



North Saanich Middle School

10400 McDonald Park Road,
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April 28, 2015

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Re: Student Class Placement for 2015-16

In the middle of May we will start building our classes for next year. At NSMS, every effort is made to place children in the best situation for their success.

Grade 5 students are placed in one of our nine multi-age grade 6/7 classrooms. With the Grade 5 teacher's valuable input, students are placed in a class that will best support their academic, social and emotional development. We try to pair them with a friend who enhances their learning. Additionally, placing them with a variety of new students from other schools will help facilitate new friendships.

Our general philosophy for our grade 6/7 multi-age classrooms is to keep our grade 6 students moving into grade 7 in the same class with the same teachers. We call this 'looping'. Current research and our experience with looping this year's grade 7's make it clear that grade 7 students are less anxious about coming back to school when returning to the same teacher and many of the same classmates. Furthermore, teachers are able to challenge these students earlier in the school year because they already understand their learning style and needs. Grade 7 students take on a positive leadership role in their classrooms because they are familiar with the class expectations and routines. Even more importantly, they have already established a relationship with their teacher.

In building placement for students going from grade 7 to 8, we balance the classrooms in order to create positive learning environments by placing students in a room where they will have a connection with their teachers as well as a couple of friends that they work well with. Historically, grade 8's have many opportunities to socialize and interact with their peers during the year therefore being separated from a few friends is often better for their academic development.

We are aware that there are some students who will need a change of classroom or might require special considerations for placement. The final placement decisions are the responsibility of the school, but we do take input from parents in two ways:

1. Parents can speak with their current teacher about their child. This is highly recommended because the current teachers make recommendations for placement.
2. Parents may fill in a Student Placement Information Form by **May 8, 2015** and return it to the North Saanich School office. This form can be downloaded on our website or picked up in the school office.

Thank you in advance for submitting any placement requests or concerns before we start placing students in classes.

Sincerely,
K. Russell
Principal

