

# SMART Profile

## Dean Rusk Middle School



Karen Lawrence teaches eighth-grade math with the help of her SMART Board interactive whiteboard.

## Teacher overcomes barriers to learning using SMART products

When Karen Lawrence learned that an autoimmune disease would keep one of her top eighth-grade math students away from class for several months, she was determined not to let him fall behind in his studies. Her job was made much easier with the help of a SMART Board™ interactive whiteboard. Lawrence, a teacher at Dean Rusk Middle School in Canton, Georgia, began saving all her math lessons on a CD, which she delivered to the student's house.

"Thanks to the SMART Board interactive whiteboard, Brett still felt he was a part of the class," says Lawrence. In addition to the daily math lesson, Brett's classmates could leave messages of support as Lawrence allowed them to take part in the audio recording of the lesson. "I think we contributed a lot to his healing," she says.

The SMART Board interactive whiteboard's touch-sensitive display connects to a computer and a digital projector. The computer image is projected on the screen, and teachers can present their lessons on the interactive whiteboard. Teachers can write in digital ink to record students' feedback, access websites, play videos or capture images and notes – all within SMART's Notebook™ software.

In her class, Lawrence shows her complete lesson on the screen, goes through the steps to solve equations and has students contribute by coming up to the interactive whiteboard and writing directly over the equations, using digital ink.

Teachers can save lessons on their websites or a CD, prepare lessons for the next class in advance, make lessons available for students who were absent and share them with other teachers. "It's perfect for students who miss a day, or students who feel like they just need that little bit extra," says Lawrence.

"For Brett, it provided a lifeline," she says. "I was able to walk around the classroom and hold the microphone out for individual students to answer, or hold it out for a choral answer. There was always time for his classmates to say, 'This lesson is hard, Brett,' or 'Call me if you don't understand.'"

Lawrence's classroom was equipped with a SMART Board interactive whiteboard five years ago and since then she has used the product to deliver every lesson.

"In researching interactive whiteboards, I attended a workshop on SMART and one on a competitor's product and at the end of the day, the choice was clear," says Lawrence. She is now part of Teach 21, a group of teachers and administrators working to integrate SMART products into classrooms across Cherokee County School District.

"The SMART Board interactive whiteboard's applications are really limitless," she says. "You can customize the product for what you do every day."

Nowhere has this been more important than in bridging the distance between her math class and Brett, who was confined to his home for nearly six months.

"Brett managed to take the same tests as the other students and maintain a high A average through it all," Lawrence says. "At the end of the year, everyone agreed that Brett should win the eighth-grade math award."

Brett made a substantial recovery and is now a full-time student at Sequoyah High School.

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**Karen Lawrence,**  
math teacher