



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Report

**STATUS OF THE
KINDERGARTEN
THROUGH THIRD GRADE
CLASS SIZE REDUCTION
PROGRAM**

JANUARY 14, 2004

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

***BACKGROUND: PRIMARY CLASS SIZE
REDUCTION PROGRAM BEGAN IN THE 1994-96
BIENNIUM***

- This incentive-based program began in the 1994-1996 biennium with the first appropriation of \$38.7 million being made in fiscal year 1995.
- The objective of the program was to provide additional funding as an “incentive” for school divisions to reduce their class sizes in grades kindergarten through three below the required class sizes established in the Standards of Quality (SOQ).
- The SOQ for the 1994-1996 biennium required division-wide student to teacher ratios of 25 to 1 with no class being larger than 30. At the kindergarten level, an aide was required in any class that was larger than 25 students.
- This program provided a means for school divisions to acquire state support to reduce class sizes below the levels required by the SOQ.
- The program was initiated as a result of the recommendations of the Commission on Educational Opportunities for All Virginians.

***BACKGROUND: VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION
SUCCESS LEADS TO EXPANSION OF THE
PROGRAM AND ULTIMATELY TO A REDUCTION IN
THE SOQ PUPIL TEACHER RATIOS***

- The 1998 General Assembly made significant changes to the program for the 1998-2000 biennium based on the widespread participation in the program.
- First, the program was expanded to make it available to all schools with grades Kindergarten through three.
- Second, the range of student to teacher ratios was expanded from three levels to eight levels to soften the transition from one tier to the next and to include a tier for all schools regardless of the free lunch rate.
- This expansion also further reduced the pupil to teacher ratios and maximum class size caps that were available to schools.
- In 1999, recognizing that all schools were participating in the program at a reduced class size of at least 24 to 1, the General Assembly passed legislation to reduce the SOQ required student to teacher ratio to 24 to 1 in kindergarten through the third grade. This change was effective July 1, 2000.

CURRENT PROGRAM FUNDING PROVIDES APPROXIMATELY \$61.8 MILLION ANNUALLY TO REDUCE K-3 CLASS SIZES

- SB/HB 29 includes \$62.5 million in fiscal year 2003 and \$61.8 million in fiscal year 2004 to be disbursed by the Department of Education as an incentive payment for reducing class sizes in the primary grades. (See **Attachment A** for relevant appropriation act language from Item 147, SB/HB 29 as introduced on December 17, 2003.)

- Key components of this incentive-based funding include:
 - The available funds provide the state share of additional cost to reduce class sizes below the levels required by the SOQ.
 - Schools are funded based on the greater of the division average or the actual statewide division incremental per pupil cost. (HB/SB 30, the Governor's introduced budget bill for the 2004-2006 biennium, proposes to change the funded per pupil amount for each division to be based on the lower of the division's average or the statewide division average incremental per pupil cost.)
 - The funding and the applicable ratios and class caps are applied at the school level based on the percent of students eligible for free lunch at each school.
 - For fiscal year 2004, the per pupil incremental cost ranged from \$302 to \$1,264.

- The table in **Attachment A** shows the reduced pupil to teacher ratios and class caps available to each school under the program based on its free lunch eligibility rate.

IMPLEMENTATION, DATA COLLECTION, AND COMPLIANCE FOR FY 2004

- School divisions were required to provide data to the Department of Education demonstrating the reduced ratios and maximum class sizes that they were providing at particular schools. This information was due to the department by October 15, 2003. As of the date of this report, data has been received for 768 of 769 eligible schools.
- Consistent with the process for determining compliance with other staffing ratios, school divisions are allowed to count the time spent by resource teachers (e.g., art, music, physical education, etc.) in kindergarten through grade three when calculating the pupil-teacher ratios for this initiative.
- As stipulated in the SOQ statute, special education teachers cannot be counted toward meeting the reduced ratios.
- Information for this report is based on certified fall membership and staffing data for fiscal year 2004.

IMPLEMENTATION, DATA COLLECTION, AND COMPLIANCE FOR FY 2004

- As of the date of this report, 765 schools met the requirements for the lowest pupil to teacher ratio for which they qualified. These schools participated at the following ratios for fiscal year 2004:

14 to 1 – 31 schools	18 to 1 – 115 schools
15 to 1 – 12 schools	19 to 1 – 234 schools
16 to 1 – 23 schools	20 to 1 – 285 schools
17 to 1 – 65 schools	

- If local circumstances (e.g., lack of classroom space) do not permit participation at the qualifying ratio for a particular school, divisions may elect to have eligible schools participate at a higher ratio, with a commensurate reduction of state and required local funds.
- Three schools failed to qualify at the lowest eligible pupil-teacher ratio. The following schools did not meet the requirements for the lowest pupil to teacher ratio for which they qualified, but did accept a reduced funding level at a qualifying pupil-teacher ratio.

