

PROCEDURES

CLASS SIZE – MINIMUM, OPTIMAL AND MAXIMUM SCHOOL DISTRICT AVERAGE

In order to provide quality instruction and consistency across all grade levels, the following standards will be considered in developing class size guidelines.

Grade-Specific Considerations

Research indicates that best practices regarding minimum and optimal class sizes vary to some degree by grade level.

Course-Specific Considerations

The following are space-related factors that should be considered when fashioning class size procedures:

1. Laboratory space requires adequate room for both group work and individual work, and must support the prescribed program of studies;
2. Kindergarten classrooms usually include discrete areas for gross-motor physical activity and for activity with learning materials. Research indicates that a minimum of 50 square feet per student is desirable;
3. Art classrooms also require somewhat greater than normal per-student space, and also have to accommodate adequate ventilation; and
4. Science laboratories require learning stations outfitted with gas, water and electricity, and must afford students significant space for movement, and for proper safety precautions, during laboratory investigations.

Multi-Grade Classrooms

Multi-grade classes are covered by these procedures in the same manner as single-grade classrooms.

Special Education

Federal law requires that each special education student receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). For this reason, self-contained special education classes should be excluded from the average minimum and optimal class-size calculations.

Physical Education

Physical education class sizes must be designed with the unique pedagogical, equipment-related and space-related needs of that discipline in mind. This approach is indispensable to the effective delivery of the learning standards of this content area, and to the effective assessment of the degree of success of their delivery. Adaptive physical education classes are excluded from the average minimum and optimal class-size calculations.

English Language Learners (ELL)

Incorporation of ELL students into minimum, optimal average and maximum class sizes is inherently difficult. As with students on IEPs and 504 Plans, this is partly because of the small numbers of such students, and the inherently individualized nature of their educational programs. Strategies designed to immerse ELL students with their English-speaking peers, and the emerging emphasis on co-teaching practices, lend themselves to achieving desirable minimum and optimal average class sizes. Because of the unique characteristics of English language learners, they should generally be excluded from the average minimum and optimal class-size calculations if they are in a self-contained classroom.

Class Size Procedures

Distance Learning Classes

The 2010 legislative session expanded the availability of distance learning for Vermont students, and it is expected that this trend will continue in legislative sessions to come. Distance learning affords students access to courses that would otherwise be unavailable, either due to lack of locally qualified teachers, or due to the cost of teaching. It is recommended that for purposes of calculating minimum and optimal average class sizes, the total number of students and teachers at all sites be considered in the calculations.

Grades K-8

<u>Grade</u>	<u>RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES</u>		
	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Ideal</u>	<u>Maximum</u>
Kindergarten	15	16	18
1 st	15	18	20
2 nd	15	18	20
3 rd	15	18	20
4 th	15	20	22
5 th	15	20	22
6 th	15	20	22
7 th	15	23	25
8 th	15	23	25

Grades 9-12

1. The recommended guideline for class size for most courses is 15 to 20 students.
2. The recommended guideline for minimum class size for most courses is 12 and the maximum is 25.

Procedures for Exceptions

In cases where the minimum enrollment numbers are not met, the following steps shall be taken:

1. **Review Process:** The principal, in coordination with the Superintendent, will assess the necessity of maintaining the class. Factors such as student needs, program viability, and overall enrollment will be considered.
2. **Consolidation:** If possible, students may be reassigned to another section of the same course within the school to meet minimum class size standards.
3. **Approval:** Any decision to proceed with classes below the minimum size must be approved by the Superintendent or designee, ensuring that such decisions align with the district's educational goals and financial constraints.