Adobe Customer Story

Tomlinson Middle School, dreams within reach.
Title I school ignites passion for learning with Adobe creative and eLearning software donated through the White House’s ConnectED Initiative.

"My students were so excited to receive the grant because they hold Adobe in such high regard. Being given industry-standard software from Adobe implies faith. It tells students: 'You are worth it.'"

Vanessa Perez, computer teacher, Tomlinson Middle School

SOLUTION
Adobe Captivate, Adobe Photoshop Elements, and Adobe Premiere Elements

RESULTS

![Icon](image)

ENHANCED LEARNING
Students struggling with concepts gain understanding at their own pace through blended learning

![Icon](image)

PASSION AND SKILL
In developing creative software skills to help further their careers or college path, students became passionate about learning

![Icon](image)

SELF-ASSURANCE
Attention and grant from company such as Adobe builds self-esteem among students

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UNLOCKED DREAMS
Students express themselves creatively with powerful digital media tools bringing dreams closer to reality
Bringing meaning to the classroom

Some kids may not see how what they are learning in school applies to their immediate lives. Or they may not find passion in their schoolwork. As a result of these disconnects, some of them may drop out. That outlook, however, is changing at Tomlinson Middle School in Lawton, Oklahoma, where students have renewed enthusiasm due to the availability of Adobe software, granted through the White House's ConnectED initiative.

"A lot of students here are at the age where they will drop out of school unless they find something they are excited about," says Vanessa Perez, teacher at Tomlinson Middle School. "A company like Adobe caring enough to donate software means a lot. It is a huge confidence-builder for my students."

Classified as urban and attached to an Army base, Tomlinson Middle School is a Title I school set in an impoverished area in Oklahoma. Most students qualify for free or reduced-price lunches. Many students repeatedly move and get shuffled in and out of schools.

Yearning for the latest technology

In settings such as this, teachers can find it difficult to help students excel at school, believe in themselves, and aspire to future career success. Perez, who teaches Digital Literacy, Multimedia, and Web Design, has been working to change that. She has strived to take her classes beyond simply teaching students to type or create presentations by bringing in better computer equipment and a more comprehensive curriculum and program. Over the years, her students have persistently said they wanted to learn photo editing and graphics.

Perez was challenged with how to afford industry-standard photo editing and graphics software for her computer lab. Then she heard from a colleague about Adobe software grants donated through the ConnectED initiative. She applied and secured the grant that included Adobe Captivate, Adobe Photoshop Elements, and Adobe Premiere Elements software for the school.

"Design Your Own Species," powered by Photoshop Elements

Perez started her students with Photoshop Elements, knowing that photo editing was high on their wish list. As a first step, she engaged eighth-grade students in the "Design Your Own Species" project. They were tasked with digitally melding several different animals into one. Along the way, they learned Adobe Photoshop Elements features such as the Magic Wand and Layer Masks. Because students were incorporating various photos into the project, they learned how to respect copyright laws and provide attribution.
"Adobe software lets us give students assignments that build skills they can use in college or in their careers," Perez says. "Some students dream of becoming graphics, video game, or web designers, but they don't understand the steps to get there. By having access to industry-standard software, students can discover what they really love to do and make their dreams more realistic and achievable."

**Learning in the real world**

Perez plans to expand her curriculum using Adobe Premiere Elements to further spur student engagement. Each spring, students are tasked with creating a memorial video about the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing that is shown to the entire school. Perez plans to enrich the experience and bring her Multimedia class students closer to the incident by taking them to the memorial museum and arranging for them to speak with survivors or relatives of survivors. Students will document their experiences through stills and video and edit the end product using Adobe Premiere Elements.

Perez is an advocate of blended learning, an instructional approach that combines classroom instruction with online media giving students more control over time, place, and pace. To boost effectiveness of blended learning and give students more options, Perez plans to begin using Adobe Captivate to create engaging eLearning courses through screen recordings, audio interactions, and quizzes.

"In my experience, students having trouble grasping a concept will watch digital media such as screen recordings over and over again until they learn it," says Perez. "There's no one looking over their shoulders or judging them about how long it might be taking, and they can learn at their own pace. With less pressure, learning comes easier."

**Unbridled expression**

The Adobe software grant, as part of the ConnectED initiative, is opening many new doors and possibilities and engendering hope at Tomlinson Middle School. Although the school had used a variety of open-source software for photo manipulation and video editing in the past, none of the previous solutions were comprehensive enough.

Most applications had just one function, such as the ability to create a simple collage, so students had to jump among applications to fully express themselves. The end result due to the limitations of the software: without extreme patience, students settled on producing something slightly less ambitious than what they originally envisioned. With Adobe software, Perez is seeing her students blossom in showcasing their creative talent, helping them fully realize their dreams and aspirations.
Self-esteem on the rise

Student confidence has soared since Perez brought Adobe software into the computer lab. Students see things on television or see lackluster family photos that could use a new background. They recognize and point out what is being done with visuals on the TV show or can proudly announce that they can make the family photos shine. Students’ knowledge and skills are having a positive impact on their self-esteem.

"The look on students’ faces when I told them we were getting Adobe Photoshop Elements was priceless," says Perez. "My students were so excited to receive the grant because they hold Adobe in such high regard. Being given industry-standard software from Adobe implies faith. It tells students: 'You are worth it.'"

About the White House’s ConnectED initiative

In 2013, President Barack Obama launched the ConnectED initiative, designed to enrich K-12 education for every student in America. ConnectED provides teachers with the best technology and the training to make the most of it, and empowers students through individualized learning and rich, digital content. To support this important initiative, Adobe is donating more than $300 million in software and professional development services to K-12 Title I schools over four years.