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Information Concerning the Florida Class Size Amendment



Prior to the 2010/11 school year, class size was measured initially as a district average and then at the school average. The final phase of the Class Size Amendment will take effect during the 2010-11 school year.

Article IX, Section 1(a) of the Florida Constitution requires that action must be taken once a class exceeds the cap by just one student. Classes in the areas of language arts, reading, math, science, social studies, and foreign language cannot exceed 18 students in grades PreK-3, 22 students in grades 4-8 and 25 students in grades 9-12.

The ballot measure being presented to the voters in November proposes an amendment to the Class Size provision of the Florida Constitution, Article IX Section 1(a), which requires compliance with present standards at the school level rather than at each classroom. The “average” number of students per class in Pre-K through 3rd grade could not exceed 18, in grades 4 through 8, 22 students, and in grades 9 through 12, 25 students. The proposed amendment would also set a cap for every individual classroom of 21 for grades Pre-K through 3, 27 for grades 4 through 8 and 30 for grades 9 through 12.

Lee County Public Schools must meet these caps at the individual class level or risk paying fines for every student enrolled over the caps set by the amendment. Below are some informational points about what this means for our District:

How Does This Impact Elementary School Students?

- New classes may have to be formed and student placements will be adjusted across the grade level frequently
- Classes with more than 18 students (PreK-3) or 22 students (grades 4,5) may become classes with co-teachers and thus will be larger in size
- If classes in a grade level are at the hard cap at a school, a newly enrolling student may have to be assigned to another elementary school that has space in that grade level (transportation provided by the district)
- Schools lose the ability to make certain classes smaller to serve the needs of students requiring more intensive instruction

How Does This Impact Middle/High School Students?

- Frequent schedule changes will be made to stay within the class size caps
- Class sections may be closed and not available
- Multiple schedule changes could occur with fluctuations in enrollment at a school
- Scheduling changes may occur throughout the school year

- Use of flexible scheduling may be used to create additional class times
- Use of Virtual School options will be encouraged
- Courses may be limited due to affordability
- Elective class size (not calculated in the Class Size) may be larger to accommodate Class Size requirement

How Does This Impact Teachers?

- Class/course assignments may be changed due to the enrollment needs
- Classroom assignments may involve teachers floating to various classrooms locations throughout the school day
- Student schedules may be changed in order to balance the academic classes capped by the Class Size Amendment
- Enrollment may be restricted in grade levels and/or academic classes/electives where there is no room
- Teachers may volunteer to teach an additional period for a pay supplement (middle/high school)

How Does This Impact Parents/Families?

- Your child(ren) may have to change teachers frequently in order for the District to stay in compliance with the Class Size Amendment
- Your child(ren) may be forced to switch schools each year in order to meet compliance
- Less dollars will be available to provide activities/opportunities outside of a basic curriculum, thus negatively affecting the quality educational experience for your child(ren)

How Does This Impact The Schools, In Particular, And The School District, In General?

- School support personnel (such as art and music teachers, media specialists, guidance counselors, assistant principals, deans, instructional assistants, secretaries, clinic assistants, security, etc.) have been reduced to create additional teaching positions to implement the constitutional mandate on class size
- Based on the latest student enrollment projections for 2010-2011, these additional teaching positions may not be sufficient to fully implement the class size amendment
- The increased amount of class sections being scheduled per period may require the use of more portables on school campuses
- Transportation demands/costs may increase if students are bused to alternate schools due to class caps being met at schools
- Failure to comply with the constitutionally mandated class sizes will result in financial penalties to the District

See more concerning the Class Size Amendment at
<http://www.fldoe.org/classsize>

