

LFHS Foundation

### LFHS Foundation Funds Pilot of Interactive SMART Board™ in Math Department

#### In Math Class, Everybody Gets to Play!

While some students may not believe the idea that you can “play” in a math class, a pilot grant awarded by the LFHS Foundation hopes to make it a reality for 100% of the students in math classrooms.

This past fall, Math Department Chair **Tom Meagher** received a grant from the LFHS Foundation for an interactive whiteboard, aka “SMART Board,” and a set of Senteo™ interactive response devices. This hardware is now set up in the math lab for all math classes to try out the new technology. SMART Boards™ are a simple idea brought into the technology age. Here’s how they work:

A SMART Board looks like a traditional whiteboard on a 10-foot track, but looks are all it has in common with a traditional whiteboard. A SMART Board does for visual activities in class what a tape recorder does for auditory activities. It “records” the work of the teacher and the students as they work through problems, review formulas or write out definitions. There is no erasing. The board just scrolls to the next line just like a Word document or Excel spreadsheet. Not sure what happened a few minutes ago or want to compare this problem to the one that was done before? Just scroll back! Is there more than one way to solve a problem? Just split the screen.

To reference outside documents on Edline or on a website during instruction, a teacher can access the

hyperlink on the SMART Board. Students have the dual benefit of the teacher in the room, and full access to supplemental reference materials available in a wide range of formats.

This technology also allows classroom notes and discussions to be permanent and available for others. Students absent for the class can access the day’s work. Lessons can be forwarded to Learning Resource Center teachers or referenced by Math Resource Center tutors. As part of professional development, the Math Department can use lessons to discuss ideas and lesson plans. Now, every student, teacher and administrator with a vested interest in the classroom’s technology shares its benefits.

Also part of the Foundation’s grant award, the Senteo™ Interactive Response System provides students with remotes allowing them to respond in real-time to a classroom question. The teacher reports and records their responses in a pre-programmed format. That’s right - the three students thrusting their hands in the air right away have nothing on the student who ponders a bit before answering. Now everyone gets to show his or her knowledge! As the students respond via their individual remotes, the system displays what each responding student knows about the topic, and gives the teacher immediate feedback on how well a topic has been understood.



With the Foundation’s grant award, Mr. Meagher also purchased a wireless slate for teachers and students to access the SMART Board from anywhere in the room. The slate adds mobility and hands-on activity while functioning as a mouse, pen and eraser in a mobile unit.

Today, the Math Department is piloting one SMART Board with accessories to expose math teachers and their students to its benefits. Ultimately, Mr. Meagher would like a SMART Board in every math room so every teacher could use it every day for every class. With 96% of the students in the high school enrolled in a math class, the impact of this technology would be far-reaching.

“The SMART Board and Senteo technologies could be as ubiquitous in our classrooms as desks and chalkboards,” said Mr. Meagher. “The products have the ability to improve how students and teachers interact in and out of the classroom. We are hopeful our pilot will demonstrate their value so that we can make a case for a more substantial investment.”

With your contribution to the LFHS Foundation, the Math Department may be able to allow everyone to use the SMART Board to “play” one day!

