

March 20, 2006

Dear Healthy Kids Learn Better Coalition Members,

When I gave the presentation representing the Oregon Physical Therapy Association at the June HKLB meeting, Phyllis Rock of the Oregon Department of Education requested we provide guidelines for proper school chair selection. Here are the basics.

A school chair must allow and support proper sitting posture of a neutral pelvis and upright trunk and head. This is done with a chair that has the following features:

- (1) Seat platform level (no forward or backward tilt), but may be molded
- (2) Backrest with lumbar support, and vertical, with spring or give for some movement. The backrest should not be reclined or posterior to seat platform.

The Virco ZUMA chair is the best example I know of at low price. I believe Artco Bell has a version of the ZUMA chair available now. The Virco IQ chair is also good. The Virco chairs are presently available through the Salem-Keizer Coop, but may not be with the next bidding if the ergonomic criterion is not included for bidding.

I am presently in the process of getting these "ergonomic" criteria as part of the criteria used by the Salem-Keizer School District in their bidding process. Until now, the only criteria for ordering school chairs were (1) risk to the custodians who handle them, and (2) the cost of the chairs.

The chairs listed above are within the criteria of cost, and weight to the custodians, and they are HEALTHY for the KIDS. The Virco chair I brought to the HKLB meeting is one of them. We must now raise the awareness of what and whom the chairs are actually for, and the serious health issues related to sitting posture. Then all the schools chairs provided by the public school coops will be healthy for the kids!

Call if you would like to talk about this or meet. I am in Salem. 503-365-7554

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