

Classroom Placement Procedures

The Process

Annual classroom placement is carefully determined prior to the start of school for each student returning to Eagle Canyon Elementary. Placement is determined by the student's current teacher and grade level team of teachers. Newly enrolled students are added to the classes as they register, with classroom decisions based on whatever information is available from referring schools and parents and the need to balance class composition. In addition, the principal and the certificated personnel assist with placement.

Purpose

The primary purpose of the placement process is to create equitable classroom environments that allow teachers to meet academic, social and emotional needs of every student. The placement teams ensure a balance of variables in each classroom setting through careful consideration of each student's individual needs and strengths. These variables include, but are not limited to:

- Gender ratios
- Levels of academic progress and student needs
- Degrees of self-directness and independence
- Class size as it relates to state and district guidelines

Requests for specific teachers are discouraged, since it would be highly unlikely that the staff could successfully build the most productive, balanced class groups on the basis of parent requests (rather than the information and criteria previously outlined).

Combination Classrooms

As most of our community is aware, combination/multi-age classrooms (serving two grade levels) are a fact of schooling in most public elementary schools in California. Because students do not come to us in neat groups of 27 or 31, Eagle Canyon Elementary will most likely experience combination classes on an annual basis. When forming combination classes we assign students on the basis of their instructional strengths and learning styles. Such careful consideration contributes to students' academic and emotional success in the class. Students in each grade level receive rigorous instruction and support to in achieving and excelling in grade level standards. In a single grade level classroom, there are a variety of learners who may be grouped throughout the day based on their ability. Similarly, in a combination class, one group of students work on an independent task while another group receives direct instruction from the teacher.

Thoughts to Consider

Occasionally children are initially upset with their class placement at the beginning of school. It is not uncommon for a child to initially be perplexed if his/her new teacher is another than expected or unlike last year's teacher. Also, it is not uncommon for someone to hear that "so-and-so" is the only and best teacher to have in "such-and-such" grade. Sometimes, too, a student will initially feel his/her teacher is "too mean" or "too strict" or "too" something else. Fortunately, once given a chance to succeed at adapting to a new classroom and building a new student-teacher relationship, most parents discover that their child's placement is working well after all. Remember, placement was carefully selected for your child by the current teacher, principal and support personnel.

Finally, it is critically important for you to know that students' attitudes towards their teachers and school are highly influenced by the attitudes and strategies of their parents. **We can all provide our children with a successful beginning of the year experience by responding to their classroom assignments with positive enthusiasm.** Through confidence in our children's ability to deal with change, knowledge, cooperation, and trust, we can all work together to enhance personal development and the general school climate for all Eagle Canyon boys and girls.