

September 2025 Newsletter

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Split Grade Classrooms

Some students have been placed in split-grade classrooms this year. Please be assured that your child's learning will be thoughtfully supported, and instruction will be tailored to meet them at their individual stage of development.

It is important to note that being either the older or younger student within a split-grade class does not present a disadvantage. Educational practices have evolved significantly. In the past, instruction was primarily based on textbooks and grade-specific materials. Today, teaching is guided by research-based approaches that emphasize social-emotional development, communication skills, and creative thinking. This modern approach ensures that all students receive a rich and well-rounded educational experience, regardless of grade configuration.

Multi-Grade or Combined Classes and the BC Curriculum
Research has found that students in multi-grade or combined classrooms perform as well as students in single-grade classrooms.
In the past, classroom instruction focused on grade-specific content and skills. Instruction was supported by grade-specific textbooks and resources.
Today education is changing. Research is guiding us to look at the importance of basic competencies (communication, critical and creative thinking, and social/emotional skills) and less focus on grade-level content.
Textbooks are being replaced by a multitude of resources including access to information through technology.

How You Can Support Your Child
Support your child in the same way you would if your child were in a single-grade class by staying interested and concerned about school work and activities. Monitor your child's homework and maintain communication with the teacher.

Conclusion
Education is changing with new challenges and opportunities facing students, parents, teachers and districts. The focus is on providing opportunities for students that help them set personal goals that emphasize student individualized needs. This is characteristic of 21st Century Learning teaching practices and is easily attained in a combined-class. The latest research and best practice supports the use of multi-grade or combined classes.

Your Child and Their Multi-Grade Classroom

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What is a Multi-Grade or Combined Class?

A multi-grade or combined class is one that includes students from two or more consecutive grades that work in one classroom setting. A single grade class may have students with a similar range of abilities. Both include a variety of instructional groupings and combinations, depending on the students, the learning objectives, and the resources available.

It is important to know that students in multi-grade or combined classes are not held back to the level of the younger children for age or children in the lower grade expected to do work beyond their abilities. The learning outcomes are age appropriate for all students whether or not they are in a multi-grade or combined class. Why do we have multi-grade or combined classes?

Multi-grade or combined classes may be the result of school demographics. Often these classes are created as a result of an imbalance in the number of students enrolled in each grade. They are a way for schools to utilize their staff more effectively to meet student needs. Class size and composition is a factor in balancing the educational needs of students.

How is the Decision Made for Placement in a Multi-Grade or Combined Class?

Criteria such as age, range of ability, special learning needs, gender, social groupings, and staff recommendations are used to make decisions on the appropriate placement of students in both combined and non-combined classes. Teachers, principals, vice principals and Learning Assistants/resources teachers work together to create appropriate classrooms based on learning styles and needs of the students. A combined class, like most modern classrooms includes a variety of instructional groupings and combinations depending on the students, the learning objectives and the resources available.

Today's Learner

...we need an education system that better engages students in their own learning and that fosters the skills and competencies they will need to succeed. The focus for this transformation is the movement to increasingly personalized learning, which is enabled and supported by quality teaching and learning flexibility and choice, and high standards.

BC Education Plan
(www.bceducation.ca)

Today's learners are entering school at a variety of skill levels. Every classroom, regardless of the grade structure (single grade or multi-grade), has a wide range of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Today's Classroom

Accommodating the BC Curriculum allows including multi-grade or combined classes are flexible and responsive to individual needs. Independent learning is recognized and supported. Students learn to take ownership of their own learning and to work with others. Students are actively involved and engaged with all students within their classroom. Students feel a sense of belonging, allowing them to gain confidence in their learning.

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day are on Saturday, September 30th. As school is not in session that day, we ask all staff and students to wear their orange shirts to school on Monday, September 29th.

Orange Shirt Day is a legacy of the St. Joseph Mission (SJM) residential school commemoration event held in Williams Lake, BC, Canada in the spring of 2013. It grew out of Phyllis' story¹ of having her shiny new orange shirt taken away on her first day of school at the Mission, and it has become an opportunity to keep the discussion on all aspects of residential schools happening annually. The date was chosen because it is the time of year in which children were taken from their homes to residential schools, and because it is an opportunity to set the stage for anti-racism and anti-bullying policies for the coming school year. It also gives teachers time to plan events that will include children, as we want to ensure that we are passing the story and learning on to the next generations. Orange Shirt Day is also an opportunity for First Nations, local governments, schools, and communities to come together in the spirit of reconciliation and hope for generations of children to come. For more information and to watch Phyllis's and other stories go to <http://www.orangeshirtday.org>²

