

# REFERENDUM INFORMATION SHEET #5

## *“Are 5<sup>th</sup> grade students too young to be in a middle school?”*

The National Middle School Association reports that “Research repeatedly confirms the importance of the *type of program* and *qualities of the learning environment*, not grade organization, as the key to successful experiences for 5<sup>th</sup> graders.”

Including 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes in a middle school does work *if* the program for the 5<sup>th</sup> graders is appropriate.

Under the plan promoted by the facilities referendum, Ryerson Middle School would incorporate a “5<sup>th</sup> Grade Section” into the school (the ten classrooms located at the rear section of the school’s ground floor). This would allow the 5<sup>th</sup> grade students to be a part of the vibrant life of the middle school, but would also provide them with the added support and enhanced guidance of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade faculty team during their initial year in the school. The program for 5<sup>th</sup> graders would offer:

- PHYSICAL BENEFITS -- the daily physical activities of the Ryerson School’s middle grades program focuses, and will continue to focus, on the physical development needs of 10-14 year-old youngsters.
- SOCIAL BENEFITS -- the cooperation, teaming arrangements, and social activities of a middle school can help address the young adolescent’s need for socialization and interaction with peers.
- INDIVIDUAL LEARNING NEEDS ACCOMMODATIONS -- the teams of teachers, variety in grouping patterns, opportunities for remediation, integrated learning units, and acceleration as part of a middle school can help to target the learning needs of 5<sup>th</sup> graders.
- GUIDANCE BENEFITS -- the guidance services and advisory programs at a middle school provide assistance to students on a personal level, either individual or in a small group setting.
- THE DEVELOPMENTAL NATURE OF MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAMMING -- middle school programs, such as exploratory, flexible scheduling, and varied instructional methods accommodate characteristics of young adolescents, including 5<sup>th</sup> graders, and target their needs.
- TEAMED TEACHERS -- 5<sup>th</sup> grade students can benefit from an array of teachers working together, planning activities, groupings, and advising students as a team.

**See you at the Polls on April 21, 2009.**

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