School Name:

KEGOTANK ELEMENTARY
METOMPKIN ELEM
PUNGOTEAGUE ELEMENTARY

Division:

ACCOMACK COUNTY
ACCOMACK COUNTY
ACCOMACK COUNTY

IMPLEMENTATION, DATA COLLECTION, AND COMPLIANCE FOR FY 2004

- As of the date of this report, the City of Colonial Heights has not submitted their data for Lakeview Elementary. The department is currently working with the Colonial Heights school division to complete the data submission.
- Six divisions reported hiring additional teachers or resource teachers in order to comply with the lowest eligible ratio for some of their schools. In addition, divisions likely hired teachers and arranged students in advance of the school year in anticipation of the requirements of this program.
- Alternatively, if local circumstances do not permit participation at the qualifying ratio for all grade levels for a particular school, divisions may elect to have eligible schools participate only for certain grade levels, with a commensurate reduction of state and required local funds. For fiscal year 2004, no schools elected to eliminate certain grade levels to meet eligibility requirements.
- As provided in the Appropriation Act, a waiver may be granted to divisions for the class cap requirement in a school that has only one class in an affected grade level. For fiscal year 2004, such a waiver has been requested for two schools:

School Name:

COUNCIL ELEMENTARY
GROVE HILL ELEMENTARY

Division:

BUCHANAN COUNTY
PAGE COUNTY

- **Attachment B** provides projected entitlements by school division for fiscal year 2004. Actual payments will be contingent on updated Fall Membership and program participation data.

Budget Language Excerpt from HB/SB 29, Item 147

8. Primary Class Size Payments

a. An additional payment estimated at \$62,482,702 the first year and \$61,788,283 the second year from the general fund shall be disbursed by the Department of Education as an incentive payment for reducing class sizes in the primary grades.

b. The Department of Education shall calculate the payment based on the incremental cost of providing the lower class sizes based on the greater of the division average per pupil cost of all divisions or the actual division per pupil cost.

c. Localities are required to provide a match for these funds based on the composite index of local ability-to-pay.

d. By November 1 of each year school divisions must provide data to the Department of Education that each participating school has a September 30 pupil/teacher ratio in grades K through 3 that meet the following criteria:

Qualifying School Percentage of Students Approved Eligible for Free Lunch	Grades K-3 School Ratio	Maximum Individual Class Size
16% but less than 30%	20 to 1	25
30% but less than 45%	19 to 1	24
45% but less than 55%	18 to 1	23
55% but less than 65%	17 to 1	22
65% but less than 70%	16 to 1	21
70% but less than 75%	15 to 1	20
75% or more	14 to 1	19

e. School divisions may elect to have eligible schools participate at a higher ratio, or only in a portion of grades kindergarten through three, with a commensurate reduction of state and required local funds, if local conditions do not permit participation at the established ratio and/or maximum individual class size. Special education teachers shall not be counted towards meeting these required pupil/teacher ratios in grades kindergarten through three.

f. The Superintendent of Public Instruction may grant waivers to school divisions for the class size requirement in schools that have only one class in an affected grade level in a primary school.

g. The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall provide a report on the status of the reduction in primary class sizes to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Appropriations, House Education, Senate Finance, and Senate Education and Health Committees annually, prior to the commencement of the General Assembly session.

K-3 Primary Class Size Reduction Program HB/SB 29 Estimated FY 2004 Payments

Div #	Division	Number of Participating Schools	Estimated FY 2004 Payments
001	ACCOMACK	6	690,062
002	ALBEMARLE	8	203,634
003	ALLEGHANY	4	176,725
004	AMELIA	1	142,802
005	AMHERST	7	326,007
006	APPOMATTOX	2	219,040
007	ARLINGTON	15	465,506
008	AUGUSTA	8	370,276
009	BATH	1	8,154
010	BEDFORD	10	359,861
011	BLAND	2	58,610
012	BOTETOURT	1	18,866
013	BRUNSWICK	4	307,605
014	BUCHANAN	6	510,115
015	BUCKINGHAM	3	217,271
016	CAMPBELL	7	550,329
017	CAROLINE	4	323,927
018	CARROLL	8	344,322
019	CHARLES CITY	1	62,396
020	CHARLOTTE	4	224,630
021	CHESTERFIELD	10	1,061,673
022	CLARKE		
023	CRAIG	1	41,396
024	CULPEPER	4	290,608
025	CUMBERLAND	1	170,204
026	DICKENSON	5	301,073
027	DINWIDDIE	5	317,518
028	ESSEX	1	149,168
029	FAIRFAX	42	1,510,460
030	FAUQUIER	3	136,750
031	FLOYD	4	125,423
032	FLUVANNA	2	53,008
033	FRANKLIN	11	496,213
034	FREDERICK	3	167,970
035	GILES	3	153,929
036	GLOUCESTER	5	289,981
037	GOOCHLAND	2	21,865
038	GRAYSON	7	213,825
039	GREENE	2	107,241
040	GREENSVILLE	1	207,566
041	HALIFAX	12	658,896
042	HANOVER	2	101,675
043	HENRICO	20	1,195,261
044	HENRY	12	661,674

