

NODE CHAIR

Educators today need to teach in different ways than the prevalent paradigm from past decades — collaborative, multiple focal points, and shifting modes and posture.

The node chair responds to these emerging needs. It is mobile and flexible, and designed for quick, easy transitions between one mode to the next. With node, a classroom can flex from a lecture-based arrangement to a team-based one, and back again, without interruption.

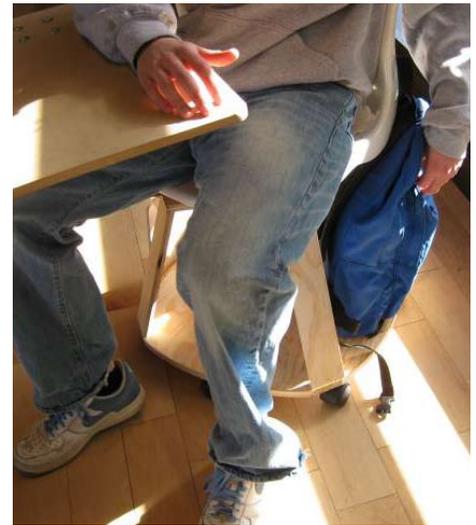
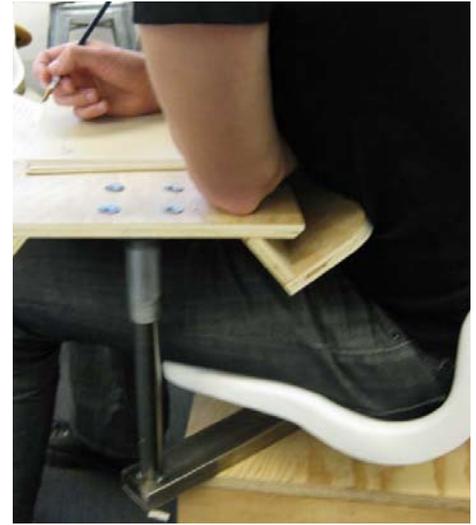


The design team collaborated with Steelcase to find and design the right platform for improving the classroom experience.

A key insight was that tablet-arm desks had remained unchanged for decades, while teaching styles and students needs were

changing dramatically, especially in the past decade. The reason to go to class, once to receive a lecture, are now many — collaboration, critique, small and large group activities now mix in with listening to the teacher lecture, with rapid changes between these modes.





As part of an iterative design process, the team built numerous full-scale product prototypes, invited students and instructors to test them out, and often swapped parts on the fly in response to feedback.

After the design team delivered a fully realized industrial design, Steelcase engineered its production on an accelerated schedule, so that the product's market arrival would coincide with schools' purchasing cycles.



The final product, dubbed the Node chair, has received praise for promoting student collaboration, allowing educators to reconfigure classrooms to fit different teaching styles, and enabling institutions to save money by making spaces more flexible and accommodating for varied uses.

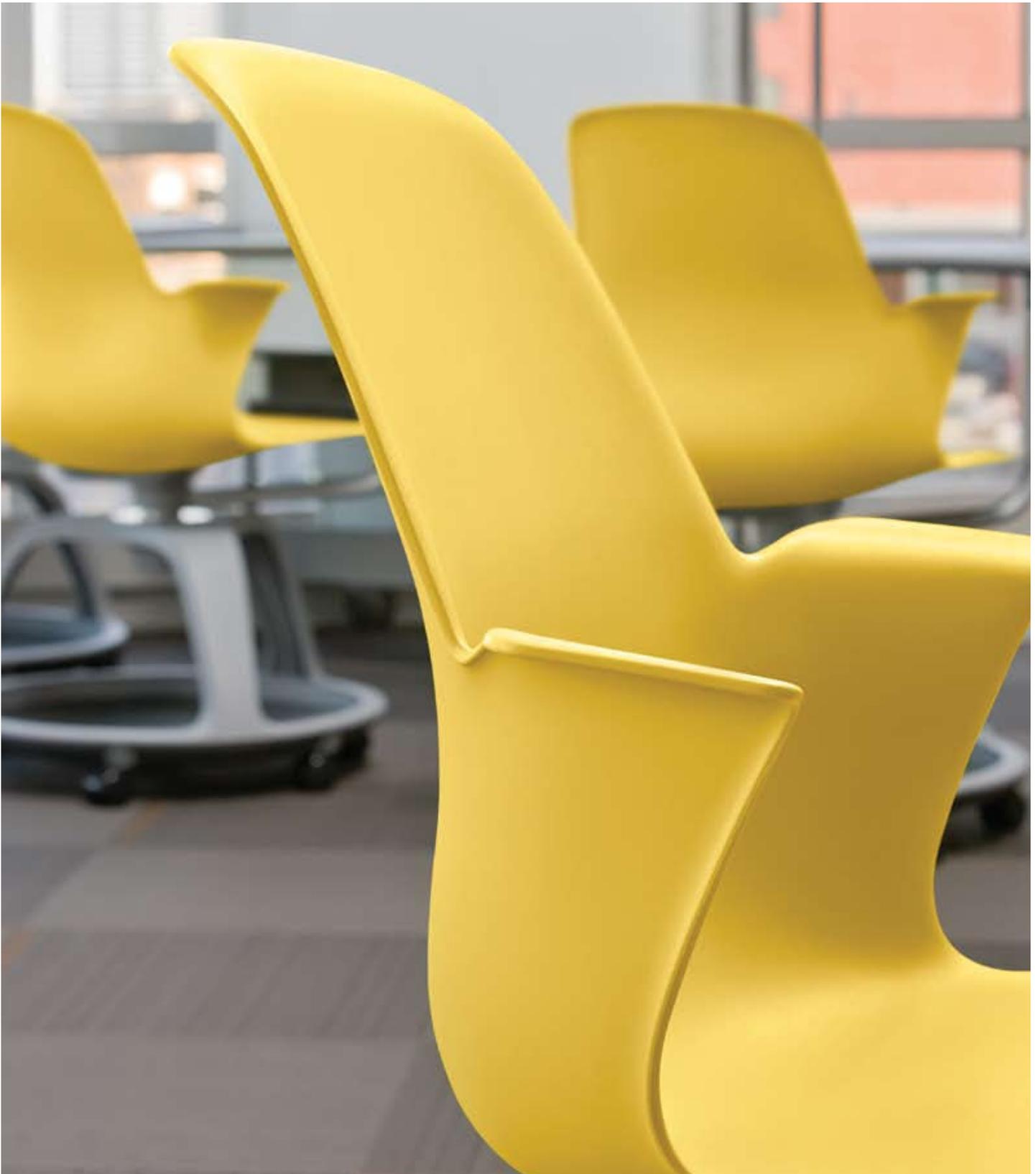




The Node chair's sleek, utilitarian design has received accolades.

"The details betray a remarkable thoughtfulness," Cliff Kuang wrote in an article for FastCompany. "The seat is a generously sized bucket, so that students can shift around and adapt their posture to whatever's going on; the seat also swivels, so that students can, for example, swing around to look at other students making class presentations; and a rolling base allows the chair to move quickly between lecture-based seating and group activities."





Steelcase unveiled the Node chair in June at the NeoCon 2010 World Trade Fair, where it won an Innovation Award. Prior to the chair's availability two months later,

Steelcase received nearly 5,000 pre-orders for it worldwide, at a price of \$599, or \$399 without tablet. Node subsequently won a Spark! Award for "superlative" design.