

Eanes ISD Middle School Students Playing Their Ace With MacCSILE

In 1992, at West Ridge Middle School in the Eanes ISD, a project was proposed that was designed to address the national concern that quality education for all students continues to be a major problem. The project seemed simple enough:

- (1) use technology as part of the learning process,
- (2) believe that any student can learn,
- (3) utilize teachers who are willing to take a risk, and
- (4) be willing to teach in a way

that is different from how most teachers teach, and how they, as teachers, were taught to teach.

After all, it shouldn't be too big of a step for this award-winning school. West Ridge, a scenic and modern school in the rolling hills of southwest Austin, had met big challenges before, having been named a National Blue Ribbon School for excellence in its educational program. Its students come from upscale homes and

professional parents, so most have had access to a computer at home.

So the project, funded by the Texas Center for Educational Technology (TCET) at the University of North Texas in Denton, with contributions in-kind from Apple Computer, was to explore the uses of an experimental software, MacCSILE (the Macintosh version of the Computer Supported Intentional Learning Environment), in middle school education and teacher education. The



Principal Carol McKenzie is key to the MacCSILE project at the award-winning West Ridge Middle School.