



Spul'ukwuks Elementary School
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RICHMOND
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 38

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Mrs. Elaine Stapleton
Principal

Mrs. Jenny Slinn
Vice Principal

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UNDERSTANDING COMBINED CLASSES

We often find that the philosophy behind combined classes is unfamiliar to parents. Children who are placed in the upper grade of a combined class are not placed there because they struggle in school. For example, in a combined Gr. 4/5 class, we do our very best to ensure that for each grade, we have students who encompass a range of learning styles and abilities. We do not place all of our strongest Gr. 5 learners in a Gr. 5/6 when a Grade 4/5 classroom is also available.

Teachers are trained to provide instruction to diverse classes of students, looking at children as individuals, and providing for individual education plans, where warranted, for students who are faster or slower to develop. In this student-centered approach to teaching and learning, we recognize that not all students learn at the same rate and at the same time. Common topics explored in classrooms allow for a diverse range of students to learn at their own pace, while working toward learning outcomes specific for their grade.

Combined classes offer enhanced opportunities for all students to demonstrate confidence, positive self-concept, and a strong sense of belonging. Combined classes can help students form broader and more varied friendships, as older students provide role models for younger students. Sometimes the teacher/student relationship can be enhanced if the same teacher teaches a student for more than one year, leading to increased feelings of security for returning students and a smoother transition in September because the teacher already knows their learning styles and needs well. Teachers in combined classes, like those in straight grades, follow the curriculum requirements defined by the Ministry of Education.

You will find that over the course of your child's schooling, there are years they will be in the lower grade of a combined class and other years when they will be in the higher grade of a combined class. These are both valuable learning experiences and will benefit your child's development academically, emotionally and socially.

We always have the best interest of our students in mind, and work intentionally to provide the best class placement possible for each child.

