



POLICY SECTION: SCHOOLS

SUB-SECTION:

POLICY NAME: **COMBINED (SPLIT) GRADE CLASSES
FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

POLICY NO: **S. 24**

Date Approved: October 24, 2013 – Board	Review Cycle: October 2016	Dates of Amendment:
---	--------------------------------------	----------------------------

Cross Reference:

- A.33 – Guidelines for Trustees, Parents and Staff in Addressing School Related Concerns*
- S.05 – School Organization Change*
- S.A.02 – Placement of Pupils*
- S.P. 13 - Student And Program Assessment*
- Collective Agreement between Toronto Catholic District School Board and Toronto Elementary Catholic Teachers of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers’ Association 2008/2012*
- Ministry Primary Class Size (PCS) Framework*
- Education Act S.265 (1) (e) Duties of a principal*
- Education Act, Ontario Regulation 132/12: Class Size*

Attachment(s):

Purpose:

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that all decisions regarding combined (split) grade classes within the Board are guided by professional standards, considering student and well-being and achievement.

Scope and Responsibility:

This Policy extends to all elementary schools within the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB). The Director of Education is responsible for this Policy.

Alignment with MYSP:

- Fostering Student Achievement and Well Being
- Providing Stewardship of Resources

Financial Impact:

There will be significant financial and facility impact on the TCDSB if the Board provided for only single grade classes within their elementary schools.



POLICY SECTION: SCHOOLS

SUB-SECTION:

**POLICY NAME: COMBINED (SPLIT) GRADE CLASSES
FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

POLICY NO: S. 24

Legal Impact:

The Toronto Catholic District School Board is obligated to meet all Ministry requirements in regards to class size. The board also has contractual obligations that restrict the number of students in any particular class.

Policy:

The Toronto Catholic District School Board promotes single grade classes where feasible. All combined (split) grade classes must meet Ministry and contractual guidelines in regards to total number of students assigned. When single grade classes cannot be achieved, the Principal shall adhere to the following regulations:

Regulations:

1. Consistent with the Education Act S.265 (1) (e), under *Duties of a principal (timetable)*, school principals are expected “to assign classes and subjects to teachers”.
2. There shall be no double split classes. This refers to regular classroom teachers who cannot be assigned to teach two combined (split) grade classes on their daily timetable. The Board will respect negotiated class sizes.
3. Assignment of students to individual classes is to be determined by a school team in June of the proceeding year. The team includes principal/vice principal, special education staff when necessary, in conjunction with the current and projected classroom teachers.
4. Principals will be responsible for the final assignments of all classes within the school. They will consider avoiding cross divisional splits when determining staff allocations as well as Ministry and contractual obligations.
5. Classes will be balanced and functional with consideration for the following:
 - Student academic needs, age, behaviour, development, gender, group dynamics, learning style, physical maturity, social-emotional and special education needs
 - The continuity of the curriculum in regards to the overall expectations
 - Students, wherever possible, will not be subject to combined (split) grade placement after two consecutive years
 - Number of students in each of the grades selected for a combined (split) grade class
6. Principals will be responsible for informing the local school parent community in June regarding the projected class assignments and the associated size of each class. A parent pamphlet outlining



POLICY SECTION: SCHOOLS

SUB-SECTION:

POLICY NAME: COMBINED (SPLIT) GRADE CLASSES FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

POLICY NO: S. 24

the procedures and policies related to combined (split) grades will be provided to those particular parents whose child is placed in a combine (split) grade. Principals will also present at the October Catholic School Advisory Committee meeting the final overall class organization for the school and the rationale for the assignment of students in various classes.

7. Parents shall be notified before a decision is made so that their input could be considered before any changes are made to a child's class placement.
8. The Board will ensure that it provides students with required materials, differentiated learning opportunities and adequate training for teachers with respect to combined (split) grade classes.

Definitions:

Combined (Split) Grade Classes

Combined (split) grade classes group students from two consecutive grades into one classroom.

Divisional Splits

Combined (split) grade classes that are created and cross over from primary to junior or junior to intermediate grades (i.e. Grade 3 / 4, Grade 6 / 7).

Metrics:

An annual information report on the number of combined (split) classes in TCDSB elementary schools shall be presented to the Board of Trustees. Staff will survey elementary principals in June to gather feedback regarding the implementation of the new policy and report back to the Student Achievement and Well Being Committee. A parent pamphlet outlining the procedures and policies related to combined grades will be created and shared with all school communities.