

8 Benefits of Multigrade Classrooms

- ✓ Research has shown there's no difference in academic achievement between children in multigrade classes versus straight grade/age classes.
- ✓ Students in multigrade classrooms are less competitive with one another and more cooperative.
- ✓ Students learn at different paces. Blended classes offer a wider range of curricula across two grade levels. Advanced students can be more easily challenged with higher-level material; struggling students can more easily return to earlier material.
- ✓ Younger students gain self-confidence and maturity by being exposed to older students; older students learn to be positive, mature role models for the younger students.
- ✓ Some children will benefit from having the same teacher over two years, as the teacher comes to know the students' abilities better. This is called "looping."
- ✓ Students in multigrade classrooms tend to take greater personal responsibility for their learning.
- ✓ There is greater peer-to-peer learning in multigrade classrooms.
- ✓ Students develop friendships across grade levels, and multigrade classrooms instill a greater sense of responsibility for one another and a strong sense of community.

(psychologytoday.com)

For more information

Contact your child's Principal or the Curriculum and Instruction Department.

Leah Wisdom, Director of Instruction
& Professional Learning

(785) 330-4743

lwisdom@usd497.org



Use the QR Code on the right to access more information about multigrade classrooms in Lawrence Public Schools.

Parent Guide to Multigrade Classrooms

2022-2023



"Education is not preparation for life;
education is life itself."

~John Dewey



What is multigrade learning?

- ❖ Classrooms where students learn and grow together across more than one grade level.
- ❖ A purposeful grouping of students of different age levels that forms learning communities.
- ❖ Teaching is based on developmental levels rather than age/grade.
- ❖ Students *could* remain with the same teacher for two years.
- ❖ Developmentally appropriate curriculum is implemented and delivered through effective instructional practices for each student regardless of their age or grade level.

*“Alone we can do so little;
together we can do so much.”*

-Helen Keller

Why multigrade in LPS?

Multigrade classrooms help to balance enrollment and class sizes. In its exploration of multiage, the district has identified additional benefits that support our mission, vision, and strategic plan.

Multigrade classrooms allow for more opportunities for our scholars to be connected with a larger variety of students. Our staff and scholars will collaborate in a variety of ways throughout the school year. Additionally, multiage classroom teachers have the opportunity to personalize learning experiences for each individual child.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do teachers balance the needs of students?

A: Just as teachers in single grade/age classrooms work hard to differentiate learning for students, teachers in multigrade classrooms do the same. Since the instruction is planned with a closer eye to the students' needs, personalizing learning experiences is actually easier in a multiage classroom than one would think. Learning is not limited by curriculum guidelines. Instruction is provided in whole class, small group, and individual groups as needed based on the learning concept/skill.

Q: What does training and preparation look like for teachers?

A: All teachers have early release time on Wednesdays, staff meetings and common planning together. In addition, staff is offered training opportunities throughout the year on district professional development days. Multigrade classroom teachers will be offered training and collaboration opportunities during the summer and will have access to personalized learning opportunities throughout the year from learning coaches.

Q: Are some classroom activities grade specific?

A: Yes, some activities may be grade specific. Depending on academic skills, there are times when students may receive instruction in grade-level groupings.

Q: How are standards and curriculum met for both grade levels?

A: All elementary schools use the scope and sequence and priority standards from the same curriculum resources. In multigrade classrooms, teachers design learning progressions of those standards to plan instruction. The district does not expect teachers to teach two different grade levels of curriculum resources on a regular basis.

Q: How are students assigned to multiage classrooms?

A: Principals and staff consider a variety of factors when grouping students into classes, including- learning styles, social skills, academic needs, and many other factors. All classrooms, whether single-grade or combined, include students performing at a range of achievement levels. In every case, schools strive to create a classroom environment that will support the needs of all students.

Effective Multigrade Classrooms:

- ✓ Allows students to work at their own skill levels, acquire the skills and resources to work independently, and take ownership of their learning.
- ✓ Enable students to learn to work together, developing confidence as they use one another as resources.
- ✓ Recognize students for their strengths in all areas of development.
- ✓ Encourage friendships across grade levels.
- ✓ Builds community and instills a sense of responsibility to care for one another.