

Administrative Procedures for Class Size (Attachment for Policy No. 126)

Purpose

The purpose of these procedures is to ensure that class size guidelines remain consistent with Board of Education Policy 126 - Class Size and to delineate responsibilities related to determining and maintaining class size in the School District of Philadelphia (“District”).

The District is committed to having a high-quality teacher in every classroom. The District also recognizes the benefits of low teacher to student ratios and, where practicable, aims to establish smaller rather than larger class sizes.

Procedures

During the District’s school budget cycle (February-April), the Office of Information Technology provides student enrollment projections to schools and the Office of Management and Budget. Using these projections, the Office of Management and Budget determines the number of teachers allocated to each school to ensure that the class size requirements are adhered to.

The Office of Management and Budget establishes the funds needed to support the determined number of teachers in the Staff Management System (“SMS”). Budgets are then created by principals and approved by Assistant Superintendents. The staffing determinations maintain the maximum class size requirements. The District does not provide less than 28 square feet per person in Special Education classrooms, as required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

In the fall, the Office of Management and Budget recalculates teacher allocations based on actual student enrollment after the start of the school year. Allocations for regular education, English Students of Other Languages (ESOL), and special education teachers and classroom assistants may be added and reduced based on actual enrollment.

Exceeding Maximum Class Size

Exceeding the established class sizes is permissible under the following conditions:

- Unavailability of space or infeasibility of reorganizing kindergarten classrooms, in which case the maximum class size may go to thirty-four (34) with the addition of the services of an assistant;
- Space is not available in the school;
- Observing the maximum class size would require placing classes on a short time schedule; or
- A larger class size is necessary and desirable for specialized, assembly, or forum type classes (e.g. library, music) or experimental instruction.

If the class size exceeds the maximum number of students, the building principal must consult with the Assistant Superintendent and, if possible, reorganize the classroom by transferring students within the school so that the classroom does not exceed the maximum requirement.

If a reorganization of the classroom is not possible, the building principal must, in consultation with the Assistant Superintendent, request an additional allocation for purposes of reducing class size or repurpose budget funds for purposes of reducing class size. The building principal must also, where possible, assign an assistant.

The principal must also notify the following individuals that class exceeds the maximum requirement:

- The Chief of Schools through the Assistant Superintendent,
- The Office of Labor and Employee Relations,
- The teacher of record, and
- The parents/guardians of the particular class.

The notice to the teacher of record must include the reason(s) for exceeding the maximum requirement.

Maintenance Schedule

These administrative procedures will be reviewed annually to ensure consistency with state, local, and District regulations. They will also be reviewed at the ratification of new collective bargaining agreements.