Collaborative Classroom Tables—Elementary

The Need for Collaborative Classrooms

The 21st century is seeing an increasing demand for people that work well in teams, and technology is making it easier for professionals to collaborate with others whether they be down the hall or across the globe. New ideas come from our willingness to build on the different perspectives we gain from working with others. Schools recognize the need for their curriculum to include collaborative activities, through which students learn how to exchange ideas effectively, how to actively listen to all members of their group, and how to compromise. All the while, students are fully engaged in their learning, which means they will retain knowledge that they can apply to new situations.

Requirements for a Great Collaborative Classroom

For **students**, the ideal collaborative classroom should give everyone an equal chance to participate, and the room must let students easily arrange themselves into groups of various sizes. When students can work comfortably, they can focus on creativity and teamwork. Workspaces need to allow all team members to see each other without straining. Students are encouraged to participate when they can be seen clearly by others. Students also need to communicate within their group and with people in other groups, so they will need access to whiteboards, monitors, or other media that will facilitate presentations.

For **teachers,** the collaborative classroom should maximize the ability to move among different teams for mentoring or idea exchange. They should be able to address the whole class as they communicate assignments or demonstrate concepts. They should also be able to easily reconfigure the room to create work areas that promote the best student collaborations. Easy access to whiteboards or other media allows teachers to post assignments or write ideas without interrupting students' teamwork.

For **administrators,** the best collaborative learning space will be arranged and furnished to achieve the vision for that space. They need to know that all products are available at the time they are needed and that their order will arrive correctly and on time. Installations must be quick and efficient.

Collaborative Classroom Solutions from School Outfitters

School Outfitters research and development professionals have designed a collaborative classroom with furnishings that fit the collaborative learning pedagogy. Products have been grouped together in ways to spark teamwork and to keep interactions going. **Collaboration Stations**, **Storage Areas**, and **Media Stations** are designed to work together to let students easily engage in group work.

Collaboration Stations allow students to easily arrange themselves in ways that help them to interact with each other effectively. Furnishings in these stations include:

- Collaborative tables
- Flexible school chairs
- Active Learning Stools
- Mobile teacher workstation
- Mobile teacher chair

Collaborative tables feature spacious work surfaces that are still compact enough to allow team members to reach the materials that they need for their activities. The table shapes are designed to let all students see each other, giving everyone an equal opportunity to participate. Thick tabletops withstand heavy use, and laminate surfaces clean easily.

Flexible school chairs are constructed from durable, reinforced plastic that supports students as they lean back. The smooth, anti-static seats don't require a metal backrest, which means students won't snag hair or clothing on exposed rivets. The lightweight design makes it easy for students to pick them up and move them around the room.

Active Learning Stools let energetic children rock, so they can keep better focus. A backless design encourages good posture and strengthens core muscles throughout the day.

The **mobile teacher workstation** gives educators their own personal work surface that they can roll to the group they want to mentor. They can use the storage pedestals beneath the tabletop to store materials they need for demonstrations.

Mobile teacher chairs let educators roll their chair to different group areas to facilitate their students' activities.

Storage Stations in a collaborative classroom allow students and teachers to roll supplies to collaboration areas, so students can keep discussions going. Furnishings in these stations include:

- Mobile bin storage carts
- Mobile storage carts with shelves

- Lockable storage cabinet

Mobile bin storage carts can be rolled directly to collaboration stations, making distributing and collecting supplies easy. Clear bins make it simple to locate needed materials, and they can be completely removed from the unit for use at workstations. Large and small bin sizes accommodate a variety of storage needs.

Mobile storage carts with shelves provide spacious areas that are perfect for storing in-progress projects or displaying completed projects. Rolling casters make it easy to move the units out of the way when necessary.

A **lockable storage cabinet** secures devices or other materials that may require teacher supervision. Locking items away also reduces distractions by keeping tools, supplies and projects out of view. Teachers may also opt to use this cabinet for securing personal belongings.

Media Stations were developed to facilitate communication and idea generation from multiple places in the classroom. Items in these stations include:

- Double-sided whiteboard easels
- Mobile magnetic markerboard
- Mobile corkboard
- High-capacity charging cart

Double-sided whiteboard easels can be easily rolled to workstations, so students can brainstorm and capture ideas on the fly. Two writing surfaces let students write down ideas or progressively disclose information when they want to present it. Easels can also be used to section off workspaces if needed.

A **mobile magnetic markerboard** provides a large writing surface that's great for communicating assignments or for presentations. The magnetic surface lets students and teachers display papers or storyboards as they share ideas. Rolling casters are easy to maneuver over floor surfaces to bring the markerboard wherever it's needed.

A **mobile corkboard** provides a large surface that lets students and teachers tack papers that may need to remain posted for longer durations. Rolling casters easily move the board between group areas, so students can post what they need to and quickly get back to their collaborations.

A **high-capacity charging cart** keeps all your classroom devices charged and ready for use. Locking doors keep them secure overnight. Heavy-duty rolling casters easily maneuver over any flooring, and the top doubles as an additional surface for storage or presentation.

Choosing your Collaborative Classroom Solution

School Outfitters makes it simple to outfit a classroom tailored specifically for collaborative classrooms. Choose the option that best fits your budget and needs, and with just one click, you get an itemized quote for this classroom, including all three of our specially-designed stations. Our helpful representatives are happy to answer any questions about our stations and how you can put them to use in your collaborative learning classroom. Just give us a call 1-800-260-2776.