

## Innovator of the Year: Parker pushes students through interactive lessons

Written by Kyle Arnoldy

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It wasn't a love for new technology that prompted Holyoke Elementary School second-grade teacher Chandra Parker to seek out interactive boards and tablets for the classroom. It was a desire to capture the attention of young students who can quickly lose focus.

The steps she has taken to improve the classroom setting have not gone unnoticed, as Parker has been named this year's Emerald Award winner for Innovator of the Year.



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**Chandra Parker helps her second-grade class through a series of vocabulary questions on the interactive board.**

**—Enterprise photo**

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"I just wanted things that were interactive for the kids, and I have a passion for making things better for the class I'm teaching," Parker explained. "It doesn't matter if it's the technology or differentiating for my kids, whatever is best for them. You are going to have to change every year depending on the kids and the class."

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Her ability to welcome change has paid off. Children in the class now clamor for a chance to go to the board in front of the class and solve problems.

“Mrs. Parker has a classroom of 15 students this year, and all of her students are thriving under her individualized instruction,” said elementary school counselor Sharon Jones in nominating Parker for the Innovator award. “She takes the time to find the student’s learning style and finds the time in the school day to sit with her students in a group of one, two or three and instruct in the areas of reading, writing and math.

“All of Mrs. Parker’s students have increased their standardized test scores—ALL of her students! She sets high expectations, and the kids rise to the occasion to meet these expectations.”

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