

*Text of email sent by Kathy Cox, Georgia State Superintendent of Schools, to local School Superintendents on 01/08/2009 at 02:06 PM.*

Dear Superintendents:

As you know, we are experiencing an unforeseen and unprecedented downturn in Georgia's economy. This has caused and will continue to cause declines in local and state revenue collected to fund public education. Therefore, the State Board of Education approved my recommendation for an exemption to the class size maximums. This exemption is effective the first day after the first FTE count of the 2009-2010 school year in accordance with law. The exemptions basically allow local school districts the flexibility to increase class sizes up to two students in the grades listed below:

- Grades K-8 Regular education classes - increase of 2 students
- Grades 6-12 Remedial classes – increase of 2 students
- Grades K-12 Physical Education classes – increase of 2 students
- Grades K-12 Gifted classes – increase of 2 students
- Grades K-5 Early Intervention Program (EIP) self-contained & pull out model – increase of 2 students
- Grades K-3 Early Intervention Program (EIP) augmented class model – increase of 2 students
- Grades 4-5 Early Intervention Program (EIP) reduced class model – increase of 2 students
- Grades K-12 Instructional Extension (after-school, Sat/Summer, etc) classes – increase of 2 students

I did not recommend increases for a number of 9-12 classes, special education, and alternative education programs. I believe increasing class sizes in these areas will not allow the progress you are trying to make in improving the achievement of students in high school and students with disabilities. Please review the list of recommendations for class sizes in the attached documents for recommendations on specific classes.

If you have any questions about class sizes, please contact Clara J. Keith, Deputy Superintendent for Policy and External Affairs. You may reach Clara at [ckeith@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:ckeith@doe.k12.ga.us) or by telephone at 404-651-7562.

I hope this response to your concerns will be helpful as you prepare for the difficult budget decisions you will be making at your district level. We must commit to truly working together through this time. Thank you for the work you do for Georgia's children.

Kathy Cox  
State Superintendent of Schools  
Georgia Department of Education  
2066 Twin Towers East  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334



Office of the State Superintendent of Schools

Kathy Cox, State Superintendent of Schools

January 7, 2009

Mrs. Wanda Barrs  
Chair, State Board of Education  
205 Jesse Hill Jr., Drive  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Dear Mrs. Barrs:

As you know, we are experiencing an unforeseen and unprecedented downturn in Georgia's economy. This downturn has caused and will continue to cause declines in local revenue collected to fund public education at the local school district. Due to this precipitous decline in local revenue, I am requesting an exemption to the class size maximums as set out in state statute and State Board of Education rule for the 180 school districts facing anticipated budget shortfalls for the 2009-2010 school year.

The State Board of Education has the authority in O.C.G.A. §20-2-182 to exempt class size requirements due to occurrences which result in a local board of education's inability to comply with class size maximum requirements. Given the current economic state, I believe the lack of local revenue will result in unprecedented budget challenges for local school districts as they prepare budgets for next school year.

I request that the class size exemption be effective for the 2009-2010 school year and at the specified maximum levels identified in the attached document.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Kathy Cox

Enclosures

cc: Clara J. Keith

Georgia Department of Education  
 Class Size Exemption Recommendations  
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**Appendix A**

**Regular and Vocational Programs**

<u>Grade(s) Subject(s)</u>	<u>Funding Class Size</u>	<u>Current Maximum Individual Class Size</u>	<u>Recommended Maximum Individual Class Size</u>
Regular Kindergarten	15	18	20
Regular Kindergarten With full-time paraprofessional	15	20	22
Regular Grades 1-3 No Paraprofessional	17	21	23
Regular Grade 1-3 With full-time paraprofessional	17	21	23
Grades 4-5 English, Math, Science, Social Studies	23	28	30
Grades 6-8 English, Math, Science, Social Studies	23	28	30
Grades 6-8 Middle Schools – All academic classes as defined in Rule 160-4-2-.05 Middle School Program Criteria	20	28	30

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<u>Grade(s) Subject(s)</u>	<u>Funding Class Size</u>	<u>Current Maximum Individual Class Size</u>	<u>Recommended Maximum Individual Class Size</u>
Fine Arts K-3	NA	33	No exemption recommended
Fine Arts & Foreign Language Instructional Programs Grades 4-5	NA	33	No exemption recommended
Fine Arts & Foreign Language Instructional Programs Grades 6-8	NA	33	No exemption recommended
Grades 4-8 All others (see exceptions)	23	33	No exemption recommended

