

# Empowering Students Through Technology



*The SMART Board 6065 provides a truly interactive and collaborative learning experience.*

**Sholem Aleichem College is a highly specialised school, with a specific curriculum that requires a great deal of custom content. Through SMART technologies, teachers have been able to provide students with content in a far more efficient and immersive manner, which is greatly improving the school's educational outcomes.**

Located in Melbourne, Sholem Aleichem College is one of the pre-eminent Jewish schools in Australia. Catering to preschool and primary school-aged children, the school prides itself on its ability to cultivate in its students a pride in their Jewish identity, as well as a sense of belonging to the worldwide Jewish community.

As a private school, Sholem Aleichem teaches its students a mix of the standard curriculum including: mathematics, literacy, the arts, STEM, health & physical education. In addition to this, the school teaches children a range of highly-focused courses around Yiddish language and culture, Hebrew, Jewish history, traditions & customs, and literature.

These highly tailored subjects often require bespoke content generated from the teachers. The need to rapidly generate and then share that content with pupils to maximise the key learning outcomes of these bespoke courses, was the primary reason the school moved towards technology solutions including the SMART Board 6065 interactive flat panels and the integrated SMART SLS software platform.

## Customer

Sholem Aleichem College  
Melbourne, Victoria  
[www.sholem.vic.edu.au](http://www.sholem.vic.edu.au)

## Challenge

Ageing technology that interrupted lessons making it difficult to keep students engaged.

## SMART Solution

SMART Board 6065 Interactive Flat Panels.

## Result

An interactive learning environment that the students find empowering.



*SMART Boards enable content creation and tangible learning outcomes; appealing to students, teachers and parents.*

**The Challenge**

Sholem Aleichem College had ageing projector technology that teachers found difficult to operate. The need to continually recalibrate the devices while in use broke the flow of the lessons, making it difficult to keep all children engaged; The teachers were so busy maintaining the projectors that they found it was more effective to not use them at all.

This unwillingness to use the faulty technology was inhibiting the school's ability to deliver on the classes that required heavy content creation.

"The resources available to teach in Yiddish and Hebrew are minimal in Australia," Michelle Nachsatz, E-Learning Coordinator at Sholem Aleichem College, said. "We really needed a solution that would allow teachers to create and tailor content to their needs."

**The Solution**

The school turned to Unified AV to recommend a modern learning system that would leverage SMART's interactive technology. The solution that Simon Gordon, Collaborative Solutions Specialist at Unified AV, recommended, focused on the SMART Board 6065 interactive flat panel.

"I've had a long history with Sholem Aleichem College, and over the years have developed a deep

understanding of how the school works," Simon said. "Their priority was making sure key learning outcomes for the kids are achieved. "Yes, that sounds obvious, but there are a diverse range of technology options available to schools. The problem is that the functionality of many of them lose the attention of kids; either through requiring too much effort to set up and operate, or being difficult for the children themselves to take information from or interact with. Kids simply don't respond well when their teacher is distracted while trying to get a piece of technology working. The SMART Board 6065s are viewable in bright light, have multiple points of touch, are nice and clear to view, and most importantly the teachers don't need to worry about fiddling with the technology. The moment they walk into the room the panel turns itself on and it's good to go."

**Technology in the classroom**

To ensure success with the new interactive displays and software, Simon and his team have regularly provided guidance to the teachers on how to best use the technology. According to Michelle, at first there was some reluctance among teachers to adjust to the new platform for teaching.

"Initially the teachers were slow with the adoption of the technology," Michelle said. "This is typical, of course. It's the young teachers that are generally quickest to come



Students find the interactive learning process “really empowering”.

on board with technology, and we have been fortunate to have a great group of young teachers that recognised the value of the SMART Boards early, and really evangelised them to the entire teaching community from there.

“It’s important that schools get this right. A lot of schools bring in a lot of very good technology, but unless the ones that will be using it – the teachers – have proper training, that technology is going to be underutilised.

“That said, it didn’t take long for teachers to adapt to this technology, and now the entire school is very much on board with the SMART Boards. The results have been so effective that we now believe that SMART Boards should be standard in all educational environments, and indeed, should not be seen as high-tech products.

### The future with SMART Boards

Michelle said that the parents were largely on board with these technologies too. “The fact that these boards facilitate content creation is hugely appealing to parents,” she said. “Where parents can become concerned is if technology is used for purely consumption purposes, but they can see the learning outcomes from these devices as soon as they see the children interacting with them.”

With parents and teachers on board, Sholem Aleichem College is looking to roll the SMART Boards into all teaching spaces. It currently has ten SMART Boards in classrooms, and will look to roll out another five in the coming months.

These boards are leased for five years at a time. This is not because they will reach end-of-life, Simon said. “The panels are rated 50,000 hours, or 30 years equivalent teaching time,” Simon said. “We lease it in five-year periods, the devices have depreciated themselves out of value. But they would continue to work. Indeed, they’re already compatible with 4K at 60Hz. The content isn’t there to support that at the moment, but in the coming

years there will be much more 4K content, and all it would require to enable the update on the boards is a firmware update.”

And, while Sholem Aleichem College is in the process of quantifying the educational benefit of the SMART Boards, there is a substantial body of research that shows the benefits of interactive learning for children:

- Interactive learning boosts a child’s cognitive abilities and helps to develop their capacity through the decision making process.
- Interactive learning encourages better social skills in children, developing interpersonal, leadership, team playing and collaborative skills
- Interactive learning can help develop a child’s ability to come up with creative and innovative solutions to problems.
- Interactive learning can help to order a student’s approach to thinking so that it’s more organisations and less fragmented.

Already, according to Michelle, the school is seeing real benefits in the use of the SMART Boards in the classroom. “Especially with the lower classes, we are seeing such a positive response to the SMART Boards,” she said.

“The kids are finding it really empowering.”

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