

Coming Events

- November 12—6-12 Math Academy @ECHS
- November 13—11th grade Academy @WCHS
- November 13—Counselor Academy @WCHS
- November 13—4th Grade Science Club @OHES
- November 14—Preschool Academy @TCES

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Friday Focus

Carter County Schools



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Centers and Stations in the Classroom

Carter County's Instructional Framework places an emphasis on learning centers and stations. There is evidence that this kind of learning environment has a positive impact on student achievement. In fact, John Hattie's meta-analysis of hundreds of research studies revealed a .49 effect size for small group instruction and a .59 effect size for cooperative vs. individualistic learning. With these kinds of results, we simply must revise our instructional methods to match what is best for our students.

With this in mind, there are some things to consider in the planning of effective centers/stations.

1. Grouping Students: Kagan cooperative learning structures recommend grouping students with 2 medium, a high, and one struggling student. There is a reason behind this method of organization. High and struggling students may become frustrated when paired together; however, when paired with medium level students, they are able to participate more effectively. So, know your data and use it wisely.

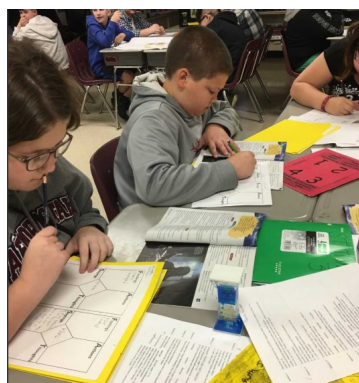
2. Differentiate the Work in Centers and Stations: Think of your centers as representing the KAS. What will PACE be at each station? One teacher thinks about it this way: Taking your vertical lesson plan and making it horizontal. Two of our teachers have created the "Center Assistant." This tool will help you create your Teacher Center (a must have) along with the other three or four stations for your classroom. Also, don't forget all of the great strategies you are learning at District Academies. Vocabulary centers, technology centers, comprehension centers, summarizing centers, problem-solving centers, etc.—these are all great options for our students. Whatever lesson you choose for each center, remember that an ACCOUNTABILITY piece is critical.

3. Manage the flow of movement: Model, model, model how the flow of movement will look going from center to center. Get a timer, live by it. Expect 100% participation and do not let any kid slow down the movements of the group.

4. Re-evaluate your groups: Use formative assessments to re-mix your groups as needed. Some teachers rework their groups every week. There are others who wait for a longer period of time. Many Carter County teachers have implemented center cards that randomize students except for their turn at the teacher center when they are leveled. Whatever strategy you choose, make sure you know and utilize student data effectively.

Teaching with centers and stations requires frontloading your classroom instruction with modeling and planning, however the resulting conversation and achievement for students is well worth the initial effort. Students appreciate the individual time they spend at the teacher center and the momentum teachers gain from being able to target specific skills can not be replaced.

Spotlight on Excellence



WCMS students in Teena Liles' class used a FACT organizer to describe characters in their text. This organizer is a great accountability piece for a center and a nice purpose for reading, too!



ECMS students in Tara Goble's science class moved around her room completing stations. Here they are using graphs and diagrams to answer questions on their recording sheet. A tracking tool or recording sheet is a great way to help kids be accountable for their station work.

Students in all content areas are able to benefit from cooperative learning centers/stations.