



From the Director's Desk....

Proposed Changes in Elementary and Secondary Class Sizes

Ontario Government Education Consultations – Phase 2 – CLASS SIZE

Phase 2 of the K-12 education sector consultations builds on the consultations concluded by the Ontario Government in December 2018 for the Grants for Student Needs (GSN), and class sizes in Ontario which concluded in February 2019.

The following background and proposed changes are outlined in full in the [Class Size Consultation Guide – March 2019](#) on the Ontario Government – Ministry of Education website.

BACKGROUND:

The Ontario Government's key goals are:

Key Goals:

1. Student Achievement: Success and well-being of every child.
2. Protecting Front Line Staff: The planned changes are to be managed through attrition protection for teachers.
3. Fiscal Responsibility: Delivering services in an effective and efficient manner.
4. Evidence-based Decision Making: Grounded in sound policy, inter-jurisdictional scans, and empirical research.

These goals provide the framework for the questions the Ontario Government is asking education stakeholders. Feedback to the Ontario Government during this second round of consultations is May 31, 2019.

Proposed changes to class size in Ontario publically funded schools is outlined in the table below:

Grades 1-8

GRADES	CURRENT STATUS	PROPOSED CHANGES	BWDSB COMMENTS
Grades 1-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 90 per cent of primary classes of a board must have 20 or fewer students • All school boards have a class size limit of 23 students • The funded average class size is 19.8 	No change	No change anticipated.
Grades 4-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Averages vary by board as identified in the class size regulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum board-wide average class size of 	The is no changed anticipated in BWDSB as our class sizes for grades

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The funded average class size is 23.84 	<p>24.5, with no exceptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funded average class size of 24.5 	<p>4 to 8 were already aligned with the government's proposed change.</p>
Mixed Grade	<p>All mixed-grade classes consisting of primary grade students combined with students from junior-intermediate grades (grades 4 to 8) must have 23 or fewer students</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>No change anticipated.</p>

Grades 9-12

GRADES	CURRENT STATUS	PROPOSED CHANGES	COMMENTS
Grades 9-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School board class size averages must not exceed 22 in grades 9 to 12 The funded average class size is 22.0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School board class size averages must not exceed 28 in grades 9 to 12 The funded average class size is 28.0 	<p>This proposed change may result in some impact to secondary schools in BWDSB. Going from a ratio of 22:1 to 28:1 is a substantial increase. The government is using an attrition model to achieve this outcome. This means that retiring teachers will not be replaced until we have achieved the 28:1 ratio.</p> <p>What does this mean for BWDSB?:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School boards are required to calculate the potential reduction in secondary teaching positions over the next four (4) years; School boards are required to project the number of secondary teacher retirements over the next four (4) years using a formula provided by the Ontario government; and The Ontario government will provide school boards with attrition

funding to prevent lay-offs due to class size changes over the next four (4) years, and respond locally to specialized programming needs.

What will be the potential impact in BWDSB secondary schools?*

- Secondary teaching positions will be downsized by approximately 50 full-time equivalent positions over the next four (4) years due to class size changes
- Secondary principals will be timing tabling their schools with fewer teachers available to teach the same number of students
- Locally negotiated class sizes maximums in BWDSB currently range from 16 to 31 students depending on programs
- Class size maximums in BWDSB will need to be increased, for example to 23 to 35 or higher to achieve the new ration of 28:1, and may vary considerably depending on provincial or local negotiations
- The variety of qualifications available to teach courses in a

			<p>particular school may be more limited if a school has had teacher retirements that cannot be replaced</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program choices may be reduced for students • Fewer adults in the building may impact student supervision • Larger class sizes may result in increased staff workload or student instruction concerns that may also contribute to higher absenteeism rates for both students and staff. <p>*There may be other impacts not yet determined as schools boards have not received the 2019-202 Technical Paper to complete the budgeting process.</p>
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Bluewater District School Board remains committed to its vision of *Preparing Our Students Today for the World of Tomorrow*.

Contact information

For further information, please contact Alana Murray, Director of Education.

May 21, 2019