

Combination Class Procedures

Formulating student classroom assignments at the beginning of the school year is a complex process. It involves the input of the school principal as well as the input of each child's classroom teacher who worked most closely with the children throughout the previous year. Many factors are considered as the teachers work together to develop educationally sound groupings for each classroom. Testing data is also considered so as to maintain the integrity and balance required for a good instructional environment in every class. During this important process, our professional staff carefully evaluates the social, academic, and emotional needs of every child which are also considered prior to assignment.

When new students enroll in our school, they are distributed based on class size. District policy set class size for grades TK-3 at 26 students while 36 students make up grades 4-6.

When a student is assigned to a combination class, the child will have the unique opportunity of enjoying an exciting year filled with a variety of learning experiences. Parents are often concerned and sometimes wonder why their child has been placed in a combination class. As detailed above, the staff and principal carefully consider each and every student prior to assignment in a combination class. Students are not randomly placed, because we want to make sure each child has a successful experience. We follow the following criteria when selecting students for combination classes: current Valley View students, independent workers who are self-motivated and express a positive attitude towards learning, and students who are above average academically in core subjects.

Guidelines of the Valley View Staff to Ensure Student Success in a Combination Class

1. When possible, staff will not place students in a combination class two years consecutively. However, due to our size and circumstances beyond our control, we cannot guarantee that students will not be in consecutive combo classes.
2. To the greatest extent possible so as to minimize social disruption, the staff will ensure that students in combination classes are on the same schedule for recess, lunch, and PE at the same time as their peers in their respective grade levels.
3. Assignment of student teachers, high school interns, and retired teachers when available, will be offered first to the teachers of combination classes.

Students in combination classes retain their respective grade-level assignments and maintain their grade-specific curricula. Teachers often choose grade level standards which overlap and create small groups to meet the needs of the individual students. GUSD has specific curriculum pacing plans and benchmark assessments, which hold all teachers accountable.

Valley View has an exceptional staff and all of our teachers have experience in combination classes throughout their careers. Also, all staff has been trained in differentiation of instruction, which supports all students. With experience, flexibility, and creativity, our teachers are capable of successfully teaching a dual-age class. Grade levels work together to support the combination teacher, which may include rotations in Science and/or Social Studies, field trips and special projects.

Your child's teacher will explain the logistics and challenges of the combination class as well as suggest ways for you to support your child at home to ensure a successful year of learning during Back to School Night.