



CASE STUDY

Successful digital learning in challenging times

Pelikaan Elementary School Bonaire

"At the Pelikaan Elementary School on Bonaire, every child matters. When the school had to close its doors due to the 2020 corona lockdown, 100 Chromebooks were lent to children lacking adequate IT equipment at home with great success."

Gerald Kolenbrander
Director, board member and IT enthusiast
The Pelikaan Bonaire



AT A GLANCE

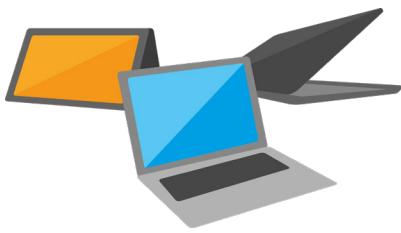


Pelikaan Elementary School's principle brought innovative Google technology into the school's classrooms.

Students now have access to all G Suite apps through the COOL platform, as well as other interesting apps for personalized education.

The importance and convenience of the Chromebooks and working in the cloud became clearer at challenging times.

Students and teachers are very keen to further extend the benefits of online collaboration learning into the classrooms.



Taking COOL overseas

Gerald Kolenbrander is principal of De Pelikaan Elementary in Kralendijk, capital city of the Dutch Caribbean island Bonaire. Since he moved to the island three years ago, Gerald has been able to bring the advantages of IT into the school's classrooms. The school now owns 150 Chromebooks with access to all educational and G Suite apps through the COOL platform. "This is already the third school where I've introduced COOL," says Gerald, laughing.

Adapting to individual needs

De Pelikaan currently has 375 pupils and a team of 40 employees. The school offers classical education with a bold mission: to adapt learning to the individual needs, interests and talents of each child. With pupils' mother tongues ranging from English, Papiamento to Dutch, there are lots of individual needs and talents.



The COOL platform is a major help in meeting children's specific educational needs. "We have many teachers who combine their own methods with the possibilities of digital learning," Gerald explains. "If IT is used properly, it can guide and challenge children individually in a great way. Without a whole group doing the same thing. I like that very much – that it opens up the possibility of a personalized curriculum."

No more cable spaghetti

This hasn't always been as easy. When Gerald arrived, there were some stand-alone computers, but they didn't work properly, if at all. Even worse was the "tied together" fiber-optic connection that ran through the different school buildings. An IT employee pulled everything out, redid the cablework and installed sufficient WIFI points. Gerald: "Then I introduced Cloudwise and Google."

At the time, the staff used Windows and many were reluctant to try something new. "But I just knew: If we're going to make a change, I want to introduce COOL," says Gerald. "I knew it was a good product." The team agreed to give it a try and the first two carts of Chromebooks preset with COOL were ordered. "Meanwhile we have four carts, so that's 150 Chromebooks. And it has worked for us!"

Teachers and pupils at De Pelikaan now use the COOL platform for all their basic digital needs, like email, calendar and Google Drive.

"I only hear positive stories. They really enjoy working with the Chromebooks."

Gerald Kolenbrander

COOL



Becoming a winning team with COOL service

The transition to Cloudwise and setting up the COOL platform was uncomplicated. An expert from Cloudwise joined the team on site to support the setup and answer questions. Gerald: "The great thing about Cloudwise as a company is that they offer very good service. They think along with you."

Less favorable were the import costs for the Chromebooks. "That's the downside of having a great partnership," Gerald says jokingly. "I wanted to order the Chromebooks with Cloudwise, because I knew they would be delivered neatly and already integrated into the school system. That feels right. And for that I'm happy to pay a little extra."

Gerald was actually among the first school boards to test the COOL platform 11 years ago. What convinced him back then was being able to work and collaborate in sync in G Suite for Education. He doesn't want to go back now. "I can't do without it anymore," he says, "it's so user-friendly! For me, this ease of use is paramount."



COOL



"I gave some 80 to 100 Chromebooks to parents who don't have ICT facilities at home. Reactions of pupils and teachers were downright positive. It all worked perfectly! Teachers were in daily contact with everyone in Google Classroom."

Gerald Kolenbrander

Sharing with each other

Easy sharing with kids, parents and colleagues: that's what the COOL platform is all about, says Gerald. "If, for example, I want to add an app or create a questionnaire I can do so very easily. And it's immediately accessible for everyone. You don't send an email with an attachment, you simply share the file. To share with each other. Beautiful, isn't it?"

Distance learning

When De Pelikaan had to close its doors due to coronavirus measures, the importance and convenience of the Chromebooks and working in the cloud became clear at once. "In two days we were ready to provide distance learning." Two teachers took the lead. They joined a Cloudwise webinar and were able to set things up smoothly. "The information and documentation that Cloudwise provides is always clear and straightforward," Gerald adds.

Moving forward

Gerald sees the increased use of digital tools for education as a welcome change. "We're still exploring more adaptive education. I really believe in a dynamic where children can develop themselves. My goal is to use IT a lot, as a tool to support the educational process." After resuming regular classes, Gerald is keen to further extend the benefits of online collaboration and learning into the classrooms.

COOL experience



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