



## OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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Pieter Langstraat, Superintendent

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June 9, 2017

Dear Elementary School Parents:

As we head into the remaining weeks of the school year I wanted to take the opportunity to provide an update about the upcoming school year.

This is always a busy and exciting time in our schools as we celebrate another year and plan for what the next year will bring. It's also a very exciting time in our school district as our student population grows and our programs continue to focus on providing the best learning environments and opportunities for all of our students.

With a growing region we expect to see another 2,000 students in our schools within 10 years. This continued student growth paints a very healthy outlook for our public education system. We are also responding to the recent Supreme Court decision which will result in smaller classes across our schools and 160 more teachers across our District.

While we are seeing some really positive developments across our schools in terms of smaller class sizes, more students and more teachers, we have also been working through the challenges that present with any big change.

One of the obvious challenges that comes with more students and smaller class sizes is space. We have been working very hard and thoughtfully to introduce more classrooms, while trying to continue to offer space to childcare providers in our schools. Daycares, preschools and before and after school programs are an important part of our community and for supporting our students and families. It has been no small feat to introduce 84 new classrooms across elementary and middle schools while trying to limit impacts to childcare services that we know so many of our families rely upon.

What we are continuing to work through for the coming year is the composition of classes. The recent Supreme Court decision directs school districts across the province to return to "restored language" which limits how many students with Ministry of Education designations can be in a classroom. As we plan for September we are recognizing this may affect how students are "grouped" in classrooms.

Principals have always given much consideration to balance within classrooms around individual needs and personalities, students' learning abilities and relationships. With the restoration of language around class composition related to designations, the flexibility in configuring classes based on some of these other considerations will be limited.

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The results in our district means there will be more combined classes at elementary than we have seen in the past which may result in some classrooms with unbalanced numbers. Although classes have not yet been confirmed, and teachers have not been assigned to classrooms, we do know this will be the case in many schools.

Combined classes are not new and there are many benefits to combined classes at elementary grade levels. There is a continuum of learning that occurs for any student at elementary level and we work with each student to individualize their studies and find their passions. This is also reinforced with the new curriculum that was introduced this year.

This coming year, however, it's fair to say we have more considerations to balance than last year when building classes, and we are working hard to respond to the new composition language while continuing to design our classes to support all learners. A lot will continue to change until September 30th when classes must be confirmed for the year, but it is important to us that we share where we are now so we can minimize surprises or concerns in September.

In short, this is a very exciting time in our school district. More resources and smaller class sizes across the district is good news for our students. We recognize there has been a lot of change in the last few months and we are appreciative of your patience and involvement as we work through these recent changes.

Our elementary schools will be hosting meetings in their schools or at neighboring schools in the month of June to answer any questions you may have about what to expect in September. I encourage you to attend to learn more.

Sincerely,



Piet Langstraat  
Superintendent of Schools

## CRAIGFLOWER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Principal: Mrs. Michelle MacFarlane  
Vice-Principal: Mrs. Jana Dick



Dear Parents and Guardians of Craigflower Students,

If you have any questions with regards to what our Superintendent, Piet Langstraat has said in his above note, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs. MacFarlane or Mrs. Dick at the school. We will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank - You,



Michelle MacFarlane