Dear Parents and Guardians,

I am excited to share with you a wonderful approach to teaching and learning that we will be using in our class this year. The approach is called Kagan Structures. Kagan Structures are highly interactive learning strategies that involve students working cooperatively in pairs and in teams to master academic curriculum.

Kagan Structures are scientifically research based instructional strategies that produce a wide range of positive outcomes including:

* Increased achievement for all groups of students
* Improved social skills and student relations
* Decreased discipline referrals
* Higher self-esteem among students
* Increased liking for school, class, teacher, and content

Kagan Structures result in so many positive benefits because they create a greater degree of active engagement by all students than traditional teaching. For example, instead of calling on one student at a time to respond to classroom questions, I will have students respond in pairs, each taking a turn to share. This way everyone participates much more. Everyone is more engaged and everyone learns more.

Instead of practicing worksheet work alone, students work with a partner. Partners have roles so everyone participates, everyone has a supportive coach, and everyone gets immediate feedback. By talking aloud with a partner, students develop deeper thinking on the topic, it becomes more memorable, and they can hear how their classmates think. By structuring learning to be cooperative, students develop cooperation skills, communication skills, and teamwork skills. This results in a safer learning environment, kinder and caring students, and less time off task for me dealing with discipline issues.

For teamwork, I won’t just tell students to, “work in your teams.” Unstructured group work often results in some students doing most the work and some doing little to none. I want to every student actively engaged. Kagan’s highly structured strategies ensure every student is actively participating. Students love this approach because they are more active, get to move, talk, and work together. It’s just a more fun and more interactive way to learn. When polled, students prefer the Kagan methods to traditional methods 12 to 1!

I am enthusiastic to offer your students this wonderful opportunity to work together to improve learning and develop essential social skills.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]