

**2013-2014**

# **Handbook**



**École Margaret Jenkins School**

*EMJS: Safe, caring and where learning flourishes*



## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Margaret Jenkins Parents and Guardians:

Welcome to a new year at École Margaret Jenkins School. We have a vibrant and caring school community that supports our focus of providing strong academic programs enriched with opportunities to learn through the arts and athletic endeavors. Our main school goal is to improve students' abilities to be self-regulated learners and citizens. We are also working to create students who are aware of their community and respond to the needs of others. I feel honoured to work with the school community in preparing our students for the future.

We have a tremendously active parent group at our school and the School Planning Council is working hard to provide students, staff and parents with meaningful opportunities to be involved in the development and attainment of our school goal. You will also see many parents volunteering in our school and our PAC works hard to support all students in the school.

Our handbook is designed to give you information about our school. I hope you find it helpful throughout a great year here at Margaret Jenkins!

Yours truly,  
Mrs. Barb Hardy, Principal

## Our History



opened across from the Annex to accommodate the waves of immigrants fleeing the war in Europe. The school, eventually bursting at the seams with the baby boom generation, was enlarged with a wing of classrooms and offices in 1957, and new auditorium in 1965, and a new library in 1973 and, most recently, the gymnasium was seismically upgraded in 2002 and the attic and Brick Annex in 2004. In 1990 some Margaret Jenkins School alumni returned to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the main building and a time capsule was created to be opened in another 75 years. In 2007 we began the next phase of our school's life, when changed from a K-7 school to a K-5 school.

Margaret Jenkins herself would have been proud of the school improvements made with our \$8 million Seismic Upgrade Project in 2009. The school has a tremendous spirit which continues year after year.

## ÉCOLE MARGARET JENKINS SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to create a **safe and caring environment** where **learning will flourish**.

### ÉMJS 2012-2013 STAFF

**Principal/Directrice:** Barb Hardy

**Vice Principal/Directrice-adjointe:** Laurie Cairns

#### **Teaching Staff:**

<b>Division</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Div 1	Mr. Markin	4/5
Div 2	Mr. Toileikis	4/5
Div 3	Mr. Pite	4/5
<b>Div 4</b>	<b>Mme Cairns</b>	<b>4/5</b>
<b>Div 5</b>	<b>Mme Gabaglia</b>	<b>4/5</b>
Div 6	Mrs. Wakelin/Ms. Nicolson	3/4
<b>Div 7</b>	<b>Mme Thérèse</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Div 8</b>	<b>Mme Caplette</b>	<b>3</b>
Div 9	Mrs. Strong	2/3
<b>Div 10</b>	<b>Mme Alloway/Hunt</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Div 11</b>	<b>Mme Goulet</b>	<b>1/2</b>
Div 12	Mrs. Crawford	1/2
<b>Div 13</b>	<b>Mme Angèle</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Div 14</b>	<b>Mme Callin</b>	<b>1</b>
Div 15	Mrs. Beattie	K/1
Div 16	Mrs. Phillips	K
<b>Div 17</b>	<b>Mme Freiberger</b>	<b>K</b>
<b>Div 18</b>	<b>Mme Creese</b>	<b>K</b>

Ms. Nicolson – Learning Support  
Mme Lambert – F.I. Learning Support  
Mrs. Christine Selder – School Counsellor  
Miss Maddern – Librarian  
Mr. John Riches – School Technologist  
Mme Lambert – Computer Teacher  
Mrs. Clifford – Music  
Mrs. Eadie – Strings

#### **Community Support Team:**

Const. Chris – Police Liaison  
Leslie Bellas – School Nurse  
Britney Slade – Out of School Care



#### **District Support Team:**

Julia Oland – Occupational Therapist  
Martha Morrison – Speech & Language Pathologist  
Lisa Armitage – Educational Psychologist – Psychometric Testing  
Jason Craig – Physical Therapist

\* **French Immersion classes are in bold**

#### **Custodial Staff:**

Paul Knapik, Daytime Custodian; Mark Harrison, Evening Custodian; Brenda, Evening Custodian, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

