



## Support HB5481: Class Size Goals

### Create actionable data and targets for class sizes

Smaller class sizes benefit all students and have been shown to have *larger* beneficial effects for low income, children of color, and 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 will achieve two goals:

1. Inform policy by providing accurate data on individual class sizes in Illinois public schools, a critical metric currently missing from reporting and not covered by district or school level student-teacher ratios.
2. Set targets for class size for kindergarten through grade 12 classes.

#### What does the bill specify?

- **Reporting requirements:** School districts, by the 60th day of instruction, must annually report the following to the State Board of Education:
  - 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 teachers by grade and subject (math, science, lang. arts) along with individual class sizes.
  - Teachers teaching multiple sections (art, music, middle/high school teachers) along with their individual section class sizes as well as their total caseload across sections.
- **2020 Goals:** The bill sets targets for the General Assembly to ensure that class sizes and caseloads do not exceed:
  - 18:1 for kindergarten classes
  - 22:1 for grades 1-5
  - 25:1 for grades 6-12
  - 150:1 total caseload for teachers assigned to multiple class sections (e.g. no more than six classes of 6-12 students at the above class sizes)

#### Why is this important?

- **Evidence based:** The most robust research using data from a large randomly controlled study<sup>1</sup> has shown that class size reductions benefit students in general and especially younger children, children of color and those from low-income households.
- **Accountable and actionable data:** Requiring the collection of data related to current class sizes allows education administrators and policy makers to make informed decisions.
- **Retains experienced teachers:** Lower class sizes are associated with increased teacher retention<sup>2</sup>. Experienced, high quality teachers are associated with better learning outcomes. In contrast, turnover decreases overall teacher experience levels, reduces principal capacity due to recruiting needs, and interrupts community connections.
- **Alignment with funding:** The school funding bill passed last fall includes class sizes as an element in the evidence based funding formula. This bill provides both targets and evaluative data to measure progress towards those funding goals.

<sup>1</sup> <https://goo.gl/haBfBF>

<sup>2</sup> <https://goo.gl/rM27UA>