

Dear Parents,

When you walk into my classroom this year, you are going to notice that my classroom will be unlike most other classrooms you've seen before. Yes, it is well decorated, bright and fun with an ocean/beach theme. It has picnic tables, kid size rocking chairs, stability balls, bean bag chairs, a futon sofa, fun lights, and several bright and colorful rugs. The reading area even has a beach umbrella. But you'll notice that something is missing. The missing piece is your child's individual work space/desk.

This is my third year teaching kindergarten and I LOVE my job. About mid ways through the school year last year I really began to notice how students work space directly affected their ability to get their work done. Just as everyone learns differently, everyone works differently. I became very interested in the motivation my kids received from allowing them to work in the environment that best fit their learning style. If they needed to stand to write better, I allowed them to do so. If they needed to sit on the floor to color better, I allowed them to do so. I want my classroom to be bright, motivating, fun but also able to accommodate the needs of all my students. Once I began noticing these things, I began searching ideas on how to really incorporate individualized work spaces for each child. I came across multiple articles on something called "alternative seating". This throws the idea of a traditional classroom out the window. Instead of desks and or tables and chairs, there are soft chairs, stability balls, ottomans, low tables, rugs, bean bags, etc. I was intrigued and decided to research it further. I found out some very interesting things about alternative seating and would like to share them with you. Alternative seating:

1. helps student's attention spans which results in higher achievement
2. makes students more actively engaged in the classroom
3. gives them an active outlet without disrupting their learning
4. makes them more physically fit
5. motivates students to want to come to school
6. helps those with ADHD and Autism, along with other special needs
7. helps develop a sense of community among the students which improves their social skills
8. helps them to become independent learners
9. is LOVED by the students and teacher

So, your child's classroom will be an alternative seating classroom. I understand that some kids would prefer a regular table and chair. I will have a table with chairs set up for those learners. They will also be able to use my U-shaped table in small group settings. Those who prefer an "alternative" seat can choose from: picnic tables, stability balls, a low table with seating on a rug, child size wooden chairs, or bean bag chairs. I am hoping to add wobble stools this year. Students can choose to write on a hard surface (such as a low table) or use clipboards, lapboards, even the floor. The students' supplies will be placed in baskets on shelves for easy access.

This method will allow your child to do their BEST learning. Just like children have different learning styles, they have different physical needs when it comes to learning. "When the body is active, the brain is active". I will be teaching the students how to choose a spot that is the most conducive to their learning style.

I am very excited to do this in my classroom and I hope you are too. I understand it might be a little strange and not at all what you're used to but I truly believe this will help your child be the best learner they can be. It has done wonders so far in my classroom for my past students. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at: [lindsey.willard@sccboe.org](mailto:lindsey.willard@sccboe.org). I am looking forward to a great year!