**Support Staff:** School Administrative Assistant, Jessica Clark; School Assistant, Anna Moniz

**Educational Assistants:** Lorna Belcourt, Laureen Belland, Aline Boulet, Gabrielle Broder, Julia Layzell, Jocelan Scott, Andrea Skakun, and Robyn Winterbourne

**Student Supervisors:** Lorna Belcourt, Aline Boulet, Galen Davison, Tammy DeMings, Carol Jenkins, Andrea Skakun, and Robynn Wagorn

**Crossing Guard:** Riga Nason

## How to Contact Us:

### École Margaret Jenkins School

1824 Fairfield Rd.  
Victoria, B.C.  
V8S 1G8  
Tel. 250-598-5191/Fax 250-598-0044

Website: [www.sd61.bc.ca/school/MargaretJenkins](http://www.sd61.bc.ca/school/MargaretJenkins)

**Email Addresses:** Mrs. Barb Hardy – [bhardy@sd61.bc.ca](mailto:bhardy@sd61.bc.ca)  
Mme Laurie Cairns – [lcairns@sd61.bc.ca](mailto:lcairns@sd61.bc.ca)  
Mrs. Jessica Clark – [jclark@sd61.bc.ca](mailto:jclark@sd61.bc.ca)  
Anna Moniz – [amoniz@sd61.bc.ca](mailto:amoniz@sd61.bc.ca)

**Parent Call Back Program: 250-598-7151**

Call this number if your child is going to be absent or late.

## École Margaret Jenkins School Hours

**Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday**

8:40 a.m. – 2:51 p.m.

**Recess 10:12 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. (10:32 am on Mondays)**

**Lunch 11:49 p.m. – 12:09 p.m. (Students eat lunch in classrooms)**

12:09 – 12:49 – (Students are outside on playground)

### Before & After School Care

Morning Care is available from 7:30 am – 8:40 am

After School Care is available from 2:51 pm to 6 pm

This program is located on-site at Margaret Jenkins in the portables and Brick Annex, and run by the Fairfield Community Association. Please call **250-382-4604** if you require registration information or **250-592-8800** to leave a message with the ÉMJS Out of School Care staff. (Spaces are limited.)

### Student Supervision Times on the Playgrounds

8:15 a.m. until 3:10 p.m. (Mon. to Fri.)



### Rainy Days

Students remain indoors during recess and/or lunch in heavy rain, but may go out if rain is light. Unless attending a supervised activity, students remain in their classrooms and engage in quiet activities. This indoor time is supervised by the playground supervisors and the student lunch monitors. The Rain Bell (double ring of the bell) will be rung in the morning at approximately 8:25 am, and students directed into classes if it is raining heavily before 8:40 am.

## **Parent Advisory Council (PAC)**

The PAC is a very important advisory body, empowered through the School Act and Board Policy. They meet at 7:00 p.m. on the fourth Thursday of the month with the Principal and Vice Principal to advise the administration and support the school in offering various programs. All parents at the school are welcome and encouraged to join us at these important meetings.

### **2013-2014 PAC Executive**



Chairperson	<b>Doug Tolson</b>
Treasurer	<b>Jess Clark</b>
Minutes Secretary	<b>Anne Tomy</b>
School Planning Council (SPC) Officers	<b>Riga Nason Allison Flack Elisa Djurickovic</b>
First Vice-Chairperson	<b>Kelly Miller</b>
Second Vice-Chairperson	<b>Shari Roubini</b>
Correspondence Secretary	<b>Heather Thomas</b>
Past Chairperson	<b>Rachel Franklin</b>

### **2013-2014 Annual School Growth Plan**

Our School Growth Plan is finalized in October with the help of the staff and School Planning Council. This year the staff is very interested in self-regulation in the cognitive domain ([http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/early\\_learning/webcasts.htm](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/early_learning/webcasts.htm)) and how that affects student learning. Stay tuned for progress reports on our growth plan in newsletters, at PAC meetings, and on Professional Development Days.



## ÉMJS Code of Conduct

In keeping with the British Columbia School Act and the BC Ministry of Education provincial standards for school codes of conduct, below is our revised ÉMJS Code of Conduct. The school will take all reasonable steps to prevent retaliation by a person against a student who has made a complaint of a breach of the code of conduct.

