

Combination (Multi-Grade) Classroom 2020-2021 FAQs

Below are some FAQs to help parents better understand the combination, or multi-grade, classroom organization:

Q: What is a combination, or multi-grade, class?

A: A combination class is a type of classroom organization plan in which students from consecutive grade levels are grouped in one class with one teacher. Combination classes may be formed at any grade level to meet the instructional needs of the students. They are also formed when enrollment in a school necessitates such an organization to keep classes approximately equal in size to meet students' needs and teachers who choose the AM/PM On-Campus and Virtual Learning Academy.

Q: How are students selected for a combination class?

A: When students are assigned to combination classes, special care is taken to consider:

- Individual needs
- Work habits
- Emotional/social development
- Instructional levels
- Parent Commitment on AM/PM or Virtual Learning Academy

Q: How are teachers selected to teach combination classes?

A: Teachers may volunteer to teach combination classes. Principals usually select teachers who:

- Work well with students representing varied ages or grade levels.
- Are familiar with the curriculum and standards at both grade levels
- Have skills in working with different types of instructional groups/levels
- Teachers who choose to teach On-Campus or Virtual Learning Academy

Q: How is the curriculum taught in a multi-grade class?

A: As in regular, single-graded classes, students attain the standards for each grade level as the teacher uses various instructional strategies:

- Flexible instructional groupings
- Team teaching
- Individualized instruction
- Independent study
- Use of instructional aides or volunteers
- Peer tutoring
- Cooperative learning settings
- Differentiated Instruction

Q: Is a combination class instructionally sound?

A: Research from the 1930s to the present has consistently indicated that students' achievement in multi-grade and multi-age settings is comparable to that of single-graded students.

Q: What benefits can a multi-graded classroom environment provide for my child?

A: A variety of benefits can be derived from the multi-grade environment:

- De-emphasis on age and competition
- Positive peer relationships between a wider age range
- Children have opportunities to seek their level of learning and social interaction.
- Students can learn to take more responsibility for their behavior and learning – independence is fostered.
- Teachers are likely to evaluate the needs of each student carefully.