¹<http://www.orangeshirtday.org/phyllis-story.html>

²<http://www.orangeshirtday.org/>

Code of Conducts



Please review the following, with your child,

- *Student Code of Conduct*³
 - *Dress Code*⁴
 - *Technology: Student Acceptable Use*⁵
 - *Bus Code of Conduct*⁶
 - *Personal Digital Device Policy*⁷
 - *Letter of Fair Notice For Parents and Students 2025-2026*⁸
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³<https://bcsd73.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/93823/?preview=102797>

⁴<https://bcsd73.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/93823/?preview=94006>

⁵<https://bcsd73.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/93823/?preview=94005>

⁶<https://bcsd73.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/93823/?preview=94009>

⁷<https://ralph-bell.sd73.bc.ca/en/our-schools-programs/resources/PDDG/Personal-Digital-Device.pdf>

⁸https://www.sd73.bc.ca/en/our-district-board/resources/Privacy_Policy_and_Support/Letter-of-Fair-Notice-For-Parents-and-Students-2025-2026.pdf

Terry Fox Run



Our school Terry Fox run/walk is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 18th 1:30pm. We will be going for a short run through the neighbourhood (Gr. 4-7) and K-3 on the field. If you can help guide students that day, please contact the office (Criminal Record checks must be completed) or Mrs. Vicars. Any donations for the Terry Fox Foundation between Sept. 10th – Sept. 19th would be greatly appreciated. Your child can bring in a "Toonie for Terry". Together, we can help keep Terry's dream alive and win the battle against cancer.

We also have been chosen to have a special visitor to come and talk with our students. The Terry Fox Foundation are sending Terry Fox's brother, Fred Fox, to our school on Sept. 11. We are so honoured to have this opportunity. Thank you to the Terry Fox Foundation for picking our school!

Breakfast Program

Breakfast items will be available for any student that needs breakfast or needs more food once they have arrived. If you would like your child attend the breakfast program every morning, please fill out this survey⁹. One survey per student. We will do our best to accommodate food allergies, but we can not guarantee.

If students want to have breakfast, they will come to the front doors anytime after 8:15 and head to the PAC kitchen.

Breakfast will begin today, Sept. 9.

School Supplies



Today we sent home the School Supply Form. School supplies can be purchase from the school. We recommend all students to purchase school supplies through the school. The school supplies can be paid on-line (through School Cash) or by sending cash or cheque to the school.

If sending cash or cheque, please have one form per child.

⁹https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf7xHFoAQT9_BHPpCzilh45TVOQ1EjuuH1wAe32c9f9iYVj4A/viewform?usp=dialog

School Sports



*Last week and this week, students in **Grade 3-7** are welcome to sign up to the Cross Country Team. One of our parents, Mrs. Leslie Thomson will be coaching the team. Practices will be at lunch and races are once a week after school. Schedule will be given to interested students.*

*Volleyball sign-up for **grades 4-7** will be near the end of September. If you are interested in coaching, please contact the office or Mrs. Grimm (agrimm@sd73.bc.ca¹⁰).*

Volunteering/Criminal Record Checks¹¹



*Volunteering in schools in School District #73 requires a criminal record check. **Volunteering includes**, but not limited to, driving students to field trips or sports events, attending field trips, helping in classrooms, helping at PAC events. Any adult interacting with students during school organized activities **MUST** have a criminal record check.*

¹⁰<https://agrimm@sd73.bc.ca>

¹¹<https://ralph-bell.sd73.bc.ca/en/parents-students-support-help/criminalrecords.aspx>

*Criminal Record checks last for 5 years; however, School District #73 requires a **new one every three years.***

To fill out a criminal record check or to renew your criminal record check, click [here](#)¹². This link can also be found on our school website, under Parents and Students.

End of Day Plans

Before your child arrives at school, please ensure your child knows how they are getting home (i.e. daycare, someone picking them up, taking the bus, etc.). The agenda is a great place to include this information. This is very helpful for our after-school bus supervisors.

If students walk or ride bikes home and want to play on the playground after school, they will need to go home first and check in. They are welcome to return to play on the playground. The adult supervision after school is for bus students only.

Parent Advisory Council



Welcome to our new council members:

Alexa McMillan - co-chair

¹²<https://ralph-bell.sd73.bc.ca/en/parents-students-support-help/criminalrecords.aspx>

Kelsey Kurzac - Vice Chair

Keira Fraser - Social Media

Not filled - District PAC representative

Returning members:

Lindsay Posteraro - Co-Chair

Nikki Rowe - Secretary

Tiffany Christianson - Treasurer

All parents of Ralph Bell Elementary students are welcome to attend our school PAC meetings as well as be a member of the committee. Our PAC has been very generous in purchasing a variety of items for our school.