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<u>Grade(s) Subject(s)</u>	<u>Funding Class Size</u>	<u>Current Maximum Individual Class Size</u>	<u>Recommended Maximum Individual Class Size</u>
Grades 9-12 English, Math, Social Studies, Science, Foreign Language	23	32*	No exemption recommended
<u>Grade(s) Subject(s)</u>	<u>Funding Class Size</u>	<u>Current Maximum System Avg. Class Size</u>	<u>Recommended Maximum System Avg. Class Size</u>
All other Subjects Grades 9-12	23	35	No exemption recommended
Vocational Labs	20	28	No exemption recommended
Remedial Grades 6-12 No paraprofessional	15	18	20
Remedial Grades 6-12 With full-time paraprofessional	15	24	26

\*Local boards of education shall establish class size maximums for these courses which shall not exceed the funding size by more than 39 percent.

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**Exceptions to Maximum Class-size for Grades K-12 shall be as follows:**

	<b>Course</b>	<b>Current Maximum Individual Class Size</b>	<b>Recommended Maximum Individual Class Size</b>
(i)	Typing/Keyboarding	35	No exemption recommended
(ii)	Instrumental Music (e. g, band)	100	No exemption recommended
(iii)	Choral Music	80	No exemption recommended
(iv)	Physical Education No paraprofessional	40	42
	Physical Education With paraprofessional (Elementary schools)	54	No exemption recommended
(v)	Co-op Supervision	56	No exemption recommended

\* Defined as class size by full-time equivalent reporting segment.

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**Appendix B**  
**Students with Disabilities**  
**No exemption recommended**

<u><b>Class Group/ Exception Program</b></u>	<u><b>Funding Class Size</b></u>	<u><b>Maximum Individual Class Size</b></u>		<u><b>Exception to Maximum 2 Segments Per Day Per Teacher With Paraprofessional</b></u>	<u><b>Recommended Maximum Individual Class Size</b></u>
		*	**		
1. Group I					
(i) S/L-SC	8	11	15	+1	No exemption recommended
(ii) LD-SC	8	12	16	+1	
2. Group II					
(i) MID-SC	6.5	10	13	+1	No exemption recommended
(ii) MID-R	6.5	10	13	+1	
3. Group III					
(i) SID-SC	5	NA	7	+1	No exemption recommended
(ii) D/HH-SC	5	6	8	+1	
(iii) S/L-R	5	7	NA	NA	
(iv) BD-R	5	7	10	+1	
(v) LD-R	5	8	10	+1	
(vi) BD-SC	5	8	11	+1	
(vii) MOID-SC	5	NA	11	+1	
(viii) OI-SC	5	NA	11	0	

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<u>Class Group/ Exception Program</u>	<u>Funding Class Size</u>	<u>Maximum Individual Class Size</u>		<u>Exception to Maximum 2 Segments Per Day Per Teacher With Paraprofessional</u>	<u>Recommended Maximum Individual Class Size</u>
		*	**		
4. Group IV					
(i) D/HH-R	3	3	4	+1	No exemption recommended
(ii) VI-R	3	3	4	+1	
(iii) OI-R	3	4	5	+1	
(iv) VI(DB)-SC	3	NA	6	+1	
(v) PID-SC	3	NA	6	0	
5. Group V	8	NA	NA	NA	No exemption recommended

**NOTE:** Each paraprofessional is the equivalent to 1/3 teacher and affects individual class size proportionately. Various teacher/paraprofessional models shall be averaged independently.

**NOTE:** If students from different exceptionalities programs are within the same segment, the maximum class size shall be determined by the program with the smallest class size.

**NOTE:** Middle school and high school students served in a departmental model shall have an individual maximum class size of seven without a paraprofessional and ten with a paraprofessional, provided the number of students of any one exceptionality within the class does not exceed the individual maximum class size for that exceptionality.

**EXCEPTION TO INDIVIDUAL MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE:** The individual maximum class size with a paraprofessional may be increased as noted for two segments per day per teacher for the remainder of the school year. Maximum teacher/pupil ratio without a paraprofessional may not be increased. (See also Rule 160-4-7).