*September 2012*

### Statement of Purpose

Our mission is to create a **caring and safe environment** at ÉMJS where the love of **learning will flourish**. Specifically, the purpose of our Code of Conduct is to:

- Establish and maintain a safe, caring, and orderly environment for purposeful learning
- To establish and maintain appropriate balances among individual and collective rights and responsibilities
- To clarify and publish expectations for student behaviour while at school, coming to and going from school, and while attending any school sponsored activity

### Conduct Expectations

**Acceptable Conduct** – Every child has the right to come to school and be **safe and happy**. We expect all ÉMJS students to conduct themselves appropriately. Acceptable conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Respecting self, others and the school
- Behaving safely, and to help make the school a caring and orderly place
- Being responsible, by being honest, fixing mistakes, and taking ownership for one's decisions and conduct

**Unacceptable Conduct** – we do not expect ÉMJS students to display any behaviours or attitudes that discredit themselves, others, or the school. Unacceptable conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Behaviours that:
  - Interfere with the learning of others
  - Interfere with an orderly environment
  - Create unsafe conditions
- Acts of:
  - Bullying, harassment, racism or intimidation
  - Physical violence
  - Retribution against a person who has reported incidents
  - Disrespect, or social exclusion
- Illegal acts, such as:
  - Possession, use or distribution of illegal or restricted substances
  - Possession or use of weapons
  - Theft of or damage to property



As per the BC Human Rights code, our Code of Conduct prohibits discrimination based on any of the following grounds

- race
- colour
- ancestry
- place of origin
- religion
- physical disability
- mental disability
- sex

**Rising Expectations** – as students move through the grades at ÉMJS, expectations will increase. As well, progressive consequences for inappropriate acts, or those that become chronic and repetitive, will be implemented. With increased age and awareness we expect:

- Increasing personal responsibility and self-discipline
- Increasing understanding of the Code of Conduct guidelines
- Increasing understanding of the need for progressive consequences

## **Consequences**

The severity and frequency of unacceptable conduct, as well as the age and maturity of students is considered in determining appropriate disciplinary action. In that:

- Responses to unacceptable conduct are consistent and fair
- Disciplinary action, wherever possible, is preventative and restorative, rather than punitive
- Student empowerment and input will be encouraged, so students can use a restitution approach to fix their mistakes and repair relationships affected by their past behaviour

## **Notification**

We have the responsibility to advise other parties of increasing and serious breaches of the code of conduct. When serious breaches occur, the following may be notified:

- The classroom teacher
- The parents of the student exhibiting the unacceptable conduct
- The parents of any student victim(s) involved
- Associate Superintendent – as needed by School District policy
- Police or other agencies as required by the incident or law
- Parents at ÉMJS – when it is deemed to be important to reassure the school community that appropriate action is being taken with respect to a specific incident



## STEPS FOR PARENTS TO ADDRESS A SCHOOL CONCERN AT ÉMJS



**\*Speak directly to the teacher/staff member involved.** *Healthy and effective communication is best achieved by going directly to the person with whom you have the concern. Mrs. Hardy can be involved if you are not satisfied with the initial results of your conversation. (E-mail is not an effective forum for educational discussions, so see the staff member in person or contact them by telephone.)*

\*If unresolved, speak to the Principal, Mrs. Hardy or Vice Principal, Mme Cairns (Tel. 250-598-5191)

\*If unresolved, contact the Deputy Superintendent (Ms. Sherri Bell – 250-475-4220)

\*If still unresolved, use the School Board Complaint Process Policy 1155 to resolve the problem

\*Our Superintendent of Schools, **Mr. John Gaipman** or Margaret Jenkins School Trustee

**Mr. Michael McEvoy** (Tel. 250-475-3212) could become involved at this stage to assist in the matter.

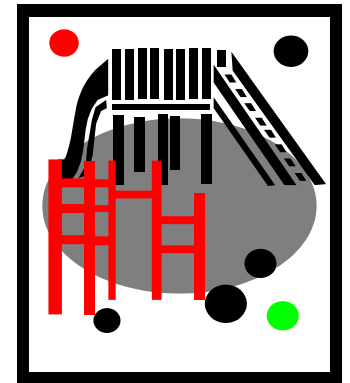
### Playground Protocol:

Primary (Grade K-2) students are permitted to play on the Grade K-2 Adventure Playground in the southwest corner of our school grounds. This was installed new in October 2007. Grade 3-5 students are not permitted to play on the K-2 play equipment during school recesses.

