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MEMORANDUM

TO: District School Superintendents
FROM: Suzanne Pridgeon
DATE: December 17, 2020
SUBJECT: 2020-21 Class Size Reduction Compliance

Section 1003.03(2), Florida Statutes (F.S.), requires the Florida Department of Education (department) to calculate annually class size measures based upon the October full-time equivalent (FTE) student membership survey (Survey 2). Compliance with class size maximums will be determined using final Survey 2 data, which will include all amendments made through December 15, 2020. After this date, no amendments may be made to Survey 2 data.

Section 1003.03(4)(a), F.S., requires a reduction in class size categorical funding for districts and charter schools that are out of compliance with class size requirements. In January 2021, the department will notify school districts regarding the status of their compliance with class size requirements. Shortly after this notification, districts and charter schools will be notified of any reduction in funding. Any district-operated school or charter school that is out of compliance at this time will be required to submit a class size compliance plan by February 1, 2021, that explains the actions the district or charter school will take to ensure compliance by October of the following school year. A template for the plan will be provided by the department. A compliance plan for a district-operated school must be certified by the district school board. A charter school's compliance plan must be certified by the charter school's governing board.

Section 1003.03(4)(c), F.S., authorizes the Commissioner of Education (commissioner) to recommend an alternate reduction amount if there is evidence that class size requirements were not met despite appropriate efforts to do so or because of an extreme emergency. A district or charter school may appeal to the commissioner by submitting evidence documenting why the class size requirements were not met. The appeal should be based on extenuating circumstances, such as data reporting errors. Extenuating circumstances presented by a district or charter school will be considered on a case-by-case basis. All appeals must be based on final Survey 2 data, after the survey closes on December 15, 2020. As in previous years, appeals on the basis of data reporting errors must be submitted through the department's appeal web application, and all appeals not based on data reporting errors must be submitted through ShareFile. **The deadline to submit all appeals and supporting documentation is January 11, 2021.** Additional information regarding the appeal process will be provided in January when districts are notified of the October 2020 class sizes.

Suzanne Pridgeon
Deputy Commissioner, Finance and Operations

The commissioner's alternate reduction recommendation must be submitted to the Legislative Budget Commission for approval by February 15, 2021, and will include any adjustments for successful appeals, as well as any adjustment for unexpected growth. If approved, the department will notify districts of the alternate adjustment to the district's class size reduction categorical allocation, and will prepare the 2020-21 Class Size Reallocation and Restoration calculation, which will reallocate up to 25 percent of the total reduction to districts and schools that were in compliance. The remaining balance of the reduction funds will be restored to districts and charter schools that were not in compliance with class size requirements, provided they submitted a class size compliance plan by February 1, 2021.

TimeLine for Class Size Compliance

- December 17, 2020 – Memorandum outlining the class size reduction process and timeline for appeals.
- January 2021 – Commissioner notifies districts of the October 2020 class sizes. Appeal process begins for districts and charter schools that are not in compliance. Compliance plans may be submitted to the commissioner.
- January 2021 – Commissioner notifies districts of initial reduction calculation.
- January 11, 2021 – Deadline for notification of appeals and submission of appeals and supporting documentation.
- January 2021 – Review of appeals.
- February 1, 2021 – Deadline for districts' and charter schools' submission of class size compliance plans.
- February 15, 2021 – Deadline for the commissioner's submission of an alternate reduction calculation to the Legislative Budget Commission.
- February–May 2021 – Approval of reduction calculation by the Legislative Budget Commission or enactment of the 2021-22 fiscal year budget, to include language that approves the reduction calculation.
- February–June 2021 – Following approval of the reduction calculation, calculation of reallocations and restorations.

Please contact Josh Bemis at 850-245-0405 or by email at Josh.Bemis@fldoe.org with questions regarding the class size reduction requirements or calculation, and contact Judy Lenczyk at 850-245-0400 or by email at Judy.Lenczyk@fldoe.org with questions regarding class size processing or reports.

SP/ja

cc: District Finance Officers
District Charter School Directors
District MIS Directors
Mark Eggers, Assistant Deputy Commissioner
Li Liu, Senior Educational Program Director
Josh Bemis, Educational Policy Director
Judy Lenczyk, FTE/CS Manager