

**Students do not "lose" the time during the first few days of school in September.**

Staff and students spend time in important learning experiences including:

- Discussion and review of school-wide expectations and routines;
- Commence a review of academics subjects and skill areas; and
- Introduction of elements of the Personal Planning Program.

**Experience demonstrates** that once permanent classes are established, the vast majority of the placements work out well. Concerns that may seem enormous during the first few days of school usually disappear once classroom programs commence and relationships are established. Typically, by the end of the first day, students are talking confidently about "my class" and "my teacher." However, concerns persisting beyond the first two weeks of school, should be discussed with the classroom teacher.

**STUDENT PLACEMENT PROCEDURES**  
**Policies & Practices**

**RAFT RIVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
School District #73 (Kamloops-Thompson)

The placement of students for the coming school year is a thoughtful and complex process involving classroom teachers, learning assistance teachers, parents and the school administration.

The primary principle considered when placing students is to find:

*"The most suitable classroom placement where the student's academic program and social emotional needs are met in the most appropriate manner."*

Fortunately, experience proves that the vast majority of students quickly adapt to their new placement, become involved in classroom routines and relationships, and work towards creating a successful school year.

Planning for the coming school year begins in March when school enrollment projections from the Ministry of Education, the School District and the school are compiled and reviewed. Based on anticipated registration, the Superintendents' Office allocates a specific number of teachers to each school. This allocation is calculated by dividing the projected number of students by the contractual class size. In B.C. the government and the teachers' union negotiate the number of students who can be placed in each class. This agreement is legally binding on all parties involved in staffing a school.

Based on the most recent enrollment predictions, the Principal, in consultation with the staff, decides on the most sensible organizational plan for the students and the school. Once an organizational plan is adopted, teachers are assigned to each division and the process of forming classes begins.

A series of placement meetings involving the principal, learning assistance teacher, and the "receiving" and "sending" classroom teachers is scheduled in early June. At this time, students are assigned to each classroom division. During the placement meetings, staff consider many factors including: class size limits, special needs, student leadership, grade balance, male/female ratio, instructional grouping, behavior and work habit concerns, social relationships and input from parents.

Parent input related to the needs of their children is encouraged throughout the school year. Parents are asked to discuss any considerations for the coming year with their child's classroom teacher, and submit requests in writing to [mbowden@sd73.bc.ca](mailto:mbowden@sd73.bc.ca) or drop them at the office.

To be considered, such placement considerations will relate to the child's educational, medical or social needs and **will not include** requests for or to avoid a particular teacher. The school Principal has the responsibility under the School Act to assign students and staff.

Schools welcome students back to school in September in a variety of ways. Schools may choose to:

- Immediately enroll students in their new classroom divisions;
- Have students return to the previous year's classroom;
- Introduce school-wide activities and themes until classes are finalized;
- Establish temporary, multi-grade classes.

At Raft River Elementary School, students are assigned to family groupings until classes are confirmed. Students who are new to the school on opening day report to the office for registration. This allows time to determine the enrollment as accurately as possible and to keep any necessary adjustments to a minimum. When students are assigned to their new classes, we want to be as confident as possible that no further changes will be necessary.

Enrollment numbers sometimes change in September due to students moving into or away from the school neighborhood. This may result in minor changes to student classroom assignments. Occasionally, the movement of families into or away from the school neighborhood affects the school's organizational plan and a new plan must be completed in the first few weeks of September. At this time, it may be necessary to relocate teachers and/or reconfigure classroom divisions. Typically, however, the students moving in and out of the school do not affect the total enrollment but may affect the balance of pupils in a particular class or classes resulting in some movement of students between classes but not affecting in the entire organizational plan.

Multi-grade classes usually result from the necessity to conform to the provincial agreement between the teachers' union and the provincial government as well as staffing limitations related to financial constraints. Realistically, every classroom is a "multi-grade" class, as teachers must plan to accommodate a wide range of ages, abilities and achievement levels. For example, in a Grade 6 class, it is possible to have students reading between the Grade 2 and Grade 10 levels or above. In addition, there will likely be students who have exceptional needs in enrichment and/or remediation; students with social and emotional or behavioral needs; students who have a physical disability; and perhaps students where English is a second language. Every class may experience such diversity and the teacher must program according to the needs of all students in her/his charge.

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