

Resolution Regarding 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 LEAs 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, LEAs that need more space for the K-3 class size reductions may create space by moving/eliminating PreK classrooms, cancelling contracts allowing space in the LEA to other providers for Pre-K, 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 many districts; some districts would have to purchase more modular classrooms while others would incur substantial additional costs building more classrooms; and,

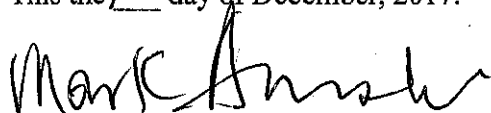
Whereas, Lee County Schools currently has 35 mobile units at elementary schools to accommodate overcrowding; and

Whereas, the class size reduction would create an undue burden on capital funding; and,

Whereas, the implementation of 2017-9 will have an immediate adverse impact on Lee County Schools.

Now, therefore be it resolved that the Lee 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.

This the 12 day of December, 2017.



Mark K. Akinosho, Chairman
Lee County Board of Education