That flat little electronic device connected to wires that hang from most teenagers' ears is more than a popular music player.

Most adults view the game, music and video players as pure fun and entertainment.

What many don't realize is that thousands of educational applications can be used to engage and excite students when learning.

Brady Public Schools is integrating iPods into several curriculum areas.

A grant written by technology coordinator Robbi McKenney and awarded from the John R. Applegate Fund through Mid-Nebraska Community Foundation has allowed the district to purchase 10 new iPod Touch units, two iHome speaker systems and extra headphones.

These are in addition to 10 iPod Classics, 20 iPod Touches and an iPad the school already has available for K-12 students.

The Classic units are used mainly for listening to audiobooks or podcasts which assist students with reading or comprehension problems.

They can also have microphones attached for podcast recording, practicing and reviewing speech/presentations or working on reading fluency.

The iPod Touch and iPad units have been loaded with educational applications that can integrate into a variety of subject areas including Spanish, science, history, art and math.

Last spring, the advanced computer class completed a project with second and sixth graders using the iPod Touch to learn Spanish, improve spelling, do research online and study geography.

This project through Educational Service Unit 10 was a starting point for Brady's iPod integration.

By completing the project, the computer students earned the district five iPods and $75 in credit toward the purchase of more applications.