

1 **FRANKLIN CENTRAL SUPERVISORY UNION AND ITS MEMBER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

2
3 **COMMON PROCEDURE FOR POLICY ON**
4 **THE MINIMUM AND OPTIMAL SUPERVISORY UNION-WIDE AVERAGE CLASS SIZES**
5 **G14**
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7 **Implementation:**

- 8 1. The Superintendent/designee shall, in consultation with building principals/director, develop
- 9 Supervisory Union-wide minimum and optimum average class-size guidelines that take into
- 10 account the instructional needs of specific elementary grade intervals as well as required and
- 11 elective courses at the secondary level.
- 12 2. Class-size guidelines in the Supervisory Union may vary as necessary to reflect differences
- 13 among school districts due to geography and other factors, such as school size and
- 14 programmatic needs.
- 15 3. The guidelines shall also ensure compliance with state and/or federal requirements.
- 16 4. The Superintendent shall report to the Board at least annually on the implementation of this
- 17 policy, and shall include in his/her report information related to the use of the guidelines in
- 18 determining actual class sizes and program offerings in the schools within the Supervisory
- 19 Union.
- 20 5. The Vermont Department of Education’s Class-Size Policy Guidelines shall be considered in
- 21 developing class-size guidelines.
- 22 6. This policy shall be posted on the Supervisory Union website and forwarded to the
- 23 Commissioner of Education by January 15, 2011.¹

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25 **Class-Size Model Policy Guidelines:**

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27 In order to provide quality instruction and consistency across all grade levels, the following
28 standards will be considered in developing class-size guidelines for member schools.

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30 ***Technical Education Class-Size Differentials:*** Career and Technical Education (CTE) class size
31 is primarily driven by factors related to course expectations, safety considerations, and space
32 constraints. These factors, which drive maximum class size, may also impact minimum class
33 size decisions, and must be evaluated in the context of guidelines specific to the course and
34 equipment under consideration.

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36 ***Grade-Specific Considerations:*** Best practices regarding minimum and optimal class sizes vary
37 to some degree by grade level.

¹Section 15 Act 153 of 2010 requires Superintendents to “work with the school boards of the member districts to develop and implement policies regarding minimum and optimal average class sizes for regular and technical education classes. The policies may be supervisory union-wide, may be course or grade specific, and may reflect differences among school districts due to geography and other factors.” 16 V.S.A. § 242(5).

Section 16 of Act 153 of 2010 requires that, by January 15, 2011, each supervisory union and member district board: 1) adopt minimum and optimal average class size policies, 2) post the policy on the Supervisory Union website, and 3) forward the policy to the Commissioner of Education.

38 **Course-Specific Considerations:** The following are space-related factors that should be
39 considered when fashioning class-size requirements:

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- 41 1. Laboratory space requires adequate room for both group work and individual work, and
42 must support the prescribed program of studies;
- 43 2. Kindergarten classrooms usually include discrete areas for gross motor physical activity
44 and for activity with learning materials. A minimum of 50 square feet per student is
45 desirable;
- 46 3. Art classrooms also require somewhat greater than normal per student space, and also
47 have to accommodate adequate ventilation. A minimum of 50 square feet per student is
48 desirable; and
- 49 4. Science laboratories require learning stations outfitted with gas, water, and electricity,
50 and must afford students significant space for movement and for proper safety
51 precautions during laboratory investigations. A minimum of 50 square feet per student is
52 desirable.

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54 **Multi-Grade Classrooms:** Multi-grade classrooms are covered by these policies in the same
55 manner as single-grade classrooms.

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57 **Special Education:** Federal law requires that each special education student receive a free and
58 appropriate public education (FAPE). For this reason, self-contained special education classes
59 should be excluded from the average minimum and optimal class-size calculations.

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61 **Physical Education:** Physical education class sizes must be designed with the unique
62 pedagogical, equipment-related and space-related needs of that discipline in mind. This
63 approach is indispensable to the effective delivery of the learning standards of this content area,
64 and to the effective assessment of the degree of success of their delivery. Adaptive physical
65 education classes are excluded from the average minimum and optimal class-size calculations.

66
67 **English Language Learners (ELL):** Incorporation of ELL students into minimum and optimal
68 average class sizes is inherently difficult. As with students on IEPs and 504 Plans, this is partly
69 because of the small numbers of such students, and the inherently individualized nature of their
70 educational programs. Strategies designed to immerse ELL students with their English-speaking
71 peers and emerging emphasis on co-teaching practices lend themselves to achieving desirable
72 minimum and optimal average class sizes. Because of the unique characteristics of English
73 language learners, they should generally be excluded from the average minimum and optimal
74 class-size calculations if they are in a self-contained classroom.

75
76 **Distance Learning Classes:** The expanded availability of distance learning for Vermont
77 students will afford students access to courses that would otherwise be unavailable, either due to
78 the lack of locally qualified teachers or due to the cost of teaching. It is recommended that for
79 purposes of calculating minimum and optimal average class sizes, the total number of students
80 and teachers at all sites be considered in the calculation.