



OTTAWA-CARLETON  
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

# Combined Grades

The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board follows the philosophy of the Ministry of Education in recognizing the unique and special characteristics of every student. Our programs are designed to meet individual needs of students in a variety of organizational structures within schools.

As outlined in the Ministry of Education's resource document, *Combined Grades: Strategies to Reach a Range of Learners in Kindergarten to Grade 6 (2007)*, a class of combined grades is composed of students from two or more adjacent grades who are grouped with one teacher for instruction.

Combined classes are often created when the number of students does not allow for the establishment of appropriately sized, single-grade classes. In other circumstances combined classes are created to most effectively meet the learning needs, stages of development, and/or learning styles of students.

In all classrooms, whether single-grade or multi-grade, there is a range of students and the teacher's goal to meet the needs of all learners remains the same regardless of the classroom organization.

Within a class of combined grades each student works towards the achievement of their grade-specific curriculum expectations. When there are common concepts and/or skills across grades, students in the class often work together. When there are differences between the grades, students work on the concepts and/or skills specific to their grade. Assessment, evaluation, and reporting are grade specific.

Current research indicates that multi-grade classes foster social growth and independence, practice in cooperation, respect for others, and increased motivation to learn.

Older children act as models and guides for the younger children which gives the older children an increased sense of self-esteem and responsibility. Younger children adjust to school and routines more quickly by observing and imitating the older children. Both groups can learn from each other.

## You Can Help

Your understanding and support of school programs and initiatives will benefit your child. The more you learn about school programs and the more you become involved in supporting school initiatives the greater the benefit to your child. Your positive attitude and active involvement will create a climate of goodwill and nurture a constructive relationship between home and school. Contact your school for more information about combined grades.



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