



**POLICY SECTION:**   SCHOOLS

**SUB-SECTION:**

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

**POLICY NO:**         **S.24**

**Date Approved:**  
October 24, 2013

**Date of Next Review:**  
October 2016

**Dates of Amendments:**

**Cross References:**

- 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~~ **September 1, 2014 – August 31, 2019**
- Ministry Primary Class Size (PCS) Framework
- Education Act S.265 (1) (e) Duties of a principal
- Education Act, Ontario Regulation 132/12: Class

**Appendix**

**Purpose:**

**There may be occasions due to enrollment pressures that combined (split) classes are required.** The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that all decisions regarding combined (split) grade classes within the Board are guided by **principles of equity and** professional standards, considering student ~~and~~ well-being and achievement.



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

**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 a total number of students assigned. When single grade classes cannot be achieved, the Principal shall adhere to the following regulations:



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SUB-SECTION:	
POLICY NAME:	COMBINED (SPLIT) GRADE CLASSES FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
POLICY NO:	S.24

### Regulations:

1. Consistent with the Education Act S.265 (1) (e), under the *Duties of a principal (timetable)*, school principals are expected “to assign classes and subjects to teachers.”
2. There shall be no double split classes. Double split classes refer 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~~ **preceding** year. The team includes principal/vice principal, special education staff, the current and projected classroom teachers, **program specialty, English as a Second Language (ESL) and French as a Second Language (FSL) teachers.**
4. Principals will be responsible for the final assignments **configuration** of all classes within the school. ~~They will consider~~ **Efforts will be made to minimize** cross-divisional splits **(see definition on page 5)** **where possible** when determining staff allocations as well as Ministry and contractual obligations.



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**POLICY NO:**         **S.24**

5. Classes will be balanced and functional with consideration for the following:
- Student academic needs, **number of students in each grade**, age, behaviour, development, ~~gender, group dynamics~~ **number of boys and girls in the class, social skills of the students (e.g., ability to cooperate or take the initiative), students' strengths (e.g., degree of independence, ability in problem-solving)**, 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~~ **for** 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~~ **Information** outlining the procedures and policies related to combined (split) grades will be provided **in a timely fashion** to those particular parents whose child is placed in a combined (split) grade. Principals will also present at the



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**POLICY NO: S.24**

October ~~Catholic School Advisory Committee~~ **School Parent Council** 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 **initial** class placement.
8. The Board will ensure that it provides students with required materials, differentiated learning opportunities and adequate training for teachers concerning 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).



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**Evaluation and Metrics:**

The effectiveness of the policy will be determined by measuring the following:

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.