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GDHS introduces Active Collaboration Lab

By Laura Erne
Special to The IFP

Georgetown District High School (GDHS) is set to have its first Active Collaboration Lab (ACL) this fall as a way to get students more active in the classroom.

The lab will feature various pieces of fitness equipment such as bikes, treadmills and rowing machines, which are adapted to provide sustained movement during collaborative group activities.

It will also be equipped with technology such as monitors, Chromebooks and Smartboards to create an interactive workspace that supports student development and enhances the learning process.

Stand-up tables, fidget bars and ergonomic stools to help with fidgeting, called hokki stools, are some of the equipment featured in the lab which serve as an alternative to sitting.

Students will remain active throughout the full 75 minutes of class time when using the ACL room.

The benefits of an ACL include keeping students engaged and providing them with the ability to concentrate, decreases behaviour management issues, encourages the development of creative ideas through the collaborative environment, improves mental, physical and social wellness, encourages positive relationships, and increases student attendance.

All 1,600 students in the school will have access to the lab.

This is not the first ACL for the Halton

District School Board (HDSB). Milton District High School is about a year ahead of GDHS in its ACL development, and was the inspiration for ACL committee co-chairs, Chase Trull and Kaitlyn Teszeri, to bring active learning to GDHS.

We know current research concludes that students learn better when they are moving and engaged, said Teszeri. The low levels of movement help to activate the brain and lead to improved mood, memory and learning. This supports our goal of being able to support students in a variety of ways and create ways to make learning fun.


The ACL will replace the current health room and because it's a larger room with storage space, no expansion is needed to adapt it into the lab.

We already know that they (students) are excited about it and looking forward to seeing it open. After having conferred with Student Council, even the Grade 12s want to come back for the opening, said Teszeri. Having had the opportunity to work with classes in a similar setting it's exciting to see them explore a new learning environment. Some students end up asking to use the space because they feel they learn better in that type of environment.

According to Active Research Living, just one physically active lesson creates a 13 per cent increase in students physical activity for the week and decreases by 21 per cent of teachers time managing behavior.

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