

# ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION

No. 202

## Board of Trustees Douglas County School District

## PROGRAM

### COMBINATION CLASSES Grades Kindergarten - Six

#### DEFINITION

A combination class is a self-contained classroom at the elementary school level, which includes students from more than one grade level. A major advantage of utilizing combination classes is to gain better class size balance.

#### STUDENT PLACEMENT AND CLASS SIZE

Students assigned to combination classes should possess at least average achievement and be rather self-directive in nature. Care should be taken to assure that non-combination classes also have positive student role models.

Combination class size should be consistent with or smaller than the size of other classes in the school. Whenever possible, the number of students from each grade level should be approximately equal. Care should be taken to prevent students from repeating social studies and science units if they remain in a combination class for more than one year.

#### INSTRUCTION

The actual range of achievement in a combination class should be less than is found in the typical heterogeneously formed elementary classroom. With all students from each grade level involved being essentially on their grade level in both reading and mathematics, the class will not have the extremes in achievement found in the typical class.

It should be possible for teachers of combination classes to need only two groups in reading and two in mathematics. Each group should be a group of students on or above grade level, if the students have been carefully selected for placement in the combination classes as described above.

Curriculum in all other subject areas should be "common" or "neutral" units whenever possible in order to avoid duplication of study and to maintain a "one-class" atmosphere. To assist the teacher with these units, the following practices are recommended:

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- A. Total support and assistance from the building administrator in providing direction, materials and consistent scheduling practices.
- B. Cooperation and flexibility from support staff (music, library, etc.) in assisting combination classroom teachers.

### STAFFING

Care should be taken in the selection of teachers for combination classes. The individual should have a positive attitude regarding the class and be able to work effectively with the more able and high achieving student. Preferably, teachers with experience at both grade levels should be selected for the combination class and, whenever possible, experienced teachers should be placed in a combination class.

### COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

It is imperative that school personnel communicate to parents the many positive aspects of a combination class. Parents of students selected for combination classes should be notified in advance of the placement, and an opportunity for conferencing should be provided prior to the new school term.

Following are some examples of advantages for students selected for a combination class:

- A. Smaller numbers of students for all classes is the primary advantage.
- B. The total class is composed of self-directing students, which oftentimes is very stimulating and motivating for students as a group.
- C. In the areas of science and social studies, this type of grouping tends to move through material more rapidly and in greater depth than a regular class.
- D. Fewer severe discipline problems exist during class time.
- E. Fewer physical interruptions as students in these classes will not leave for special "pull-out" programs (i.e., remedial reading, special education, etc.)
- F. Because of the student selection criteria, there tends to be less class "turnover" during the school year.

See Policy related to this Administrative Regulation

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