

Senator Buchanan Elementary School employs a Multiage Philosophy at both the grades 1/2 and the 4/5 levels. Multiage classrooms reflect the understanding that although intellectual, social and emotional development happens in predictable patterns, it does so on a timetable which is unique to each child. In this setting, students have the opportunity to discover, practice and revisit concepts both as novices during their first year in a classroom and as mentors when in their second. Younger students are motivated to take academic risks as they observe their older classmates and comprehend what comes next. Older students develop confidence and extend learning and understanding as they are challenged to support their younger peers by sharing their knowledge in clear and concise ways.

Ideally, students are with the same teachers for two years thus providing them with a sense of continuity and predictability that supports them in taking intellectual risks. Each year the older students move on to the next age or grade level and half return to the same classroom. This provides teachers, students, and parents with the opportunity to get to know each other. The demanding work of planning and adapting curriculum to meet the needs and interests of each student is greatly enhanced by this two year process.