



## **SMARTdesks Shows iGroup® Collaborative Learning Furniture at School & College Building Expo 2012**

*SMARTdesks launches iGroup® Collaborative Learning Furniture January 24th at the School and College Building Expo 2012 at the Convention Center in Orlando, Florida. This innovative computer table system is based on triangular iGroup elements® that go together to form a myriad of interactive shapes. Calling it “The Origami of interaction,” iGroup gives a creative, fun approach supporting collaborative learning in K-12 classrooms.*

Baltimore, MD ([PRWEB](#)) January 22, 2012 -- SMARTdesks launches iGroup® Collaborative Learning Furniture January 24th at the School and College Building Expo 2012 at the Convention Center in Orlando, Florida. This innovative computer table system is based on triangular iGroup elements® that go together to form a myriad of interactive shapes. Calling it “The Origami of interaction,” iGroup gives a creative, fun approach supporting collaborative learning in K-12 classrooms.

Collaborative learning refers to the mutual exchange of ideas between students and their classroom teachers. Collaborative learning reflects a conceptual shift from traditional pedagogy to joint learning experiences for both the experts and the students.

[Collaboration tables](#) foster stimulating interactions through their functional and aesthetic design. Through flexible desk and seating arrangements, participants at each learning station establish rapport largely through accommodating and naturally inviting table ergonomics. Computers, laptops, and mobile devices all are relevant technologies that easily integrate with “old-fashioned” pen and paper.

[Collaboration furniture](#) assures positive body language between participating members of the table. Offset seating arrangements and table curves welcome eye contact. Additionally, rolling chairs make sharing monitors and text resources at separate workstations a seamless effort. Students begin to “mirror” each other’s body language because their workstations reflect fully engaged interactions.

iGroup Collaboration Tables by SMARTdesks enable users to work independently or together in groups of two or more, and the workstations themselves offer mobility for flexible classroom layout. Teachers can arrange the desks singularly or in clusters that are appropriate for group and private study. The table’s flexibility in configuration optimizes floor space with integrated wire management systems. iGroup supports both traditional front-facing lines of desks or virtually limitless configurations including hexagon, pinwheel, wave, triangle, and abstract.

iGroup was born from a need to develop economical and flexible collaboration furniture. Michele McHenry, Director of [Design at SMARTdesks](#), says “The classrooms and labs that we are constructing today extend so far beyond the traditional classroom environment that it is critical that we offer a solution that offers both a traditional seating arrangement as well as a multitude of reconfiguration options.”

One of the iGroup’s most important principles is the freedom it gives students to learn in their own styles within the classroom. Teachers can quickly adjust the desk dynamics as they assess the needs of their students within the working space. The iGroup design promotes a continuous flow of interaction that adapts to any project at hand.



Collaborative learning studios designed with classroom layout in mind promote engaged environments where students can multitask with text and technological resources all while remaining immersed in their projects.

Derek Swanson, Personalized Learning Coordinator at the Jack Swigert Aerospace Academy, comments on his installation of SMARTdesks collaboration tables: “[the tables] allow people to talk to one another and still have the technology available to them to reference if they need to in their discussions. It’s worked out really well.”

The school employs “project-based learning” methodology; students collaborate to solve real-world problems in cooperative interactions. The workspace inspires students to innovate together and develop solutions. Team-building skills cultivated in the classroom will serve students in their future employment interactions. The firm foundation collaborative learning developed from an early age is crucial to this skill.

And as Mr. Swanson asserted, “having the ability to really have the students collaborate - that’s how students are learning.”

For more information about Smartdesks please visit [www.smartdesks.com](http://www.smartdesks.com) or call 800-770-7042. Smartdesks will be at booth # 2429 at the SCBE 2012.

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