Grade K-2 students will not be permitted to play on the Grade 3-5 play equipment during school recesses for safety reasons.

Grade K-2 students are permitted to play on the big field during recesses. Grade K-3 students are not permitted to play on the "Rocks" in the far north/east corner of the schoolyard nor along the banks of the field on the Foul Bay Road side of the field. The rocks are also off limits to all students on wet and rainy days.

Students are not to be in the school building during recesses unless they are using the washroom (by themselves, not in groups), getting a drink from the fountain, seeking medical attention, or are being supervised by a teacher or staff member. They are required to ask a Student Supervisor permission to come in, one at a time, if they need to be inside at recess.



## RESTITUTION AT ÉCOLE MARGARET JENKINS SCHOOL:

We use the restitution model (<http://www.realrestitution.com/>) at Margaret Jenkins to: maintain a safe and secure learning environment; foster pro-social behaviour and social learning; fix mistakes; ensure poor choices are not repeated; and ultimately, to develop successful and responsible young people. We know that strategies used have to be **fair** and leave the dignity of all children intact. At times there will be natural consequences when appropriate. All students will be trained to use the W.I.T.S. acronym as a list of tools available to them to resolve conflicts with others.



### **WITS stands for:**

**W**alk away (when possible)

**I**gnore (if appropriate)

**T**alk to the person

**S**eek help from an adult/supervisor

Generally speaking, teachers and support staff try to address inappropriate behaviour themselves, by working with students directly, reinforcing the WITS Program, teaching the restitution concepts and language and including the students in assigning their own natural and fair consequences for inappropriate behaviour. Least intrusive interventions will be used, such as discussing the issue with the student or mediating between two students. However, when the situation is more serious, students are referred to the Principal or Vice Principal if they are having difficulty making appropriate choices. For more serious behaviours, such as using physical violence or dangerous behaviour, threatening or abusive language, and significant defiance or rudeness to others, depending on the situation, the student may be:

- 1) Consultation with the family to design a plan to support the student
- 2) Suspended from class on an In-School Suspension in the Office or Learning Centre, or
- 3) Suspended from school on a Home Suspension for up to 5 days, as allowed under the School Act and Board Policy

***It is important to note that decisions on discipline are always made with the best interest of the student in mind, balanced with preserving a safe and secure learning environment at the school for all others.*** Creating safe and caring environment first and foremost, followed by high levels of learning is our primary focus at École Margaret Jenkins School. Suspension is our last resort .

## SCHOOL PROGRAMS

We are very proud to be a dual-track school. That means Margaret Jenkins School offers programs in **English (K-5) and French Immersion (K-5)**. With these two different language programs at Margaret Jenkins, the benefits are plentiful for all the children who attend our school. Being able to offer both French and English programs is a source of pride for all of us at the school.

### French Immersion:

French Immersion provides 100% French instruction from Kindergarten through Grade 2. Beginning in grade 3, English Language Arts are introduced for approximately 20% of the school day. Other specialist areas such as Music, Science, etc. may be taught in English. This proportion of English Language Arts continues at approximately 1 hour per day through to Grade 5, and on into middle school.

Students in the English program receive instruction in basic French (French as a Second Language) beginning in Grade 4, or earlier in some classes.

### Music /Strings:

Music and the Arts have always been important at Margaret Jenkins, and with school musicals or concerts being a regular part of annual programming. We are pleased to have **Mrs. Esther Clifford** as our Music teacher this year. We also offer a Grade 5 Strings Program under the direction of **Mrs. Barbara Eadie**.



## STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS

The following programs support the learning in the main classroom programs.



### School-Based Team

The School Based Team, chaired by **Ms. Joanne Nicolson**, our Learning Assistance teacher (English program) meets weekly on Tuesday mornings at 8 am to discuss students with any special needs or students having difficulty, who have been referred by classroom teachers or parents. They review student files, help achieve special education designations and coordinate the creation of individualized educational plans (IEP's) required for certain students. The Principal, Vice Principal, **Counsellor (Christine Selder)**, and Learning Assistance teachers, may be joined by classroom teachers, school district and community personnel (e.g., Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Pathologist, OT, PT, Public Health Nurse), and parents at these team meetings.

