

## Lab's main focus is science, but math and careers are obvious at every turn

### About the School

- Warren Middle School
- Forney, Texas
- Grades: 7, 8
- Enrollment: 710

### About the Course

- Technology Explorations
- Pitsco Education topics:
  - » Applied Physics
  - » Electricity
  - » Genetics
  - » Ecology
  - » Forensic Science
  - » Body Systems
  - » Climate & Biomes
  - » Astronomy
  - » Dynamic Earth
  - » Rocket Science
  - » Flight Technology
  - » Natural Disasters
  - » Music & Sound

**FORNEY, Texas** – The No Child Left Behind Act and an emphasis on STEM have made science a higher priority in recent years. That reality left Principal Kenneth Pearce with a decision to make: What curriculum should he add in an attempt to improve students' scores on state science tests?

New at the helm of Warren Middle School in Forney, Texas, Pearce recalled his days as a science teacher at nearby Lewisville ISD, where another teacher had a Pitsco Education curriculum lab.

"There were kids who struggled in other classes, and they were excited about the lab. Me, as a science teacher, I thought wow, I wish I had something like that," Pearce said. "When I became principal here, (a Pitsco lab) was one of the first things I wanted to get. I explained to everybody that this might be able to help a percentage of our students do better in science or at least start looking at careers in science."

Both of those desired effects were realized in the first year of the program,

2009-2010. Science Teacher Jeanne Brady worked with Pearce to select a combination of curriculum topics that filled gaps where state testing revealed Warren students needed the most help. In the end, the 12-workstation (24-student) lab brought together topics that met 87 percent of seventh-grade science Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and 84 percent of eighth-grade science TEKS. In addition, the lab showed its STEM versatility by meeting 74 percent of seventh-grade math TEKS and 60 percent of eighth-grade math TEKS – all in one course. The Pitsco curriculum topics covered in the lab include *Applied Physics, Electricity, Genetics, Ecology, Forensic Science, Body Systems, Climate & Biomes, Astronomy, Dynamic Earth, Rocket Science, Flight Technology, Natural Disasters, and Music & Sound.*

A study of test data following the first year revealed that students who took the elective Technology Exploration course – a diverse cross-section of the



Teacher  
Jeanne Brady

“I think my kids tend to score quite a bit higher than what maybe they would have without the class. I have the cream-of-the-crop kids and the low-of-the-low kids taking this class.”

