

## Frequently Asked Questions for Ladd's Multiage

There is an immense amount of information already published regarding Multiage in general. The purpose of this document is to answer some specific questions that we have received regarding Multiage at Ladd.

### **How were students selected to be in each class?**

All 5 classes were carefully balanced to reflect the greater Ladd population. Each class is balanced with students scoring high, medium, and low on achievement tests. Balance was also created regarding boys and girls and considering ethnic diversity. There is an equal placement of students with special needs and students who are gifted. Within the Multiage classrooms, this balance was done for both 4<sup>th</sup> graders and 5<sup>th</sup> graders.

### **How long has this been happening at Ladd?**

We often have split classes (combined grades due to numbers), but multiage (an intentional, philosophical and pedagogical choice) planning started in the spring of 2015. We fully implemented this approach in fall of 2017.

### **How can this work at a school with such high transiency?**

One of the benefits of Multiage is the sense of community that develops amongst the students. This will provide a welcoming atmosphere for new students as they transition into Ladd. The students who move out of Ladd will leave with strong skills and a strong sense of themselves as learners. Careful consideration of placement will occur with new students in order to keep all 5 classrooms balanced in the manner described above.

### **Will my child be prepared academically when moving to another state?**

Alaska State Standards (AKSS) are very much aligned with the national common core standards. The teachers in all 5 classes refer to the standards on a regular basis to determine their instruction. The district's curriculum, materials, and supplemental resources are used to help reach the standards. Academic standards become more complex as the grades increase. Here is an example of a reading standard for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade:

4<sup>th</sup>: Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; paraphrase or summarize key ideas, events, or procedures including correct sequence when appropriate.

5<sup>th</sup>: Determine the main idea and subtopics of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; paraphrase or summarize key ideas, events, or procedures including correct sequence when appropriate.

As you can see, they are very similar. Additional detail is expected in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. All 5 teachers have knowledge of these standards and will support their students in mastering their own grade level expectations, as well as challenge them to deeper their level of understanding.

Personalized learning through small group targeted instruction, using data to determine learning, student reflection and ownership and flexible content and tools will help teachers be able to reach individual student needs.

Science and Social Studies have similar standards that are aligned across grade levels. The topics (core ideas) of Science and Social Studies will be of one grade level. The order of the topics is not as important as the development of skills and performance expectations used to critically think about the topics. Students will be assessed according to their grade level standards and expectations, along with consideration of individual progress.

**Why?**

In addition to everything mentioned above, Ladd students deserve this opportunity. Multiage is not new to our nation's schools and it is not new to Fairbanks. However, it is primarily implemented in the schools with the highest socio-economic status and charter/magnet schools. Our Ladd students deserve every opportunity that other students have.

A team of 5 teachers working together to determine students' strengths and weaknesses, discuss instructional strategies, plan assessments, and bounce ideas off of one another is an effective resource that cannot be emphasized enough. We have knowledgeable, skilled, experienced and enthusiastic teachers wanting to teach in a Multiage setting.

**Our teachers will be able to explain how learning happens in their individual classrooms during the open house. If you have questions that are not on this list, you are welcome to send them directly to me, [cori.anthony@k12northstar.org](mailto:cori.anthony@k12northstar.org)**