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Feature - High Tech High School: PDA Verticals, Handspring, and Ballard High Team up to Introduce Handheld Computers into Curriculum

by [pdaED.com](#)

Pioneering Project at Ballard High Provides Students with Handheld Devices, Increased Learning Opportunities

[Do you want us to let you know when there's new information about the Ballard High School Project? Click here.](#)

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Ballard High is going high tech this semester. Students in Joe Kelly's ninth grade Language Arts class will be provided with Handspring Visor Deluxe handheld computers and educational software to use at school and at home. Other teachers supporting the program include Amy Holmes, Dina McArdle, Mollie Hackett, and Cassie Chinn.

Students will use the Visors to take notes in class, track homework assignments, create outlines and write reports, share information, and record their grades. They can also read novels and news, use an electronic dictionary and thesaurus, and study for tests.

The project has been made possible by the joint efforts of PDA Verticals and Handspring Inc., which donated half of the computers for the program, as well as education-related Palm OS developers, and The Ballard High School Foundation.

"The Ballard High program is an excellent example of how educators and organizations like PDA Verticals are integrating handheld computers into rich opportunities for students and teachers alike," stated Susan Yost, Education Markets Manager for Handspring. "Handspring is excited about supporting dynamic classrooms that are embracing technology."

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The Plan: A Handheld in Every Student's Hand

Dr. Engle, Ballard High Principal, anticipates that students using the computers will develop stronger organizational skills, improve academic achievement, and gain valuable proficiency with technology. "I am committed to making technology available to all students," said Dr. Engle. "We need to introduce technology into education early and integrate it into the daily lives of students." The pilot project is intended to generate data for a grant at the district level, then statewide.

Dr. Engle envisions having kiosks on campus for students to upload completed assignments, download new homework, and retrieve current information from a variety of sources. The infrastructure could then be replaced with wireless networks that take advantage of wireless Springboard modules available for the Visor.

Terry Bergeson, Superintendent of Public Instruction, recently stated that efforts like this "...are tremendous on a number of important levels. Students who become proficient with technology have a substantial advantage upon entering the working world."

Seattle Area Company Helps Realize the Vision

Dr. Engle selected Seattle area company PDA Verticals to supply the Ballard High handhelds and software because of its expertise with education and technology, industry relationships, and innovative customization process. It is the only company that provides handhelds customized with pre-loaded software selected by the user. Typically, users must purchase the device and software separately and install the software.

Students and educators at Ballard High will use the pdaED.com website to share experiences in online discussion forums and publish assignments produced using their handhelds. You can track the progress of the project, participate in lively discussions, and learn more about handhelds in education on the website. PDA Verticals is also helping teachers develop a curriculum that integrates the devices into all aspects of learning. Staff members will help train students.

"We are excited to be involved in a project to improve academic achievement." Said Chad Roberts, CEO of PDA Verticals. "The students participating will be gaining life skills that will give them the confidence and ability to compete in today's high tech world."

The Ballard High collection of educational software will

be available on customized, pre-loaded handheld computers for sale on pdaED.com in March 2001. Parents, students, and educators in the US and Canada can select and configure handheld computers, which will be shipped ready-to-use.

The Ballard High software package includes [QuizApp](#) by PDA Verticals, [Thesaurus](#) by DDH Software, [Four.Zero](#) by HandMark, [powerOne Graph](#) by Infinity Software, [BDicty Gold](#) by Beiks, and [Teacher's PET](#) by Coffee Pot Software.

For More Information

Email me when more information about the **Ballard High School Handspring Visor project** becomes available.

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