



## Lower and Upper Elementary 2026 Phase-in Explained

### Why don't all students begin at the same time?

The students are eager and excited about the year ahead. The learning environment is stimulating and exciting; it is a place where independence, freedom, and choice of materials are the rule.

**First- and fourth-grade students have a half-day classroom orientation on Tuesday, September 8<sup>th</sup>.** This small group morning orientation allows the new students and the teachers to get know one another and get comfortable in their new classroom.

In the carefully prepared three-year cycle, children who are returning to the classroom help to establish and role model the ground rules, work habits and general positive learning atmosphere of the class. **Second-, third-, fifth- and sixth-grade students spend Wednesday, September 9<sup>th</sup>, from 8:15 a.m. to 11:50 p.m., in the classroom orienting themselves to their new expectations** and help set up the classroom environment, to prepare for the arrival of their new classmates.

On Thursday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, the entire class comes together as one group for the full day. Returning students assist the new students; they are nurtured and helped through the mentoring program that is established in each classroom to more easily acclimate to their new classroom. The new students gradually learn how to handle this choice and freedom while respecting and caring for each other, the materials and the classroom.

The carefully planned phased-in approach allows the new children get an overview of how things work in the classroom, and the returning children receive reinforcement of the previous year's ground rules.

Phase-in sets the stage for a successful year of learning.

As always, if you have any questions at all, please ask!

The Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary Teachers