



Edison Elementary School

Torrance Unified School District
3800 West 182nd Street
Torrance, California 90504
(310) 533-4513

June 17, 2009

Dear Edison Families,

I would like to take this opportunity to talk about student placement in combination classes now in the event your child is placed in a combination class next year. It is my intent to offer some insight and explanation into how combination classes are formed and what you can do to best prepare your child for a positive school experience while in the combination class setting. While most of you are considering your summer plans, the staff and I are already planning for the next school year. As we begin to look at the preliminary enrollment numbers, it is clear that we will be faced with creating combination classes at multiple grade levels.

Combination classes occur whenever two grade levels are co-mingled in a single class. The need for these classes arises with the tight financial budgets facing our schools. We are allocated staff according to the number of students at each grade level.

1 teacher per 24 students, grades K-3
1 teacher per 34 students, grades 4 & 5

What is important to know about combination classes is while we do co-mingle students and perhaps some of the curricular themes, we **do not** co-mingle standards. These students are instructed at their appropriate grade level and required to meet the same rigorous standards as set forth in the California State Content Standards as well as Edison's own benchmark goals.

It is also important to keep in mind that combination classes are neither a half-grade up for the younger students nor a half-grade down for the older students. It is simply students from two grade levels working with the same teacher. Combination classes, however, do offer unique opportunities for growth, fostering independence, problem solving, and teamwork among the students.

When selecting students for a combination class, we do our best to select students that will have the skills to succeed in this environment. Students, who are independent, take initiative, are self-motivated, and work well with others, are usually the ones who adapt easily to the environment in combination classes. Like all other classroom assignments, choosing these students is a delicate balance of considering both social and academic factors. Much time goes into the decision making process. I ask that you respect this when you view your child's assignment and by chance find that he/she has been selected for a combination class.

Most students are likely to experience a combination class sometime during their years at Edison. If you learn in September that your child has been assigned to a combination class, you can help by:

- **Approaching the assignment with a positive attitude – your child will follow your lead**
- **Observing your child’s performance the first two weeks of school before forming a judgment**
- **Scheduling a time to discuss your concerns with your child’s teacher**

As with any other classroom assignment, I will be available to discuss your concerns after the first two weeks of school. Keep in mind that both student and staffing assignments may change within the first couple of weeks. I ask that you be patient with the process as this is a busy and challenging time for all. We work very hard at trying to accommodate the needs of all students while maintaining our focus on high academic standards.

I hope that this information is helpful. I wish everyone a safe, restful, and rewarding summer and look forward to seeing you in September.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Erin Lahr
Principal