



# Solana Ranch Elementary School

**"Inspiring Greatness in Tomorrow's Leaders!"**

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Dear Parents,

The placement of students each year is a task that our staff takes very seriously. I'd like to share with you the process and criteria that we use at Solana Ranch when we are setting up classes for the new school year. It is a lengthy, complicated and painstaking process that we believe is essential to create well-balanced classes. Our process is supported by Board Policy 6152 and considers the following:

## **Teacher Knowledge of Students**

After working together for a full school year (over 1,000 hours), teachers have in-depth knowledge of students' learning styles, academic strengths and needs, personalities, friendships, and social interactions, including possible difficulties. All of this information is taken into consideration when making placements. As we embark in the opening of Solana Ranch, information has been received from each student's previous teacher to help with this process.

## **Peers**

We know that students are often nervous about starting a new year in a new classroom, and in this case, a new school, so we try our best to have at least one or two familiar faces in each child's new class. However, we also know that it may sometimes be a disadvantage to have too many friends or even "best" friends together for another year. It discourages making new friends and broadening a child's social circle and skills.

## **Balancing Classes**

It is important that each class at a grade level is similarly composed. We strive to balance boys, girls, academic abilities, health concerns, behavior issues, ethnicity, and students with special needs.

## **Combination Classes**

Combination classes are created to meet class size and staffing requirements. For example, when 3 Kindergarten classes are full, we need to have a fourth class, but when we do not have enough students to fill the class, AND we do not have enough first grade students to fill a class, the Kindergarten and first grader students may be grouped together in a K/1 combination class.

The information above about *Balancing Classes* does not hold true when we create a combination class. Combination classes are unique and we put the classes together very carefully. All students in a combination class are strong in terms of academic success, have shown an ability to get along well with others, and have no exceptional needs regarding health or behavior. This is true for both the students in the "upper" grade and in the "lower" grade in a combined class. Not every student fits this profile, so we thoughtfully hand select each student in a combination class.

**If you wish, you may submit a letter to the front office describing a particular learning style that works best for your child.** This letter will be considered when making class placements. **Teacher names may not be included in your letter if you wish your letter to be considered.**

Our District policy supports the efforts of our teachers and requires a two-week waiting period once school starts before any parent requests for class placement changes will be considered. These procedures have been carefully refined and implemented and they ensure that we create the most supportive and optimal learning environment for all of the students at Solana Ranch.

Please feel free to call me if you have any questions or concerns. I hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,

Jerry Jones, Principal Solana Ranch

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