

What is the class-size mandate?

In 2018-2019 the maximum individual K-3 class sizes will drop from 24 students to between 16 and 18 students, depending on grade level.

For more detailed information on how this mandate came about, [click here](#).

*****Update on How Mandate Will Affect Wake County - 12/15/2017**

Aren't smaller class sizes a good thing?

On the surface, dropping class size numbers seems like a great idea. But when the mandate has no funding behind it, there is no money to hire more teachers or, more importantly, create more actual classroom space. In Wake County alone, this mandate would create the need for 400 extra classrooms county-wide; equivalent to 14 NEW elementary schools.

So what could/will happen at Apex Elementary?

- At Apex Elementary, the class size mandate will lead to larger 4th and 5th grade classes – upwards of 31 students – because some of those upper level teachers will need to be brought down to lower grades to meet the class size mandate (there is no mandate for how large 4th and 5th grade classrooms can be).
- The mandate will definitely lead to our school needing to utilize the trailers outside. Right now there is no funding to add additional trailers so even this is not a perfect fix.
- Our art, music, AIG and interventionists may not have their own classrooms.
 - Apex Elementary would see “art on a cart” i.e. our art teacher would move from class to class rather than have her own space as her classroom would be needed to house a K, 1, 2, or 3 classroom. Consider all the art projects that simply cannot be done in a traditional classroom. Also, where would our art teacher store her supplies? Art projects will not be at the same magnitude or creativity level that they are currently. Things like pottery or sculpture will not be possible.
- Finally, Apex Elementary could see 'combo' classes. Meaning, 2 classes of the same grade could be in one classroom space (i.e. 30 Kindergarteners with 2 certified teachers in ONE classroom).

How can I stop this from happening?

The most important thing you can do, right now, is to reach out to your legislators to let them know you want them to reconsider the class-size mandate or fully fund it, IMMEDIATELY. Legislators need to hear from YOU, the parents.

Using this website you can locate your legislator: <http://www.ncleg.net/representation/WhoRepresentsMe.aspx>. If you have trouble identifying who your NCGA House and Senate representatives are, please contact apexespresident@gmail.com.

I don't know what to say to my legislators. I'm not good at writing letters!

No problem!

Below is a template email you can use when you write your legislators. Try to modify it with a personal quip (let them know why your kid loves art, how they don't do well in a large classroom, how you aren't happy with your child being in a trailer). The most important thing is to write or call them and let them know that YOU VOTE and YOU CARE!

Also consider joining the SaveOurSchools NC Parents for Public Schooling Facebook page which updates regularly on the status of the mandate and connects parents in the state who are concerned for public education, to share and to learn about the different issues facing different areas of the state.



Hello, my name is _____ . I am a concerned parent at Apex Elementary School and your constituent. I am writing to ask whether and how you plan to help address the NCGA's class size mandate and the harms it has caused.

Should this class size mandate not be addressed by 2018, our school will see upwards of 31 students in our 4th and 5th grades and possible combo classes in our younger grades. This places an undue burden on teachers and does not contribute to a healthy learning environment.

In 2017, our school was forced to fire our full time technology specialist and instead hire an un-certified teacher who, although working full time hours, has to rely upon the classroom teachers and grade level chairs to come up with curriculum for the technology rotation. This, of course, demands additional planning time on the part of the teachers -- planning time they don't have.

EVERY ONE of our Kindergarten and 3rd grade classrooms has more than 18 students. Yet we have no additional classroom space. What will we do, come fall of 2018, when we are forced to find more teachers (teachers that NC cannot produce fast enough) and classroom space that simply doesn't exist? We will be forced to either eliminate our specialists or move them to carts.

While I agree that small class sizes may be an admirable goal, they are not worth the loss of specials or any of the other ill-effects that they are causing in the schools. Therefore, I am asking for your help in solving this problem. One way to help is to sign and enact the provisions of the NC Education Pledge that was delivered to your office in June (and may be found at ncedepledge.org). You may also consider sponsoring a bill that would waive the class size requirements for school systems that cannot, despite a good faith effort to do so, comply with the mandate without causing significant harm to the overall quality of their students' instruction.

I understand that the NCGA's regular session does not start until May 16. However, this is an issue that needs to be addressed as soon as possible. Therefore, I ask that you that you consider asking your leadership to call another special session to deal specifically with this issue.

Respectfully,
