How To Build a Robust Teacher Support System to Elevate District Instruction

Littleton Elementary at a Glance

Location:	Avondale, AZ
# of Schools:	7 Physical, 1 Virtual
Unique Challenge:	High percentage of new teachers
Area of Focus:	Evaluating teacher support
Swivl Products:	Reflectivity + Robot

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Lessons From an Innovative District with Many Early-Career Teachers

Littleton Elementary School District is a small but fast-growing rural district in Maricopa County, Arizona. It operates seven physical schools plus one virtual school. Each school is an academy, focused around coding, engineering, health science, fine arts, leadership, business, or service learning. The district is known for its high-quality education, and it attracts students who live outside the district because of it.

The district faces several challenges—about 80% of its population qualifies to participate in the school lunch program. With a teacher shortage in the area, the district has hired many new teachers from out of the state. This means a high ratio of mentor teachers to early-career and new teachers.

With these demographics, the district is focused on building instructional capacity to maintain and elevate classroom instruction. They do this through several methods of self-reflection, coaching, and support.

- ✔ Student Achievement Coaches offer individualized feedback and support to teachers
- ✔ District-Level Administrators offer coaching to principals so that they can serve as instructional leaders
- ✔ Digital Learning Leaders serve as a support system for teachers in need of help with instructional technology

Littleton Elementary has leveraged Swivl's tools to expand their support for educators while simultaneously developing systems that minimize travel and save time.

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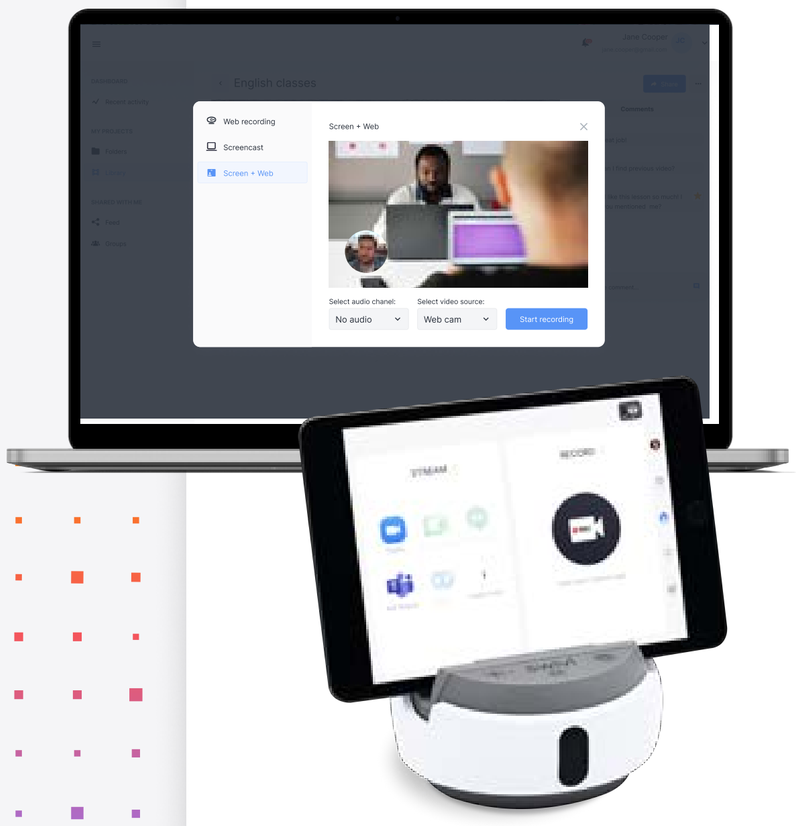
Wanted: Tech to Support High Instructional Expectations

Littleton's first introduction to Swivl was the use of Swivl Robot to support remote instruction for their online academy. "Then, we realized the power of video and streaming," Director of Instructional Technology Jim Verrill said.

Jim and his team saw how Swivl's Reflectivity paired with Robots would address the district's challenges in supporting high-quality instruction for all students with many early-career teachers on staff.

Littleton helps to build teacher capacity and ensure high-quality instruction for all students through:



- **Monthly walk-throughs:** District leadership and principals examine problems of practice and give feedback to move the building's teachers forward
- **Teacher field trips:** Taking teachers to other schools to see highly-effective teams or individual teachers
- **Instructional rounds:** Teachers visit other classrooms once a month
- **Grade level meetings:** Teachers review classroom videos and assessments to ensure students get a quality curriculum taught through best practices

Littleton wanted to leverage technology to support continuation of these best practices during a sub shortage and pandemic, while developing a culture of reflection that would continue into the future.

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Making Teacher Support More Frequent, Convenient and Faster

Littleton has developed a dynamic system for using Reflectivity + Robot to provide ongoing support and encourage self-reflection for principals and teachers.

1. Student achievement coaches work with teachers through Reflectivity + Robot to ensure a guaranteed and viable curriculum across a grade level or department. With the help of a coach, teachers reflect on assessment results. If one group performs above average, teachers review classroom video to analyze the strategies used.

2. Principals encourage self-reflection, leading to ongoing growth. The first step in teacher improvement is ongoing self-reflection, which leads to self-awareness and growth.

3. “Singleton” teachers collaborate cross-district. Teachers who are the only ones teaching a subject in their school can capture lessons to share and discuss with those who teach the same subject at other Littleton schools.

4. New teachers get frequent support by sharing short videos and written reflections with coaches through Reflectivity. Students’ Achievement Coaches provide more personalized feedback in less time by viewing teacher videos in Reflectivity than by conducting in-person walkthroughs.

> Now, because principals have Reflectivity + Robot, they can help a teacher who needs support and have them work on self-reflection.
>
> **– Aracely Vazquez, Educational Technology Specialist**

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Virtual Coaching & Walk-Throughs

Littleton’s approach involves frequent assessment of instruction at the building level and frequent feedback at the individual level. This can be time and travel-intensive for administrators, principals and coaches. Reflectivity + Robot has revolutionized Littleton’s approach, freeing up everyone to focus on their most important tasks.

Authentic Classroom Experience

“Before, if people walked into a room, it changed the dynamic for the kids,” Jennifer said. “Kids now have become used to the Robot, so it’s like it’s not there at all. We’re seeing the authentic classroom experience.” Jennifer also notes that recording quality improved dramatically when she stopped recording instruction with just a tablet and started using Swivl’s Robot and audio markers.

See More in Less Time

“Student Achievement Coaches can’t be everywhere all the time to give teachers feedback,” Jim said. Now, teachers use Robots to record videos and share them with a Student Achievement Coach. There’s no need to schedule a time to come into the classroom, and teachers receive lots of personalized feedback.

Deeper, Richer Discussions

Littleton administrators used to plan monthly building walk- throughs to gather data about instruction. Now, principals share clips with district administrators, saving travel and avoiåding situations where teachers are in transition. As a result, Jim says, “we can have deeper, richer conversations about what we’re seeing.”

Swivl Reflectivity + Robot are a catalyst for Littleton’s vision of robust teacher support and high-quality instruction. Through self-reflection, coaching, and observations, Littleton has developed an efficient, effective way to put teachers, administrators, and students on a path of continuous growth.

Over 75k schools use Swivl’s Reflectivity + Robot to build community among teachers and support their professional growth. Visit swivl.com to learn more.

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