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Hey Shawnta! How Do We Get Educators More Informed About the Benefits of Flexible Seating?

[BY SHAWN'TA S. BARNES](#)

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Hey Shawnta!

How do we get educators more informed about the benefits of flexible seating?

Sincerely,

Flexible Teacher

Hi Flexible Teacher,

Thanks for advocating for more teachers to become informed about the benefits of flexible seating.

In first grade, one of my twin sons had difficulties with one of his teachers. She insisted that he sit at a desk even though he wasn't bothering anyone and was completing his work. When she called to complain and asked for my assistance to get him to comply, I declined. Instead, I sent her a picture of my son standing at home while completing his homework. She relented and decided to no longer press the issue. Her focus was on compliance with her will, and she wasn't seeking what was best for the child.

Get Your Principal On Board

The first step is for principals to be invested in changing teachers' mindsets. If students are learning and completing their work, they should be able to stand at a tall desk, sit at a desk, or even on the floor. When teachers fight for compliance when students are actually learning, it damages the relationship between the child

and the teacher. Additionally, it can escalate into other behavior consequences because the teacher wants the child to obey.

Learn More About Flexible Seating

Once mindsets are changed, teachers should learn what flexible seating is and how to implement it because it is not a free-for-all. There has to be structure, proper implementation, and a willingness to have some students sit at traditional desks if they are having difficulties. For example, if one of the options is sitting on a yoga ball instead of a chair, the teacher needs to model how students should sit on the yoga ball during teaching and learning and explain that students could lose their yoga ball seat privileges if they are not using the yoga ball correctly.

Teachers should also know that flexible seating tends to be easier to move. If the teacher wants to be able to rearrange the class for an activity quickly, it can be easier to move a yoga ball or a floor mat than to drag desks everywhere.

Look For Funding

Next, flexible seating costs money. I strongly suggest that teachers find ways to get funding for the flexible seating and *not* go into their own pockets. This could be through the district, a foundation, or an organization that provides grants for areas like this.

Share Your Knowledge

Last, Flexible Teacher, don't be afraid to share your knowledge with colleagues. Many times colleagues will listen to each other before they listen to the school administration.

I hope these tips set you on a path to more flexible seating!

Shawnta