### Speech & Language Therapy

The Speech & Language Therapist, **Mrs. Martha Morrison**, assesses speech difficulties and language development, providing assistance at school and to the parents, where necessary.

## SUPPORT PROGRAMS cont'd . . . . .

### Health Services

**Ms. Leslie Bellas** is our Public Health Nurse this year. She will be available for staff and parents for health advice. She also oversees medical concerns and alerts (diabetes, severe allergies, etc.) identified by parents. She may also do some classroom teaching in health areas, such as nutrition, family life, etc.



### Hearing Impaired/Visually Impaired

Itinerant teachers are available to assist children with hearing or visual impairments when required. Currently we have **Daphne Hitchcock** working in our school. This is coordinated through our School- Based Team.

### Psycho-educational Testing

Our District Educational Psychologist, **Lisa Armitage**, is new this year and is available for educational testing at the request of teachers and/or parents. There is a waiting list developed by the School Based Team, to help assist our psychologist in determining priorities for assessment.

### Counselling

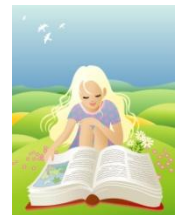
Our school counsellor, **Christine Selder**, deals with the social and emotional aspects of a child's development. She is at the school **Monday, Tuesday and Thursday mornings**. Assistance from school staff is also available to help parents obtain counselling and other support through community resources. Please call our Principal, **Mrs. Barb Hardy**, if you need help finding other kinds of support in the community.

### Police/School Liaison

The Victoria Police Department maintains close, friendly and supportive relationships with the school. Our school liaison officer this year is **Constable Chris Gilbert**. He can be reached at 250-995-7513. Const. Chris will provide instruction each month for students on personal safety, anti-bullying, respect, self-esteem, law (e.g. vandalism), and traffic safety, etc.

### The Library/Resource Centre

Our teacher/librarian is **Miss Metthea Maddern**. She also supports students with Gifted designations. The library program strives to allow students and teachers the greatest possible access to the collection. Our library is fully automated and designed for easy use by students.



### Technology at Margaret Jenkins

Our school has a 33 station networked computer lab. Our computer/technology teacher this year is **Mme Nancy Lambert**. **Mr. John Riches** is our School Technologist and provides technical support for the lab and classroom technology. We have also bought several document cameras and are installing a smart board in the library. 10 iPads will soon be available for teachers and students to use.

## EXTRACURRICULAR/SPORTS AT MARGARET JENKINS

Extracurricular activities are offered by teachers and parents as a contribution to the interests and needs of our children. Specific offerings will depend on the talents and availability of staff members and parents. Parents and local athletes will likely help with coaching duties this year as well, as in the past.

We will again be offering sports and club activities at lunch time and after school when possible. The Greater Victoria Elementary School Sports Association organizes an extensive Grade 3, 4 and 5 Sports Program, and we will again have inter-school sports teams for students in Grades 3-5 in **Cross-Country, Soccer, Basketball and Track**. Although Margaret Jenkins has had many winning teams over the years, we stress **sportsmanship, doing our best, and having fun**. Since these activities involve an expenditure of time and preparation for coaches, we expect that students have a commitment and feeling of responsibility towards their chosen activity.



## OTHER PROGRAMS AT ÉMJJS:

In addition to sports teams we also may have the following clubs, activities/programs occurring to support students this year:

**Leadership Club (Grade 4/5)**  
**Greening/Garden Committee**  
**WITS Program – Victoria Police**  
**Chess in the Library**

**Lunch-time Sports**  
**Swim Club**  
**Victoria Police Liaison Class Visits**  
**Volunteer Parent Lice Screening Team**

**Strings**  
**Bike Club**  
**Choir**  
**F.A.M.E.**

**Science Fair**  
**Book Club**  
**Enrichment programs**  
**Yoga**



## Lost & Found

Lost & Found is located across from the school office in a wooden bin in the hallway. Please **label clothing** (jackets/sweatshirts) with first initial and last name, to avoid lost articles.

