



Support HB254: Class Size Goals

Create actionable data and targets for class sizes

Sponsors: Rep Will Guzzardi, Sen Robert Peters

Smaller class sizes benefit all students and have been shown to have even larger beneficial effects for low income, children of color and for younger students.

37 states have laws or regulations to limit or reduce class size in K-12 public schools, including Nevada, Texas and North Carolina.

This bill has one main objective: give parents and policymakers accurate data on **individual** class sizes in IL public schools, along with a comparison to the class sizes incorporated into the evidence based funding formula. This data will provide parents with timely information about actual class sizes at their children's schools and will provide policymakers and the public with a critical metric for understanding where new funding dollars are going.

Average class size statistics are currently only reported in the fall of the following year and are only available by grade level through 8th grade, not for high school. The IL school code does not require detail below school level.

What does the bill specify?

Reporting requirements: School districts, by November 16th, must annually report these numbers to the IL State Board of Education and post them online; ISBE must post this information from all districts on its own site by Jan 31:

- Total number of teachers in the district.
- Pupil to teacher ratio for the district.
- Total class teachers, by grade level and subject, for the district.
- Class size for each class and section.
- Number of classes/sections that are larger than the sizes specified in the EBF:
 - 15:1 for K-3rd, low-income classes
 - 20:1 for K-3rd, non-low-income
 - 20:1 for 4-12th, low-income
 - 25:1 for 4-12th, non-low-income

Why is this important?

- **Alignment with new funding formula:** The school funding bill passed in 2017 includes class size as one element in the evidence-based funding formula. This bill will make the detailed data that is already being collected easily available to the public in order to understand how districts are spending additional funds as the state moves towards adequate funding.
- **Accountable and actionable data:** Requiring the publication of current actual class sizes gives parents and school board members a much clearer, up-to-date picture of conditions in their district and schools than the IL Report Card currently provides
- **Class size matters:** The most robust research using data from a large randomly controlled study¹ has shown that class size reductions benefit all students with the most benefits for younger children, children of color and those from low-income households. Lower class sizes are associated with increased teacher retention², and experienced, high quality teachers are associated with better learning outcomes.

¹<https://goo.gl/haBfBF>

²<https://goo.gl/rM27UA>