

What effect will a combined class have on my child?

Academic Achievement:

Many studies have found that there are no significant achievement differences between combined classes and single-grade classes. In addition, some students in combined classes do better in oral and written language and in reading.

Social development:

Research shows that combined age groupings lead to more positive student attitudes and behaviour than single-age groupings. The many opportunities for emotional and social growth provide rich social environments which encourages students to:

- Work both independently and as part of a team
- Build leadership skills
- Develop decision making skills
- Become more self-motivated, self-confident and responsible



How can the teacher teach a combined class?

Teaching in combined classes require that teachers use a variety of different strategies as they would in single-grade classes. Every day teachers work with both large and small groups as well as individual students.

Combined classes offer the benefit of a broader support structure. There are many opportunities for reinforcing knowledge and positive social behaviors. This often leads to improved study habits, social interaction and co-operation skills.

How can I support my child in a combined class?

Parents can support their child in the same way that they would if they were in a single-grade class.

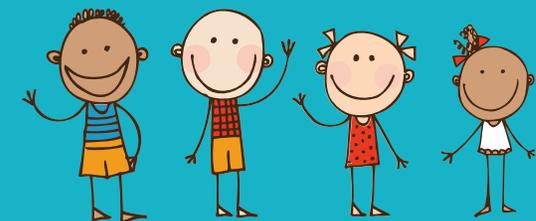
- Work with the teacher in supporting your child's learning
- Talk to your child about his or her day in school so that they can share with you the activities in which they are engaged
- Volunteer in the school
- Ask to see your child's work
- Show appreciation for good efforts

Let's talk about... Combined Classes



The Lester B. Pearson School Board provides varied learning experiences to meet students' diverse needs and allows for choices within a structured framework.

A number of schools in the Lester B. Pearson School Board offer combined classes in which students learn across two grades.



WHAT is a combined class?

A combined class includes more than one grade level and one age in the classroom. All classes, combined or single-grade, include students with a wide range of skills and abilities. The combined class offers a program which responds to both the needs of the individual and of the class. Whether a child is very talented, or one who requires extra support, each will be challenged to meet his/her potential equally as much in a combined class as in a single-grade class. Research shows that an age range of greater than one year provides a level of intellectual stimulation that supports the development of both intellectual and academic competence.



WHY do schools create combined classes?



There are several reasons why schools create these classes. When school staff look to organize their students, that is to place the students in their classes with teachers, they have to balance the educational needs of their students with the staffing they receive from the Ministry (Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur).

The Principal then constructs classes based on these factors and the educational interests of each student. In many instances, combined classes result.

What are the considerations for combined classes?

There are many considerations taken into account when principals and teachers group students into classes. Among others, these may include:

- Learning styles
- Social skills
- Academic abilities

In all classrooms, whether single-grade or combined, the range of student achievement level is broad. Schools are obligated to create classroom environments that support the needs of all students.

Combined classes offer environments that:

- Are responsive to individual and group needs
- Support individual learning styles
- Involve and engage all students in active learning

