

MOVING TOWARDS A DIGITAL FUTURE

How Showbie Streamlined Karmøy Kommune's 1:1 iPad Program Rollout



Einar Solheim
CHIEF OF OPERATIONS
AND PEDAGOGICAL
DEVELOPMENT AT KARMØY
KOMMUNE

After going digital in 2015, the Karmøy Kommune municipality realized the importance of finding a technology that could unify an entire district.

Evolution to a 1:1 District

Karmøy Kommune, a municipality in Norway, utilized a paper-based educational system with limited computer accessibility for its 5,300 students before implementing its 1:1 iPad program in 2015. In an increasingly digitized world, leaders in Karmøy Kommune knew they had to provide consistent access to technology to prepare their students for the future. After extensive research, it was clear that the iPad was the best digital tool available for students and teachers to create, collaborate, and share work.

In fall 2015, "Future School," a 1:1 iPad pilot project, was successfully implemented in six of Karmøy Kommune's 21 schools, and that number doubled the following year. Instrumental to the rollout of the pilot program were both the district's full commitment to the development of the project and a partnership with RIKT, an organization that assists schools with digital learning conversion through training and support with the best apps. With success in the initial 12 schools, the 1:1 program was given the green light to go district-wide by 2020.



“Going 1:1 is a catalyst for change to teach learning independence because it motivates students to plan, create, and evaluate their own work in new and exciting ways,” explains Einar Solheim, the municipality’s director of pedagogical development. “Now students will be fluent in the leading technology while mastering their subjects with the devices.”

The rollout of the iPad program was smooth, but the system the district had for sharing work among schools was not meeting teacher needs. “In order for the program to reach its full potential, students and teachers must have the best and most easily adaptable platform to share work and ideas,” says Einar. “That’s when we were introduced to Showbie. With Showbie, teachers and students could easily create, share, and track work in real time.”

Communication for a Smooth Transition

Within a few months of starting the pilot program, all 1:1 iPad users in Karmøy Kommune converted to Showbie as their primary workflow app. After engaging in a half-day Showbie training program, including a basic introduction to Showbie’s features, trainers shared with teachers some real-world examples from partner schools that have been successful with Showbie for years. After the training, teachers in the pilot program were then encouraged to keep in touch over the school year to exchange ideas and experiences with Showbie in the classroom.

“After trying to implement our previous LMS [learning management systems] for several years without great success, I was impressed to see how Showbie’s use skyrocketed without much further training or support needed,” explains Einar.



With more schools converting to 1:1 and joining the Showbie network, some teachers had questions about getting started with the app while others wanted to learn more about it. The solution to ensuring that all teachers’ needs were met was to create a Superuser Group using the

“After trying to implement our previous LMS for several years without great success, I was impressed to see how Showbie’s use skyrocketed without much further training or support needed.”

Showbie Groups feature. The Superuser Group consisted of one lead user from each school. Each designated lead user gathered questions and information from teachers in their schools and shared the questions over the network to see how other schools in the district were using Showbie. The Superuser Group enhances collaboration among teachers and is now an incredibly useful tool to streamline the app’s use in the district.

Creating the Superuser Group within the Showbie app allows teachers within and across schools to connect daily, which is important for a consistent and cohesive implementation of the app among all users. However, Einar explains, “While consistency is key to a successful rollout, we don’t want all teachers to use Showbie in exactly the same way. It is helpful to share ideas and innovative uses for the app, but teachers must apply what works best for them in their own classrooms.”

Teachers in the group also meet in person five times per year to share best practices and innovative uses of Showbie. To further advance Showbie’s use in the classroom, the Superuser Group will begin teaching Showbie training courses for all new schools coming online with 1:1 and for current schools in the program.

Benefits of Digital Learning

Introducing the 1:1 iPad program with Showbie has transformed the Karmøy Kommune education system. Educators can now share ideas and best practices with each other through the Superuser Group or other Showbie groups/networks at any time, creating a highly collaborative environment. Students and teachers benefit from fresh ideas flowing through the municipality on a regular basis and can immediately incorporate changes that fit into their curricula.

Showbie has also simplified the teacher and student workload by eliminating paper and showing all coursework in one location. This time-saving benefit has increased communication and collaboration between teachers and students in the classroom.

“Before Showbie,” says Einar, “teachers would spend so much time at their desk referring to paper assignments and handwritten notes to track a student’s progress. Now that they can see all of a student’s work on one screen, teachers can spend more face time with each student and assess their individual needs to succeed in class.”

Teachers love to give personalized feedback and students love to receive it. With more specific feedback and communication, teachers across the district note a significant increase in their students’ quality of work. Educators and students are re-energized with the new technology at their disposal, as it brings new opportunities to prepare students in Karmøy Kommune for a bright future.