

# SMART Showcase School Profile

**EDCompass** newsletter

[smarttech.com/EDCsubscribe](http://smarttech.com/EDCsubscribe)

## SMART Response™ Clicks at Ware County High School

By **Kim Hamill**

“SMART Response lets me know if I have to reteach, repeat or move on,” says Debbie Dixon, advanced placement (AP) calculus teacher at [Ware County High School](#).

Dixon has been using this interactive response system to incorporate formative assessment into her daily instruction for two years, and she’s seen some powerful results in her students’ retention and engagement.

Ware County High School, in Waycross, Georgia, standardized on SMART products two years ago, incorporating [SMART Board™ interactive whiteboards](#), [SMART Response PE interactive response systems](#) and [SMART Slate™ wireless slates](#) into every classroom. To support the use of these products, the school district, Ware County Schools, also implemented a staff development program and instructional website to help teachers incorporate them into the curriculum and access content and lesson activities.

“We’ve been using SMART products in our school to enhance our instructional process. As a result of the SMART technology initiative, test scores are beginning to increase, which we attribute to more time on task for our students. They are so enthusiastic about using the technology to learn that the excitement has spread to our teachers, too. The investment in SMART products has definitely been a wise decision for our school district,” says Dean Moody, Ware County High School’s Instructional Technology Coach and SMART Master Trainer.

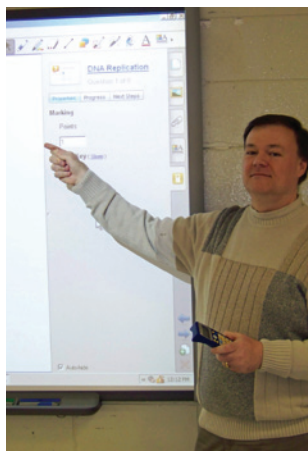
According to Moody, the use of instructional technology, and interactive response systems in particular, is an important initiative in Georgia schools. Ware County teachers are already seeing the benefits of SMART Response. It gives them immediate insight into their students’ understanding, enabling them to differentiate instruction and create small-group learning opportunities based on the data they’ve obtained.

“We use SMART Response as a way to have ongoing formative assessment so that teachers can determine the direction they need to go with their lessons. They don’t have to wait until the end of the class period to grade a five-question quiz and see how they needed to adjust their instruction. With SMART Response, they can determine if instruction should be adjusted from the onset,” says Moody.

### The science of assessment

By using SMART Response for formative assessments, Lee Hatfield, an AP biology teacher at the school, has been able to clarify her students’ understanding of biology concepts on the spot – rather than finding out what they don’t know during a formalized test.

“I get immediate feedback from my students and I know what I need to clarify that instant, instead of the next day or maybe two days later. I can go ahead and take care of it right at that moment. If I don’t know, from minute to minute, who’s getting it and who’s not getting it, then when it comes time to do a summative assessment, it’s way too late. I find that using formative assessment really helps me get an idea of who’s grasping the information.”



“We use SMART Response as a way to have ongoing formative assessment so that teachers can determine the direction they need to go with their lessons. They don’t have to wait until the end of the class period to grade a five-question quiz and see how they needed to adjust their instruction. With SMART Response, they can determine if instruction should be adjusted from the onset.”

**Dean Moody**

Instructional Technology Coach and  
SMART Master Trainer  
Ware County High School  
Waycross, Georgia

Lee Hatfield, AP biology teacher, uses SMART Response to conduct formative assessment and gain insight into her students' understanding.



Hatfield uses SMART Response daily, but she says it's especially important when she's teaching new material or abstract concepts like meiosis or photosynthesis. She inserts higher order thinking questions throughout her SMART Notebook™ collaborative learning software lesson activities. Hatfield has found that, because her students know she is going to ask a question every couple of pages, they pay more attention and are more engaged.

When her students answer the questions, using their SMART Response remotes, she can quickly look at the data to know immediately if and how she needs to adjust her instruction.

"If something is going well, that gives me more time for extending and refining lessons. But if it's not, then I know I have to go back and reteach. Or, if part of the class is ready to move on while others are still struggling, that's when I use the information to do flexible grouping. I then differentiate the lesson accordingly," Hatfield says.

### Instant insight adds up to success

In Debbie Dixon's classroom, SMART Response is helping students develop a deeper, clearer understanding of AP calculus concepts. They gain insight into their own strengths and into areas that need more of their focus.

Dixon finds that even a single assessment question can help her adjust instruction for the entire lesson. "I use SMART Response for stand-alone questions early in the presentation of new material. Before we can move on to the next step, I can incorporate a multiple choice question or an open-ended question. I love that it's not limited to a, b, c, d. Students can type in a decimal answer or a fraction answer, so I can see if they have an understanding before we move on."

She also incorporates SMART Response into end-of-course test preparation sessions. By conducting formative assessments that are drawn from standardized test preparation materials, she can analyze if the whole class needs additional instruction on a concept or how to instead individualize the review materials.

"I have differentiated assignments based on students' formative assessments. Their performance indicates whether they need the assignment that has more scaffolding available, or if they need the one that has accelerated questions – the higher level thinking skills. I know which one each kid needs individually."

This data-driven approach is giving Dixon deeper insight into her students' understanding and leading to more classroom engagement. Looking at the bigger picture, Dean Moody says, "the classroom is no longer four walls – the classroom is really the world." By taking advantage of interactive technology products, like SMART Response, educators at Ware County High School are preparing their students for success in that world. **EC**



If you would like to visit [Ware County High School](#) to talk with educators about their success and see firsthand how they're putting SMART products to work, visit the [SMART Showcase School](#) section of our education website. From this page, you can also find a [Showcase School or District in your area](#).

© 2010 SMART Technologies ULC. All rights reserved. EDCompass, SMART Response, SMART Board, SMART Slate, SMART Notebook, smarttech, the SMART logo and all SMART taglines are trademarks or registered trademarks of SMART Technologies ULC in the U.S. and/or other countries.