



BOARD POLICY MANUAL	
Approval Date <b>March 2009</b>	Replacing <b>All previous documents</b>
Review Date	Page <b>1 of 2</b>
Policy Section <b>School</b>	Identification <b>SCH-1032</b>

## CLASS SIZE GUIDELINES

### RATIONALE

The *Class Size Guidelines* are intended to provide insight and direction for the Principal as he/she makes critical decisions regarding class sizes on behalf of the Board. The guidelines are meant to balance the community's resources with the need to ensure a vibrant and wholesome learning program to all our students.

### EDUCATIONAL FACTORS AFFECTING CLASS SIZES

The *Class Size Guidelines* listed below take a number of factors into consideration. The following factors impact the quality of teacher-learner dynamics in our school classrooms:

- 1. Student Development Levels**  
School research confirms that younger students flourish best in smaller class groupings. Students in these grades have a need for quality teacher time, which is critical for their school socialization and the enhancement of basic literacy and numeracy mastery. For students from Grades 4 and up, the research findings for lower class sizes are inconclusive.
- 2. Individual Student Needs**  
The requirements of teacher time to help students with learning challenges will impact the number of students a teacher can teach effectively. These learning challenges encompass a wide variety of physical, behavioural, cognitive, and language limitations. Both individual and entire class educational and social needs need to be considered in establishing class sizes.
- 3. Classroom Space**  
Having sufficient room within the classroom allows the teacher to engage the students comfortably and safely in a variety of learning activities. The Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools (OACS) recommends that general use classrooms be large enough to allow 3 square metres or approximately 32 square feet of space per student.
- 4. Paraeducator Assistance**  
Providing additional support to the teacher by assigning a Teacher Assistant (TA) or Educational Assistant (EA) is one way to mitigate a higher than desired class size and to avoid the need to establish a combined class. The classroom teacher may be well served by such an assistant and thus be able to provide quality instruction to a larger than desired class. Paraeducators may also be hired to provide support for a particular student.

Paraeducator support at all grade levels will be determined on an annual basis. All the *Educational Factors* included in these guidelines will be considered when determining specific position terms and job descriptions.

5. **Multiple Grade Considerations**

When enrolment goes beyond the stated limits, consideration should be given to create two-grade combination classes. If student developmental levels are respected and caution is used in placing students with individual learning needs in single or combined classes, these classes should not require additional guidelines from the ones listed below. However, the following considerations should be remembered when creating multiple grade classes:

- a. Combined classes that include grades from across divisions should be avoided if possible (e.g. SK and 1; 3 and 4; 6 and 7). Combining grades across divisions present difficulties with curriculum expectations and delivery. Many subject areas have a shift in focus, sophistication and skill development from one division to another.
- b. After carefully considering the *Educational Factors* listed above, multiple two-grade combination classes may also be implemented (e.g. three combined 7 and 8 classes).
- c. When necessary, combination grades across divisions will follow the guidelines assigned to the lower division.

**CLASS SIZE GUIDELINES**

The chart provided below is meant to guide the Principal while determining student placements and teacher assignments. The chart will be used in conjunction with the *Student Placement Procedures*.

<b>Division</b>	<b>Suggested Class Sizes</b>
<b>Junior Kindergarten</b>	20 – 22
<b>Senior Kindergarten</b>	20 – 25
<b>Grades 1-4</b>	25 – 28
<b>Grades 5-8</b>	28 - 30

A recommendation to divert from the *Class Size Guidelines* must be presented to the Board by the Program and Human Resource Committees with the approval from the Principal and input from the intended classroom teacher(s).