



School Size Policies, Public on School Sizes

This presentation builds on the July presentation on school size policies from around the country by providing information similar policies in Arkansas districts collected through the district survey. Additionally, it presents survey responses on class size and case load standards for districts in Arkansas.

School Size Policies

Nationally only a handful of states have specific school size policies including Arizona, Florida, North Carolina, and Kentucky. Some states have a range of size figures and North Carolina provides standards based focusing on school climate or economic efficiency.

| State | Elementary | Middle | High |
|---|------------|---------|----------|
| Arizona | 500 | 500 | 1000 |
| Florida – new schools | 500 | 700 | 900 |
| Florida – existing schools | 820 | 1139 | 2180 |
| North Carolina – based on school climate | 300-400 | 300-600 | 400-800 |
| North Carolina – based on economic efficiency | 450-700 | 600-800 | 800-1200 |
| Kentucky (minimum-maximum) | 300-600 | 400-900 | 500-1500 |

Few of the districts or charters that responded to the statewide survey had school size policies in place. Just 30 of the 181 respondents to the question had these policies. For those with policies, public input was provided on the policies through a number of approaches, including public hearings, surveys, and planning committees. However, over 30 percent of respondents said the public does not have input on the policies.

Class Size Policies

Few districts or charters responded that they had specific class size policies, as seen in the following table. Those that did respond were asked about the minimum, maximum, and ideal size for each grade range. For the lower elementary grades, respondents felt that class sizes of 20-30 were ideal, 25-30 for upper elementary grades, 28-47 for middle grades, and 28-50 for high school.

| Does your school district or charter system have a policy or guidelines on class sizes? | | | | | | |
|---|-------|------------|-------|------------|-------|------------|
| | Yes | | No | | N/A | |
| | Count | Percentage | Count | Percentage | Count | Percentage |
| Lower elementary grades (K-3) | 10 | 62.50% | 2 | 12.50% | 4 | 25.00% |
| Upper elementary grades (4-5) | 8 | 57.14% | 2 | 14.29% | 4 | 28.57% |
| Middle/junior high grades | 8 | 61.54% | 1 | 7.69% | 4 | 30.77% |
| High school grades | 8 | 66.67% | 1 | 8.33% | 3 | 25.00% |

Caseload Policies

Many responding districts and charters have caseload limits for staff.

| Does your district have caseload maximums for the following positions? | | | | | | |
|--|--------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|
| | Yes | | No | | N/A | |
| | Number | Percentage | Number | Percentage | Number | Percentage |
| Counselors | 55 | 74.32% | 13 | 17.57% | 6 | 8.11% |
| Nurses | 36 | 50.70% | 25 | 35.21% | 10 | 14.08% |
| Reading/ Math Specialists | 12 | 16.44% | 39 | 53.42% | 22 | 30.14% |
| Special Education Teachers (Full day/ self-contained programs) | 58 | 81.69% | 9 | 12.68% | 4 | 5.63% |
| Special Education Teachers (Partial day/ resource programs) | 40 | 56.34% | 12 | 16.90% | 19 | 26.76% |
| Speech Therapists | 39 | 54.17% | 21 | 29.17% | 12 | 16.67% |
| Occupational Therapists/ Physical Therapists | 28 | 38.89% | 22 | 30.56% | 22 | 30.56% |
| Assistant Principals | 29 | 39.19% | 25 | 33.78% | 20 | 27.03% |
| Classified/support staff | 13 | 18.06% | 41 | 56.94% | 18 | 25.00% |
| Other instructional staff | 9 | 12.68% | 40 | 56.34% | 22 | 30.99% |

Districts range in the levels with the most frequent case load for counselors at 450, 750 for nurses, 500 for specialists, 15 for self-contained special education teachers, 45 for resource room special education teachers, and 500 for assistant principals.

| | Min | Max | Mode |
|--|-----|-------|------|
| Counselors | 135 | 750 | 450 |
| Nurses | 200 | 3,100 | 750 |
| Reading/ Math Specialists | 50 | 600 | 500 |
| Special Education Teachers (Full day/ self-contained programs) | 6.1 | 30 | 15 |
| Special Education Teachers (Partial day/ resource programs) | 10 | 45 | 45 |
| Speech Therapists | 10 | 60 | 45 |
| Assistant Principals | 175 | 1,000 | 500 |