## STUDENT SAFETY:

### Call Back Program

If a student is absent at 8:45 a.m. and there has been no call from home to say the child will not be at school, a volunteer parent will call the student's home to confirm that he or she is safe. ***Parent call back phone number is 250-598-7151. Please leave your message on the 24 hour answering machine at this number if your child will be away.***



### School Crossing Guard at Margaret Jenkins Fairfield

Our school crossing guard at Irving and Fairfield is **Riga Nason**. Our adult crossing guard is on duty before and after school at the Fairfield and Irving crosswalk by the drugstore. **Please ensure your child uses the crosswalks** in the area when coming to school. Also, please do not jaywalk across Fairfield Road – this is a very dangerous and congested area before and after school.

## STUDENT SAFETY cont'd.....



### Bicycles, Scooters, Skateboards and Rollerblades

For safety reasons, **bicycles, scooters, etc. must be "walked" on both school grounds**, until after 3:30 pm. **The law requires all who ride a bicycle to wear a helmet**. Students should not wear their rollerblades on the school grounds (until after 3:30 pm). Skateboarding, rollerblades, scooters, and runners with wheels are not permitted to be used on school grounds during the school day. It is expected that students wear helmets when using skateboards and roller blades to travel to school. Please also make sure your child is old enough and able to handle the responsibility of operating these items.

### Student Pick-up/Drop-off – Parent Vehicles

When driving or walking near school, please remember to **slow down and go slow around all drop-off and pick up areas**. Please adhere to time limits in drop-off parking spaces around the school to make things flow as smoothly as possible.

### Bicycle Access to School Grounds

A bicycle gate is located in the fence just east (uphill) of the crosswalk on Fairfield across from Gonzales Pharmacy for cyclists to enter the school grounds. The idea is to keep cyclists and pedestrians separate, so cyclists should use the new gate and refrain from riding down the sidewalk amongst pedestrians. (Cyclists still have to dismount and walk their bikes, once on the school grounds.) Two gates are also located at the back of the school; one just east of the Brick Annex on Chandler Ave., and the other by the Out-of-School Care Portable also off Chandler Ave.

### Dogs on the Playground

The city bylaw does not permit dogs to be on the playground. We have several children who are afraid of dogs and a student this year who was bitten by a dog tied up on the fence. There have also been occasions where during the school day dog owners have not picked up after their dogs. We encourage you to follow the city bylaw.



### No Pedestrians/Walk-through Allowed in the Staff Parking Lot

Please make sure you and your children do not walk through the Staff Parking Lot off Chandler Ave. as this is a busy space and off-limits to students and all pedestrians for safety reasons. We have had a number of close calls between vehicles and pedestrians in this area over the years. A new fence was added last summer to restrict pedestrian access to this area. Signs have been posted at the entrance to the Staff Parking Lot in more prominent locations to ensure drivers know that this area is for staff vehicles only. Thank you for your cooperation in this area.

### Telephones

Student telephone use is restricted to emergency or important school-related situations only. Students' social arrangements should be set in advance, and students are not allowed to phone home to get permission to go to another student's house. When parents phone the school to speak directly to their children it disrupts the educational process in the classroom, **so we ask that parents call to speak to their children only in an absolute emergency.**



### **Cellular Telephones/MP3 Player/Expensive Electronic Devices or Toys**

Students who have cellular telephones are not permitted to use their phones on the school grounds or in the building. They must be stored discretely in their pocket or other safe place, and not played with at school. Cellular telephones might be used by some students as safety devices for walking to and from school, but students should get permission to use the office telephones if they need to make an important call during the day at school. We discourage students from bringing expensive electronics to school as they can be damaged or go missing.

### **Student Sign-out to Leave School Grounds During School Hours**

Please let your child's teacher know if they will be going home for lunch on a regular basis. For occasional lunches at home, please make sure you send a note with your child indicating this. We are a closed campus, meaning that it is expected that all students will remain on the school grounds throughout the day, unless parents make other arrangements. All students leaving the grounds must sign-out in a log kept in the office, and must sign back in upon their return to ensure we know they have safely returned to school. Parent notes or telephone calls are required for this.

