

State of North Carolina
County of Cherokee

RESOLUTION ON K-3 CLASS SIZE REDUCTION IMPLEMENTATION

WHEREAS, pursuant to S.L. 2017-9, local school districts in 2018-19 are required to set class size averages in grades K-3 that equal the State classroom teacher funding ratios and will have to meet more restrictive individual class size maximums across those grade levels; and

WHEREAS, equalizing the average and funded K-3 class size ratios will result in the loss of flexibility to generate State funding for teaching positions in program enhancement courses like art, music, physical education; and

WHEREAS, in Section 2.1 of S.L. 2017-197, the General Assembly declared its intent to create a new funding stream for program enhancement teachers starting in 2018-19; and

WHEREAS, even if this funding is provided, there are still classroom space and staffing challenges in implementing the new K-3 class size requirements which are outlined below; and

WHEREAS, an immediate reduction in the K-3 class size maximum will worsen what is already a very difficult environment for Cherokee County Schools in finding licensed and qualified teachers to fill classrooms, most likely leading to more classrooms taught by long-term substitutes or lateral-entry teachers, who do not have the pedagogy and classroom management training necessary for this age group; and

WHEREAS, if a need for more space within Cherokee County Schools for the K-3 class size reductions is realized, space may be created by moving or eliminating Pre-K classrooms or not implementing plans to expand prekindergarten; and

WHEREAS, the immediate reduction in individual class size maximums in grades K-3 would in turn increase the number of physical classrooms required at these grade levels, adding to already staggering backlogs of school capital needs in this district; and

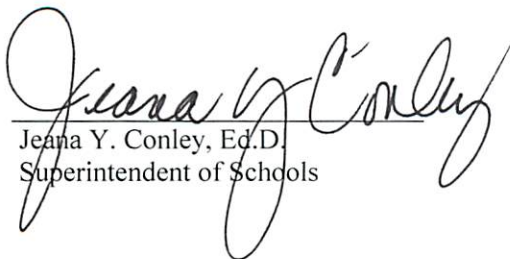
WHEREAS, if solutions for space requirements cannot be satisfied it may become necessary to convert art rooms, music rooms, and gymnasiums into traditional classrooms and have those teachers travel from room to room with a cart to deliver program enhancement classes in traditional classrooms but this doesn't work well with unique aspects of art and music education, such space realignment would also require physical education courses to be held outdoors with no alternative for days with adverse weather conditions; and

WHEREAS, art classes use messy supplies such as paint and clay while music classes generate loud sounds that, without adequate sound proof walls, will travel to neighboring classrooms and disrupt learning in those classes; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cherokee County Board of Education respectfully requests the General Assembly slow implementation of the K-3 class size reductions outlined in S.L. 2017-9 through a multi-year phase-in that allows time for the legislature and school districts to address the challenges delineated above.

Approved by the Cherokee County Board of Education this, the 14th day of December, 2017.

Attest:


Jeana Y. Conley, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools


Wanda Arrowood, Chair
Cherokee County Board of Education