



# Ocean Cliff Elementary School

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September 12, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

It was wonderful to see our Ocean Cliff students and families back to school last week. We thank you for your patience as much of the week was spent restructuring our classes and awaiting district approval for our new organization. At the end of last school year, we had expected Ocean Cliff to be organized with 15 divisions but due to families moving away, our numbers have decreased and we have had to reconfigure the school with 14 divisions.

On Monday students will find out who their teacher is for this school year. Each year we have a few students who find this day difficult. Please help your child understand that changes and new circumstances take time to get used to. We encourage our students to keep an open mind to their new groupings and teacher, to realize that it takes time to get to know each other and to get used to a new group. Students take their cues from adults around them. If the adults in their lives focus on the positives surrounding the change, keep an open mind and focus on the learning and activities that will take place, this helps students keep an open mind, stay positive and be open to new experiences.

Tomorrow (Monday) morning students will return to the same grade group meeting place as last week. Teachers will dismiss students from this same area in the afternoon for pick up.

On Tuesday morning parents can drop off their child(ren) by the classroom door or as you would usually drop off your child(ren).

Students will need the following items with them on Monday:

- Backpack
- Snack
- Lunch
- Water bottle

School Supplies – please wait to hear from your child's new classroom teacher about school supplies and when they should come to school. Please make sure all supplies are labelled with your child's name.

A friendly reminder to all our grade 4-7 students to bring/wear a mask indoors. You did a great job wearing your masks this week! We encourage our K-3 students to wear a mask indoors.

## **Class Organization Information**

We have reviewed our lists many, many times. Please know that much thought, consideration and time has gone into trying to accommodate so many different facets of student learning and groupings. We always strive to find the best placement for each child.

As students settle into their new classrooms, we are often asked how decisions are made regarding the organization of classes. We consider each child's placement carefully based on the following criteria:

- Student intellectual, social and emotional development
- Learning styles and strengths of students
- Degree of independence in student work habits
- Integration of special needs students
- Separating students who do not work well together
- Adhering to class size limits

Placement of students in classes is a very time-consuming process and much thought, time and effort goes into these decisions. Ultimately, we work on placing students in the best learning environment to suit their specific needs. This process is determined through school-based professional decisions and through a collaborative process between past and present teachers. Teachers have the knowledge of the academic and social emotion needs of children, and therefore can best determine where individual children should be placed. Teachers are well aware of the needs of our students and will make class placements accordingly and we feel confident that your child will be placed appropriately.

As we set classes each year, we find that due to the way enrolment numbers fall into place, we must create combined classes. Parents often have questions or concerns regarding their child being in a combined class. Please read the attached pdf. that highlights some important details regarding combined classes. You may also wish to check out a thoughtful blog post written by Chris Wejr on combined classes (<http://chriswejr.com/2012/09/09/will-my-child-be-ok-in-a-split-class/>).

Most children are excited about being in a new class! However, some children may feel anxious about their placement. Generally, our experience is that children easily adjust within the first few days. If your child is finding the change difficult, please let them know it is typical to feel anxious in new situations, but that soon their new classroom will feel like home!

Thanks for your support with this process and for helping us begin another wonderful year together at Ocean Cliff!