### **Class Placement**

Each May we tentatively place students in classes for the next school year. Realizing that circumstances change, we do not make final placement decisions until September. Placing students in classes is one of the most important roles of the year and it is done only after a great deal of discussion, and based on a variety of factors. The staff will respect parent requests and give them serious consideration. The professionals who work with the students at the school will make the final decision (as stated in the BC School Act) in an effort to put together a group of learners with the most potential for success, based upon educational and social concerns. The following factors are considered:

- Child's need for attention in social, emotional and behavioural areas
- Child's physical and social maturity
- Friendships (not necessarily best friends), other students who support a child's learning
- Academic development
- Male/female balance in the class
- Number of years the child has been with a teacher
- Child's need for learning assistance or special services
- Interests and expertise of staff
- Student's strengths and needs and the ability to work independently
- Multi-grade or single grade level and number in each level of a split
- Parental input
- Class size and composition restrictions





## **Class Placement, cont'd.....**

When anticipating the following school year for your child, please bear in mind:

- Groups of students in one class may not necessarily remain together
- Both split classes and straight classes may be developed for a grade level the following year
- When placing students for social reasons, we primarily consider students who your child succeeded with in class, not friends from outside of school; the two groups may be completely different.
- The beginning of school can be an emotionally difficult time for students due to the change in schedule, sleep patterns, etc., and disappointments can be magnified but students generally adapt to their new class quickly

## **Split Grade Classes**



Split grades have been used in British Columbia for many years now, and regularly appear at ÉMJS each year. They are beneficial because they can help address the concept of continual learning progress (i.e., some outcomes can be reviewed for students who need to do so, and some students can better be accelerated to new outcomes if necessary by being in a split grade). They also allow for a wider variety of classes (e.g., creating two Grade 2/3 splits, instead of just a straight Grade 2 and a straight Grade 3 allows two classes at each grade level instead of one). This way, we have more choices for placing students at the same grade level which can be advantageous.

Please note that our goal is to put a diverse group of learners in all classes, including split grade classes. We do not stream “delayed” students into the top end of split classes, and “advanced” students in the bottom end of split classes. Such streaming would have a negative effect. Instead we mix a variety of learners together so there are role-models and students with a range of strengths in the class. The educational research suggests that this approach has an overall net benefit on students.

## **Parent Input**

If there are unusual or special circumstances, parents are invited to submit written requests regarding placement for the following year. They may or may not be met, depending on the input of staff and administration. Children are not necessarily placed with best friends, and may be separated from them in subsequent years if their socializing has been disruptive to their learning. Multiple requests from parents (e.g., for numerous friends, avoiding certain grade levels or teachers) can rarely be met. We ask that parents trust the professional judgment of staff to build successful and diverse groups of learners and try to put requests in only if there are exceptional circumstances. Conversely, requests that are extremely important to parents should be shared with administration for consideration. Finally, it is extremely difficult to make changes once classes are set, given the interdependent nature of student placements and the subsequent problems that may be created if changes are made once a class is set, so getting requests submitted in May is recommended

## Earthquake/Emergency Preparedness:

Safety is a primary concern at Margaret Jenkins and a great deal of energy and planning is put into emergency preparedness. Fire drills happen frequently in September, then monthly thereafter. Earthquake Drills are conducted two times per year. Each classroom is equipped with a portable emergency kit to be evacuated with the class in the event of an emergency.



These kits contain basic first aid supplies, space blankets, and water. One large Emergency Container is located at the west side of the school and three other smaller earthquake kiosks are on site as well. They contain food, water and medical supplies to care for the students in an emergency as well as copies of emergency release forms completed by each family. The PAC has purchased a 5000 watt emergency generator, night lighting, large shelters and new first aid supplies as well.

During our earthquake drill we make sure that younger students are with an older buddy class. Some of the staff stay with the children while others form search and rescue and first aid teams. At the end of the year we try to have a longer earthquake drill that involves use of emergency contacts. Please make sure that your emergency contacts know you have designated them and that they might be called upon to pick up your child in the event that you cannot.



**SCHOOL DISTRICT 61 (GREATER VICTORIA) MISSION STATEMENT**

*The Greater Victoria School District is committed to each student's success  
in learning within a responsive and safe environment.*