

## School Bus Becomes Mobile Classroom Thanks To iPods



When you hear the word iPod, you're likely to think about listening to some tunes. But in one Arkansas school district the hi-tech gadget is being used as a teaching tool. Getting a laptop or iPod would be a great present any day of the year.

For dozens of Sheridan students, it's Christmas in April. But these gifts are all about education. Sheridan School District Superintendent Scott Spainhour says, "The amount of time students have to spend on the bus today is extraordinary and we hope to take advantage of all the time we have to be able to impact kids."

Many students spend up to three hours a day riding the bus between school and their homes in Grapevine. Now they'll have something to do. "I'm hoping that the kids will see a path that will lead them to become doctors and dentists and veterinarians and scientists and engineers, but they must be exposed to that way of life," says Dr. Billy Hudson.

Hudson is a Grapevine native, but is currently a professor at Vanderbilt. It's his idea to turn buses into mobile classrooms. One is already set up with wireless internet, and the computers and iPods are loaded with lessons focusing on math and science.

"It's going to be controlled by the school. They're going to put their instructional material on there," says Hudson. The first ride with the new gear was the quietest you'll ever hear a school bus. It's proof the new project may already be working.

"There's a lot of brand new stuff I can learn on the iPod," says student Tommy Traywick. "I heard one thing about lightning; the thing I was just listening too."

Here's the best part, if these students pass their 3 year program, they get to keep the electronic gear.

Student Chris Cox says, "They're really neat because there is no way I'd be able to afford something like this." Arming kids with technology; it's just one more way educators hope to set these kids up for a future of success. Vanderbilt is paying for the laptops and iPods. Plus, students will have the ability to chat with tutors there online, on the bus if they need help.

---