\*No paraprofessional

\*\* With paraprofessional

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**APPENDIX C**  
**Gifted and Alternative Programs**

<b>Class / Group Exception Plan</b>	<b>Funding Class Size</b>	<b>Current Maximum System Average Class Size</b>	<b>Recommended Maximum System Average Class Size</b>
1. GIFTED			
(i) Elementary Resource ( K-5)	12	17	19
(ii) Middle School Resource and Advanced Content (6- 8)	12	21	23
(iii) High School Resource and Advance Content (9 -12)	12	21	23

<b><u>Class / Group Exception Plan</u></b>	<b><u>Funding Class Size</u></b>	<b><u>Current Maximum System Avg. Class Size</u></b>	<b><u>Recommended Maximum System Avg. Class Size</u></b>
2. ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS			
No paraprofessional	15	18	No exemption recommended
With full-time paraprofessional	15	24	

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**APPENDIX D**  
**English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)**

**No exemption recommended**

Grade(s) Subject(s)	<u>Funding Class Size</u>	<u>Maximum System Average Class Size</u>		<u>Recommended Maximum System Avg. Class Size</u>
		No Paraprofessional	With Paraprofessional	
<b>K-3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>4-8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>9-12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>	No exemption recommended

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**APPENDIX E**  
**Early Intervention Program (EIP)**

**Self-Contained and Pull-out Models**

<u>Grade(s) Subject(s)</u>	<u>Current Funding Class Size</u>	<u>Current Maximum System Avg. Class Size</u>	<u>Recommended Maximum System Avg. Class Size</u>
<b>Kindergarten</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Grades 1-3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Grades 4-5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>

Self-contained classes may be multi-grade level classes as long as the class size does not exceed the maximum class size.

**Augmented Class Model-Kindergarten**

A state certified early childhood /elementary teacher will work for a minimum of one segment (45 minutes) with no more than 14 Early Intervention Program students.

<u>Grade(s) Subject(s)</u>	<u>Current Funding Class Size</u>	<u>Current Maximum System Avg. Class Size</u>	<u>Recommended Maximum System Avg. Class Size</u>
<b>Kindergarten</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Kindergarten with full-time paraprofessional</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>22</b>

A maximum of 14 EIP students may be in an augmented – class.

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**Augmented Class Model – Grades 1-3**

A state certified early childhood/elementary teacher will work for a minimum of one segment (45minutes) with no more than 14 Early Intervention Program students.

<u>Grade(s) Subject(s)</u>	<u>Current Funding Class Size</u>	<u>Current Maximum System Avg. Class Size</u>	<u>Recommended Maximum System Avg. Class Size</u>
<b>Grades 1-3</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Grades 1-3 with full-time paraprofessional</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>23</b>

**Augmented Class Model – Grades 4-5**

<u>Grade(s) Subject (s)</u>	<u>Funding Class Size</u>	<u>Maximum System Avg. Class Size</u>	<u>Recommended Maximum System Avg. Class Size</u>
<b>Grades 4- 5</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>30</b>	No exemption recommended

A maximum of 14 EIP students may be in an augmented class.

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**Reduced Class Model – Kindergarten – No exemption recommended**

<b><u>EIP Students</u></b>	<b><u>Non-EIP Students</u></b>	<b><u>Maximum Total in Class</u></b>	<b><u>Recommended Maximum Total in Class</u></b>
<b>1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	No exemption recommended

A full-time paraprofessional may be used in the kindergarten models to increase class size by 2 students. The 2 additional students may be either EIP or regular students.

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**Reduced Class Model – Grades 1-3 \*\* - No exemption recommended**

<b><u>EIP Students</u></b>	<b><u>Non-EIP Students</u></b>	<b><u>Maximum Total in Class</u></b>	<b><u>Recommended Maximum Total in Class</u></b>
<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>16</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>14</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13</b>	No exemption recommended
<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	No exemption recommended

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**Reduced Class Model – Grades 4-5 \*\***

<b><u>EIP Students</u></b>	<b><u>Current Non-EIP Students</u></b>	<b><u>Current Maximum Total in Class</u></b>	<b><u>Recommended Non-EIP Students</u></b>	<b><u>Recommended Maximum Total in Class</u></b>
1	22	23	24	25
2	20	22	22	24
3	18	21	20	23
4	16	20	18	22
5	14	19	16	21
6	12	18	14	20
7	10	17	12	19
8	8	16	10	18
9	6	15	8	17
10	4	14	6	16
11	2	13	4	15
12	1	13	3	15

\*\* Paraprofessionals may not be used to reduce teacher/student ratio in grades 1-5.

**Reading Recovery – No exemption recommended**

The Reading Recovery Program may be used as a model for the Early Intervention Program.

<b><u>Funding Class Size</u></b>	<b><u>Maximum System Avg. Class Size</u></b>	<b><u>Recommended Maximum System Avg. Class Size</u></b>
11	14	No exemption recommended

Students served by Reading Recovery may be counted for one segment of EIP instruction for the entire year.

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**APPENDIX F**  
**Instructional Extension**

	<b><u>Current Funding Class Size</u></b>	<b><u>Current Maximum System Avg. Class Size</u></b>	<b>Recommended Maximum System Avg. Class Size</b>
After-school, Saturday, Summer, and inter – session programs	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>