

Class Size Waiver

Board Work Session

December 1, 2014

How does APS use the waiver?

- The District uses the waiver to determine the number of teachers Human Resources will allocate to each school for core subjects when developing the budget and when leveling teacher allocations after school starts.
- Principals can use the waiver as a guide to gain flexibility as they plan their master schedules.

Projected savings from class size waiver

| FY15 Scenarios for Increasing Class Size | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------|--------------------|-------|--------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Waiver | Teachers | Para-professionals | Total | Change | Cost Teachers | Cost Para-pros | Total Cost | Savings |
| 0 | 1,927 | 229 | 2,156 | | \$ 154,160,000 | \$ 7,900,500 | \$ 162,060,500 | \$ - |
| 1 | 1,868 | 224 | 2,092 | 64 | \$ 149,440,000 | \$ 7,728,000 | \$ 157,168,000 | \$ 4,892,500 |
| 2 | 1,817 | 216 | 2,033 | 59 | \$ 145,360,000 | \$ 7,452,000 | \$ 152,812,000 | \$ 4,356,000 |
| 3 | 1,772 | 210 | 1,982 | 51 | \$ 141,760,000 | \$ 7,245,000 | \$ 149,005,000 | \$ 3,807,000 |
| 4 | 1,718 | 200 | 1,918 | 64 | \$ 137,440,000 | \$ 6,900,000 | \$ 144,340,000 | \$ 4,665,000 |
| 5 | 1,675 | 191 | 1,866 | 52 | \$ 134,000,000 | \$ 6,589,500 | \$ 140,589,500 | \$ 3,750,500 |
| | | | | | | | | <u>\$21,471,000</u> |
| Note1: Core High School Max is Waiver of 3 | | | | | | | | |
| Note2: Based on avg. teacher salary of \$80,000 | | | | | | | | |
| Note3: Based on avg. para-professional salary of \$34,500 | | | | | | | | |

Class size maximum limits

- Title 20 establishes class size limits to guide school district resource allocations in order to ensure a quality basic education.
- Since the recession, the state has approved waivers to these limits to assist districts in managing with reduced resources.
- Recent guidance suggests that only school districts that are seeking or have already implemented one of the approved flexibility options will receive this waiver for FY 2016.

Many districts receive waivers

- State provides guidance for waiver adoption under Title 20.
- The following are examples of districts that utilized the guidance for 2013-2014 waivers:
 - Cobb County: 1-8 waiver for Regular Education
 - DeKalb County: 1-8 waiver for Regular Education
 - Clayton County: 1-7 waiver for Regular Education

Maintaining the current level of flexibility

| Grade(s) Subject(s) | APS FY 2014-2015 Class Size Maximum | State Maximum | Request to Exceed State Maximum by: | APS FY 2015-2016 Class Size Maximum |
|---|--|----------------------|--|--|
| Regular Kindergarten with Full-Time Paraprofessional | 25 | 20 | 1 to 5 | 25 |
| Regular Grades 1-3 No Paraprofessionals | 26 | 21 | 1 to 5 | 26 |
| Grades 4-5 - English, Math, Science, Social Studies | 33 | 28 | 1 to 5 | 33 |
| Grades 6-8 - English, Math, Science, Social Studies | 33 | 28 | 1 to 5 | 33 |
| Grades 9-12 - English, Math, Science, Social Studies | 35 | 32 | 1 to 3 | 35 |
| Grades 7-8 - CTAE Courses | 33 | 28 | 1 to 5 | 33 |
| Grades 9-12 - CTAE Courses | 35 | 30 | 1 to 5 | 35 |
| Grades 9-12 - CTAE Lab Courses | 28 | 23 | 1 to 5 | 28 |

APS Current Classroom Size Analysis

- While waivers have been in place over the last several years, the average class size in schools across the district is below the allowable maximum provided for in the waiver.

| | APS School with lowest average class size | APS School with highest average class size | State maximum | Waiver amount |
|----------------------|--|---|----------------------|----------------------|
| Kindergarten | 21.5 | 22.8 | 20 | 25 |
| Grades 1- 3 | 17.3 | 23.6 | 21 | 26 |
| Grades 4 – 5 | 18.3 | 27.0 | 28 | 33 |
| Grades 6 – 8 | 20.4 | 22.8 | 28 | 33 |
| Grades 9 - 12 | 11.8 | 23.3 | 32 | 35 |

- Does not include charter schools, which have a full-flexibility waiver.

Why do we need a waiver if our average class size is less than the state max in most cases?

- While our average class size at most schools is below the state maximum, the waiver provides flexibility for principals who may have strong rationale as to why some classes should exceed the state max.
 - For example, for a school with 43 students in the 3rd grade, the principal can choose to schedule two classes of 21 and 22 students only if the district has a waiver to exceed the state maximum of 21. Otherwise, a third teacher would be required, resulting in 3 classes of 16 students, well below the state max.
- The class size waiver determines the number of core subject teachers Human Resources will allocate to each school. This sets the floor for teacher allocations to ensure a common baseline for programming and staffing across schools (but, many schools leverage itinerate teachers and special program funds to reduce overall class sizes).
- By using the waiver amounts as the floor for allocating core subject teachers, the district is able to reallocate approximately \$21.47 million to other funding priorities that it would otherwise need for 252 additional teachers (see slide 3).

Next steps

- Approve waiver resolution.
- Present enrollment projections in January.
- Compute teacher allocations to guide HR recruitment in February.