

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON CLASS PLACEMENT

What is the goal of placement?

The goal is to create classrooms at each grade level where student personalities and academic strengths and needs are well balanced and well matched to the teacher, providing a heterogeneous mix of students.

Who is involved in the placement process?

This is truly a collaborative effort. We achieve the best result when parents, teachers, the school counselor, and the principal/assistant principal are involved. Each role is slightly different.

What is the parents' role in this process?

Children are often very different at home than in school. Parents are invited to share information about their child's strengths and challenges with their child's current classroom teacher, school counselor and/or administration. **Please share this information in writing by June 1. Note, this is optional.**

Will my child be placed with some familiar students?

We make every effort to place children with at least one student from their previous class. If you would like to suggest which students would or would not be a good match for your child, include that in an email or letter to the building principal (fisherm@kinnelon.org or mulhollandj@kinnelon.org). Please be aware that by requesting which child(ren) you would like in the same class as your child, this is ultimately requesting placement for the other child. Please understand the complexity of this task will not make it possible to meet all such requests.

Is it okay to request a specific teacher?

No, we ask that you not request a specific teacher. We know there are many parents who want to select a specific teacher. Unfortunately, if we were to form classes based on parent selection we would be unable to achieve our goal of balanced classes. It is important to utilize the expertise of our staff and their knowledge of all students when making class placements.

What if we had a very positive experience with a particular teacher?

It's hard for parents to know for sure which teacher will be the best match for their child since parents don't have the opportunity to truly know each teacher in a thorough, first-hand manner. Sometimes a successful teacher pairing for an older sibling may not work as well for the younger sibling. Additionally, experiences other parents have had with a particular teacher may not be a good indicator of how you or your child would interact with that teacher. Personalities and chemistry are so variable that it is difficult to judge from someone else's experience.

What if we feel a particular teacher will not be a good match, is it alright to say so?

Yes. If you have had prior experience with a teacher that was not positive or if you wish each child in your family to have a different teacher, we welcome that information as long as you indicate the reason for your request.

Will my child learn the same things in each classroom at the grade level?

Our curriculum and teaching methods are based on the same grade level standards. The vast majority of what children learn will be the same regardless of which teacher the child has. Teachers at each grade level plan together, discuss student needs and coordinate their programs frequently. However, all students and teachers clearly have their own personalities, interests, and strengths. Their classrooms will reflect this, but it is *in addition* to our district curriculum not in place of it.

Who actually makes the decision?

The faculty and the building administrators are all involved in this decision. Staff members included are the school counselor, specialists, special education teachers, learning consultant, school psychologist, and school nurse. The final decision rests with the principal.

When will we find out who our child's teacher will be?

Parents are typically notified of all student placements in late August. New students move into the district over the summer and we need to hold off on final decisions so that we can include these students in the process.

What should I do if I strongly feel the selected teacher does not match the criteria I requested?

Generally, we have found that our process works quite well and most families are pleased with their child's placement. Very rarely has a change been made once placements are released; even one change in placement can significantly affect the overall class balance. Please do not share your concerns with your child. We have learned that it is best to start the year with a positive outlook. If you feel it is important to discuss your concern, kindly contact the school via email or phone.