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Jeff Caswell, 7th Grade Math Teacher
Arlington Middle School, Arlington, Tennessee

Challenge

Large math classes with diverse backgrounds, learning styles and needs.

Solution

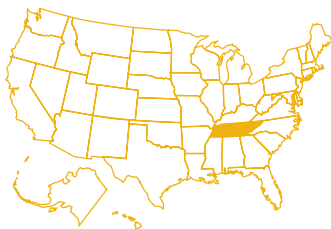
eBeam interactive systems help teachers create customized lessons for a wide range of math students in order to engage them with teaching material and raise their test scores.

Benefits

- Allows teacher to meet the needs of each student’s learning style, interests and background
- Relates mathematics to everyday interests of students
- Provides recording of lessons to be placed online for later review
- Enables special needs student to participate from home

Location

Arlington, Tennessee



eBeam Supports Diverse Learning Styles at Arlington Middle School

Jeff Caswell’s school purchased eBeam interactive whiteboard systems two years ago, when the school’s principal, Patricia Prescott, decided to use eBeam systems after comparing the available interactive whiteboard options.

“Several years ago at a Shelby County Schools Principals’ Meeting, we had a session on interactive technology which included Smart Boards and e-Beam [systems],” explained Patricia, “I liked the e-Beam [systems] because they were very easy to use and they fit our budget better.”

Since then, Caswell has been using eBeam technology to engage students, communicate more effectively with parents and collaborate with other educators.

“Learning styles, interests and backgrounds differ greatly from one of my students to the next,” explains Caswell. “As a teacher, it’s my goal to level the playing field, and my eBeam system allows me to do that. I can use numerous resources to ensure that each lesson is customized and contextualized for all of my unique learners.”

During Caswell’s math lessons, visual learners benefit from instructions that are color-coded to match the steps as he models problem-solving techniques. While auditory learners absorb his lecture, kinesthetic learners are at the board dragging numbers and mathematical functions into the appropriate equations.

Caswell also uses the eBeam system’s capabilities to relate mathematics to the everyday interests of his students. Sometimes, for instance, they examine and manipulate the latest sports statistics from ESPN. By pulling in these “real world” examples from the web, Caswell encourages a genuine interest in mathematics, which he feels is the key to increasing test scores and grades.



Since adopting the eBeam system Caswell has seen a substantial increase in the test scores and grades of his students, many of whom in past years were performing well-below grade-level proficiency expectations. Some of these students have diagnosed learning differences, while others simply find it easier to focus and be engaged when curriculum is presented with interactivity and multimedia.

Caswell's favorite eBeam feature is the record button located on the eBeam Tool Palette. This allows him to record everything happening on the board, including annotations, sequence of events and even what he is saying. These recordings are then uploaded and shared.

"Throughout the class period, both visual and audio segments of the lesson are recorded and uploaded to our class website for absent students, students who need to review the lesson before attempting homework and those parents who need a refresher in order to support their child's learning. I even used this feature to record and share my open house presentation with parents who were unable to attend."

Remote Use

Caswell has a student who suffers from serious health conditions, which often prevent her from coming to class. Though she is provided with an in-home tutor, the student's mother wants her daughter to participate in the incidental learning that takes place in the actual classroom, where questions and answers aren't scripted and discussions aren't always from the textbook.

Caswell's desire to see his student succeed coupled with the eBeam system's broad capabilities provided a creative and effective solution to the problem. Using the free meeting-sharing function within eBeam Scrapbook software, Caswell's student has been able to remotely participate in his class lectures on days when she can't attend school. She uses a home laptop PC equipped with Skype, a free online telephony application and she is able to follow along with what's happening on the board in real-time.

She not only sees live class lessons, but also hears Caswell as he speaks into a wireless headset. She can connect with peers as they ask questions, and participate by answering questions virtually on the board. According to Caswell, this unique alternative learning solution isn't just beneficial for the remote student—her classmates are intrigued by the "futuristic" technology and think it is fun to have her participate virtually.