*The first PAC meeting will be held in the Ralph Bell library on **Sept. 16, 2025 at 6:00pm**. Childcare is available. The PAC Facebook page has a lot of information for parents as well – Ralph Bell Elementary PAC.¹³ Any questions, email ralphbellpac@gmail.com*

Mug and Muffin - Parents

We would like to invite our parents to come on October 10 at 8:30-9:00 for our Mug and Muffin. It is a time to meet and connect with other Ralph Bell parents. Bring your mug and enjoy a muffin and conversation with others.

¹³<https://www.facebook.com/groups/646472643192990>

Ralph Bell Spirit Wear

Thank you to Mrs. Vicars for organizing our school spirit wear again this year. We have many new items available for purchase. We encourage students to wear their Ralph Bell gear on Fridays.

Spirit Wear - Students and Adults¹⁴

Other Important Information



ABSENCES/LATES

*If your child is going to be absent or late, you will need to contact the **Safe Arrival line**. The system logs the absences/lates for our attendance system. Parents will need to report the student absences before 8:15 on the day, otherwise the system will call you to report that your child is absent. **Parents will contact the system by:***

- *calling the toll free # 1-844-350-264*
- *visit: <https://go.schoolmessenger.ca/>*

¹⁴<https://rbestudents25-26.itemorder.com/>

- *Smart phone app (iOS and Android version; both available for free) - download from iTunes or Google Play*
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*A **registration email** will be sent to parents in advance. These emails are not spam and will contain specific parent login information for the system as well as instructions on how to log in as a parent to report your child's absences.*

Directions

Once connected to Safe Arrival

- *please choose the reason for your child's absence from school: sick, appointment, family vacation, etc.*
 - *Wait for confirmation number to ensure your child's absence has been recorded.*
 - *Absences can be booked in advance and for consecutive days, if needed.*
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PARENT PORTAL

The MyED BC Parent Portal was activated on Aug. 31, 2025, for all parents in the district that had an account last year. Parents/Guardians new to the school district will have their MyED BC parent portal accounts created on September 15.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Munch-a-Lunch – Sept. 9**
- **Fred Fox - Sept. 11 - 11:00**
- **PAC Meeting – Sept. 16 @ 6:00pm**

- *Terry Fox Run - Sept. 18 @ 1:30*
 - *Photo Day (all students) – Sept. 19*
 - *Inservice Day – Sept. 22 (no school)*
 - *National Day for Truth and Reconciliation – Sept. 30 (no school)*
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FORMS AND PERMISSIONS

The following forms will be sent home later this week. They require a parent/caregiver signature. Please ensure these forms are returned to the office as soon as possible:

- **Personal Information** - *Allows SD#73 to collect, keep, use, and share photos, videos, images and/or names on school or district website.*
 - **Outside Media** - *Allows media (including radio, television, newspapers, and other print) that visit the school to take pictures or interview students. See form for more details.*
 - **Electronic Use Agreement** - *Allows student to use district technology resources.*
 - **Web access and Cloud Storage** – *allows students to receive a Google Apps for Education account (gedu).*
 - **School Supply Order** – *can be paid on School Cash.*
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****Please note some students will NOT receive all the forms. Some forms need to be signed every year; other forms only need to be signed once. If we have a signed copy on file, it will not be included in this year's package. You may review all signed forms on file anytime at the office.**

ADDITIONAL FORMS

Additional forms that may be required can be obtained at the office. These might include:

- ***Medical Alert/Medication*** - Please ensure that you inform the office if your child has a serious health condition or requires medication during school hours. This needs to be updated every year.
 - ***Indigenous Programs and Services*** - Only sent home with students who have self-identified as being of Indigenous ancestry.
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UPCOMING DATES

- *September 18 - Terry Fox Run*
 - *September 19 - Photo Day*
 - *September 22 - No school - Inservice Day*
 - *September 29 - Orange Shirt Day*
 - *September 30 - National Day of Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day - no school*
 - *October 6 - National Bobcat Day*
 - *October 10 - Mug and Muffin for all parents*
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Community Information

- **Play Forever Youth Basketball and Leadership Camp** - In partnership with TRU and the BGC Club of Kamloops, Canadian charity, Play Forever¹⁵ is offering a fall youth basketball and leadership camp for Grades 6-9. Information to register can be found here¹⁶.
 - **Parent Engagement Session (SD73)** - September 17th @ 6-7pm - Topic:CBIEP'S, Partnering for Success: Understanding the Education System and Your Role as a Parent - at Henry Grube Education Centre - 245 Kitchner Cres.
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RALPH BELL WEBSITE¹⁷



RALPH BELL
ELEMENTARY

¹⁵<https://www.playforever.ca/>

¹⁶<https://gowolfpack.ca/sports/2025/8/12/play-forever.aspx>

¹⁷<https://ralph-bell.sd73.bc.ca/en/index.aspx>