

July 26, 2004

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: LEA Superintendents  
LEA Finance Officers  
LEA SIMS / NCWISE Coordinators

FROM: Philip W. Price

SUBJECT: Class Size Requirements for 2004-05

Class size requirements for third grade have changed for the 2004-05 school year. The class size reduction for third grade is reflected in the chart below showing the K-12 class size requirements for 2004-05.

Compliance with class size requirements, as outlined in G.S. 115C-301, is required by the end of the second school month.

<b>Grade Span</b>	<b>LEA-wide Average</b>	<b>Maximum Class Size</b>
K-2	21	24
3	21	24
4-9	26	29
10-12	29	32

The legislation reducing class size in third grade requires that a LEA use the additional allotted positions in the third grade only. In order to determine a LEA's compliance with this requirement, Financial and Business Services will monitor each LEA's third grade class size average for **typical** classes to determine that the required class size average of 21 has been met. For the purpose of monitoring the assignment of allotted teacher positions in third grade, a typical class is defined as a regular (standard academic level) self-contained class in which the teacher spends the majority of the day with the same students teaching a complete curriculum.

Second-month class size data, as reported for a LEA through the School Activity Report (SAR), will be used to determine each LEA's compliance with requirements for both class size and the assignment of allotted teacher positions in third grade. Note that it may be necessary for Financial and Business Services to request additional class size data for those few LEAs that may have schools that do not organize self-contained classes in third grade but instead organize classes as departmentalized or blocked.

As always, special attention should be given to class sizes in grades K-3 since School-Based Management and Accountability Program (ABCs) class size waivers are not available for those grades. All school administrators should review their school's SAR to ensure that class size data accurately reflects the number of students being taught within individual classes. Inaccurately reported classes continue to inflate the number of class size overages for many LEAs.

A school that wishes to exceed class size requirements in grades 4-12 must include an ABCs waiver in its school improvement plan. An ABCs class size waiver included in a school's improvement plan for 2002-03 will continue to be in effect for the remaining one year of the ABCs cycle. Notification of new ABCs waivers for class size should be sent to Curriculum and School Reform Services at DPI.

Requests for an individual class size exception waiver (not an ABCs waiver) provided for under the provisions of G.S. 115C-301(g) and 115C-47(10) require the completion of a Class Size Exception Waiver Request for an Individual Class form. Class size requirements are outlined in Chapter Four of the **School Attendance and Student Accounting Manual**. The manual may be viewed online at [www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/) .

This form can be found in Chapter Four of the **School Attendance and Student Accounting Manual**. Before any individual class size exception waiver will be granted, a LEA must explain why the class size exception cannot be corrected, and the local board of education must approve the waiver. Please note that a school **will not** be eligible to receive an individual class size exception waiver (not an ABCs waiver) if the school has received one for the last two consecutive school years. The Information Analysis and Support Section **will not** approve waivers for class size exceptions for a school if parents have contacted the Section regarding class size overages at the school. We ask that you pass this information on to each principal in your LEA.

PWP/BRW/dkm

**OFBS # 04-19**