

How are students chosen for combined classes?

Principals and staff consider a variety of factors when grouping children into classes, including:

- Learning styles
- Social skills
- Academic strengths and needs
- And many other factors



All classrooms, whether single-grade or combined, include students performing at a range of achievement levels.



In every case, HWDSB schools strive to create 21st century learning environments that support the needs of all of our students.

How can the teacher teach more than one grade at a time?

Teachers in HWDSB use many different strategies to teach students in combined grades. They may:

- Introduce a common topic then give each grade a different task or problem
- Organize students into flexible groups depending on student interests and skills
- Differentiate instruction based on students' individual strengths and needs

For more information contact:
Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
Tel: 905.527.5092
Fax: 905.524.2544
Website: www.hwdsb.on.ca



An Introduction to Combined Grades



www.hwdsb.on.ca

ALL STUDENTS ACHIEVING THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

COMBINED CLASSROOMS



Combined classes, or split grade classes, group children from two or more consecutive grades in one classroom. This type of classroom is very common on both a global and local scale. In Ontario, approximately 21% of classes fall into this category.

Schools combine classes for a variety of reasons. This includes organizing classes to meet student learning needs and combining grades to balance class size.

All classrooms include students with a range of skills and abilities. Combined classes are neither better nor worse than single-grade classes. They are simply one of the many ways schools meet students' academic and social development needs.



How will a combined class affect my child?

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Several studies have found that students in combined classes do just as well as students in single-grade classes. In fact, some students actually do better in language and reading.

IMPROVED SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Canadian studies show that children in combined classes have **more opportunities for emotional and social growth.**

The rich social environment helps students:

- Learn how to work on their own and as part of a team
- Build leadership abilities as they work together and help each other
- Develop decision-making skills, and become more self-motivated and responsible
- Learn in an environment that reflects the real world

The diverse ideas and opinions of classmates help expand students' perspectives.

Will my child get enough individual attention?

Every day, in both single-grade classes and combined grades, teachers work with large groups, small groups, and individual students.

But students in combined classrooms also benefit from a broader support structure. Younger children can ask students from the higher grade for help. Older students learn by explaining problems to their younger peers. In fact, peer tutoring can help higher achieving and older students reinforce their knowledge and positive social behaviours.

