



Support HB254: Class Size Goals

Create actionable data and targets for class sizes

Sponsor: Rep Will Guzzardi

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 two objectives:

1. Give parents and policymakers accurate, timely data on **individual** class sizes in IL public schools, 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.
2. Affirm General Assembly's support for reasonably-sized classes for kindergarten through grade 12.

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 make adequate funding provisions for public education in our state such that class sizes and caseloads would not exceed by 2020:
 - 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 study¹ 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 actual class sizes allows education administrators and policy makers to make informed decisions.
- **Retains experienced teachers:** Lower class sizes are associated with increased teacher retention². 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 new funding formula:** The school funding bill passed in 2017 includes class size as one element in the evidence-based funding formula. This bill affirms *nearer-term* targets (2021) and ensures that the detailed data is collected in order to understand how districts are spending additional funds and to measure progress towards funding adequacy.

¹ <https://goo.gl/haBfBF>

² <https://goo.gl/rM27UA>