

STATEMENT ON ELEMENTARY CLASS SIZE FROM SUPERINTENDENT CHANG

I am aware there is confusion around our policy and approach to class size. Additionally, we have heard and understand the concerns of members of our community. We target an ideal class size around our average of approximately 21-22 students per class, and make every effort to stay within our policy guidelines for maximum class size (22 for grades K-2 and 24 for grades 3-5). My goal is to keep our average class size stable. We do not favor larger class sizes and we are not looking to make class sizes of 25 our norm. We, too, are not happy that some of our classes have grown to exceed our guidelines. We will use the experience of this year to better inform our decisions as we look towards the 2019-2020 school year. Sectioning for 2019-2020 is not final, including the section reductions proposed in the budget. **Additional sections will be added, and the proposed section reductions will not occur in any case where class enrollment is found to be at or above our policy guidelines for maximum class size. Therefore, I am making the commitment that NO ELEMENTARY CLASS SECTION will be at or above our policy guidelines at the end of the sectioning process in August.** These decisions will be finalized over the summer. As in the past, we are able to accommodate these potential changes in the current proposed budget. Please see the FAQ (below) for additional information.

FAQ - CLASS SIZE

The Summit Public Schools is committed to providing the best for its students. Students have been, and always will be, at the center of our decisions and we are proud of our ongoing ability to provide a quality education for each child, in each school. This FAQ is intended to provide information on class size decisions and how they are made.

Facts about current class size:

- Currently 77 sections in grades 1-5
- Average class size: 20.2
- Guidelines for maximum class size as established by policy: 22 (K-2) and 24 (3-5)
- 90% (69) of our sections are within guidelines
- 10% (8) of our sections are currently outside of the guidelines
 - Of the 8 sections, 3 are outside the guidelines due to building administrators' prerogative to meet specific students' needs, while 5 sections are outside the guidelines due to unexpected changes in enrollment.

2018-2019	2019-2020
Current District elementary average class size ~ 20.2	Projected District elementary average class size ~ 20.5
BES average ~ 20.6	BES average ~ 20.4
FES average ~ 19	FES average ~ 20.7
JES average ~ 19.6	JES average ~ 20.1
LHES average ~ 20.8	LHES average ~ 20.5
WES average ~ 21	WES average ~ 21.1

Ideally, Summit would like to be near, or at, our class size average in as many circumstances as possible. However, unpredictable fluctuations in student population create situations in which difficult decisions need to be made about sectioning. Utilizing 22 (K-2) and 24 (3-5) as our guidelines for maximum class size (as established by Board policy) has allowed us the flexibility needed to make strategic sectioning choices while maintaining an average class size that has proven to be effective and sustainable. In order to provide a deeper understanding of that process, please read the questions and answers listed below.

1 . What process is used for sectioning at the elementary school level in Summit?

In October, enrollment at each grade and each school is evaluated by district administrators. The number of sections for a particular grade level is projected based on targeted averages, enrollment trends, transfers, and the guidelines contained within the district’s class size policy. Other considerations include highly qualified educators, available classrooms, student achievement data, district resources, the availability of support personnel, walk-throughs of classrooms, and reports from our school administrators.

As the budget process and the school year progresses, we continue to monitor student enrollment. Prior to finalizing sectioning decisions, projections are compared with

actual enrollment numbers, and adjustments are made accordingly. Final decisions regarding class sections will be made during the summer. Once the process has come to a close, or if the guidelines are exceeded during the school year, sections will not be added, however additional support will be provided to impacted sections as deemed appropriate.

2. How does district policy factor into the process?

All throughout the year we look at enrollment numbers and trends, and generally we stay within the guidelines prescribed by Board policy. The policy states that it is at the Superintendent's discretion to make sectioning decisions based on the information provided, trends, and projections for the upcoming school year. Every effort is made to create sections within our guidelines. There are unique situations that may arise where class sizes will exceed the guidelines.

3. Is it possible for budget constraints to impact sectioning decisions?

Sectioning decisions are first and foremost determined through careful consideration of educational and operational needs in conjunction with the district's policy guidelines. Class size is a function of staffing to meet the needs that are present or estimated for the following school year. Class size decisions at budget time are based on the information available during this cycle of the school year. Once the budget has been approved, changes to the number of sections offered are still possible. These changes may require internal adjustments to the budget.

4. Once sectioning is complete in summer is there any flexibility in changing sectioning decisions?

No. While efforts are made to stay below the maximum number of students in a class to allow for the potential of a new student, it is conceivable that timing and the number of students moving in could undermine those efforts. If the guidelines are exceeded during the school year, additional support will be provided to impacted sections as deemed appropriate.

5. Has the process for sectioning changed?

No. The current sectioning process has been used for many years, and our class size guidelines have stayed the same. The policy has been effective in guiding administrative decisions for the past nine years. The average class size during the 2015-2016 school year was 19.1. The average class size projection for the 2019-2020 school year is 20.5. This demonstrates that class sizes have generally remained the same over time.

6. What have we found to be the impact of classes that are sectioned at three to four students above the average?

Our elementary education program in Summit is highly regarded and has proven to be successful based on a myriad of different measures. Those measures include: teacher, parent, and student feedback, state test scores, internal test scores, data compared to similar districts, and the ultimate success of our students in the upper grades and beyond. Our students have demonstrated success in each of our schools within a variety of classroom configurations and settings due in large part to the quality of our instructional staff. Nonetheless, above average class sizes are the exception, not the rule.