K-3 Primary Class Size Reduction Program HB/SB 29 Estimated FY 2004 Payments

Div #	Division	Number of Participating Schools	Estimated FY 2004 Payments
045	HIGHLAND	1	14,775
046	ISLE OF WIGHT	4	341,247
047	JAMES CITY	6	255,512
048	KING GEORGE	2	203,628
049	KING QUEEN	2	80,823
050	KING WILLIAM	1	128,172
051	LANCASTER	1	77,493
052	LEE	9	555,669
053	LOUDOUN	3	75,382
054	LOUISA	3	175,979
055	LUNENBURG	2	199,630
056	MADISON	3	92,398
057	MATHEWS	1	67,364
058	MECKLENBURG	7	442,357
059	MIDDLESEX	1	42,658
060	MONTGOMERY	12	600,196
062	NELSON	2	117,272
063	NEW KENT		
065	NORTHAMPTON	2	287,090
066	NORTHUMBERLAND	1	66,050
067	NOTTOWAY	3	279,453
068	ORANGE	4	218,264
069	PAGE	5	257,348
070	PATRICK	5	238,162
071	PITTSYLVANIA	9	720,033
072	POWHATAN		
073	PRINCE EDWARD	1	301,394
074	PRINCE GEORGE	5	321,986
075	PRINCE WILLIAM	23	2,087,281
077	PULASKI	7	352,579
078	RAPPAHANNOCK		
079	RICHMOND	1	74,260
080	ROANOKE	4	172,303
081	ROCKBRIDGE	4	114,909
082	ROCKINGHAM	11	541,285
083	RUSSELL	8	424,387
084	SCOTT	7	381,006
085	SHENANDOAH	2	226,741
086	SMYTH	7	434,733
087	SOUTHAMPTON	4	222,111
088	SPOTSYLVANIA	5	332,161
089	STAFFORD	4	482,358
090	SURRY	1	31,010
091	SUSSEX	3	144,281

K-3 Primary Class Size Reduction Program HB/SB 29 Estimated FY 2004 Payments

Div #	Division	Number of Participating Schools	Estimated FY 2004 Payments
092	TAZEWELL	9	799,902
093	WARREN	3	181,804
094	WASHINGTON	7	547,307
095	WESTMORELAND	2	147,892
096	WISE	6	697,459
097	WYTHE	6	322,665
098	YORK	2	171,590
101	ALEXANDRIA	13	427,468
102	BRISTOL	4	227,159
103	BUENA VISTA	2	83,657
104	CHARLOTTESVILLE	6	283,815
105	CLIFTON FORGE		
106	COLONIAL HEIGHTS	1	35,481
107	COVINGTON	1	74,155
108	DANVILLE	10	1,072,260
109	FALLS CHURCH		
110	FREDERICKSBURG	1	121,105
111	GALAX	1	137,068
112	HAMPTON	20	1,795,749
113	HARRISONBURG	4	277,322
114	HOPEWELL	3	535,423
115	LYNCHBURG	11	841,197
116	MARTINSVILLE	4	300,362
117	NEWPORT NEWS	27	3,979,703
118	NORFOLK	35	5,773,488
119	NORTON	1	83,576
120	PETERSBURG	7	1,046,016
121	PORTSMOUTH	16	2,763,588
122	RADFORD	1	107,945
123	RICHMOND CITY	29	3,671,704
124	ROANOKE CITY	20	1,601,696
126	STAUNTON	4	204,427
127	SUFFOLK	12	1,390,272
128	VIRGINIA BEACH	28	2,701,337
130	WAYNESBORO	4	255,851
131	WILLIAMSBURG	6	16,394
132	WINCHESTER	4	180,281
134	FAIRFAX CITY	7	23,549
135	FRANKLIN CITY	1	206,506
136	CHESAPEAKE	12	1,649,846
137	LEXINGTON		
138	EMPORIA	1	110,755
139	SALEM	2	103,647
140	BEDFORD CITY	5	68,838

K-3 Primary Class Size Reduction Program HB/SB 29 Estimated FY 2004 Payments

Div #	Division	Number of Participating Schools	Estimated FY 2004 Payments
142	POQUOSON		
143	MANASSAS	3	325,431
144	MANASSAS PARK	1	186,402
202	COLONIAL BEACH	1	60,936
207	WEST POINT		
		<u>789</u> *	<u>61,788,283</u>

<p>* In the case of jointly-operated divisions, participating schools are counted in both localities where funding is received by both localities. There are 769 unique schools participating for fiscal year 2004.</p>
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