
Kinesthetic classrooms get the mind moving

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Teachers have always had to compete against boredom and distractions to reach their students, but now that kinesthetic equipment is available for classrooms, students can burn off extra energy while learning at the same time.

Sitting still may not be the most effective way to stimulate the mind, yet all of Haywood County students spend a majority of their learning time sitting at desks. Fortunately, two Haywood County classrooms have found a possible solution — and it has pedals.

Last month, two classrooms replaced their old desks with several kinesthetic learning tables, which include wiggling seats, balancing boards to stand on and pedals underneath. Each of these tables allow students to cycle, wobble and move left to right while learning and doing class work.

Kinesthetic learning has been shown to improve students' attentiveness and focus, through a steady range of motion that increases blood circulation and brain activity. Two local teachers, Laura Beth Gibson and Amy Kilgore are finding this to be true.

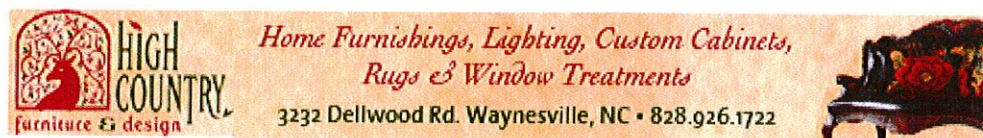
After just a few weeks, Kilgore, who teaches fourth-grade at Junaluska Elementary, has noticed her students becoming more focused on their studies. In addition, Gibson, who teaches first grade at Bethel Elementary School, said her 6-year-olds were becoming less distracted and better behaved.

Students who have a more attentive and focused demeanor in class will surely absorb more information while being more active at the same time. And with dozens of moving students already performing better, the proof is in the pudding.

It's too bad that only two classrooms could be supplied with kinesthetics, but we understand why. Since the machines were paid for by a portion of the a Carol M. White Physical Education Program (PEP) grant, there is a limit on how much could be spent.

Hopefully, future grants will come our way and more kinesthetic classrooms can be implemented. Once teachers and school officials see the difference it makes for the students' learning, maybe there will be more cause to invest in these tools.

Hats off to the Haywood County school system for being proactive and thinking in new ways to combat old challenges.



Comments (0)
