

<b>Topic:</b>	<b>Monitoring of Elementary Class Structures</b>
<b>Effective:</b>	<b>November 2012</b>
<b>Cross-Reference:</b>	<i>School Boundary Review Administrative Procedure</i> <i>Combined Grades: Ministry of Education 2007</i>
<b>Review/Revision Date:</b>	<b>November 2018</b>
<b>Responsibility:</b>	<b>Family of School Superintendents</b>

**INTENDED PURPOSE:**

The Halton District School Board is committed to providing the best educational opportunities and learning environment for students in all classes. The following Administrative Procedure outlines monitoring strategies to be used by Principals and Superintendents where gender balance, class size or combined grade composition may impact the learning environment.

Combined classes are increasingly more common due to the Ministry expectations for Primary Class size caps and Junior-Intermediate regional averages. The Halton District School Board's Human Resources department must staff our elementary schools to ensure regionally, 90 percent of JK-3 classes will have a student teacher ratio of 20:1, and the remaining 10 per cent of classes will have class sizes no greater than 23:1. The regional Junior-Intermediate average must be 25.1. To meet these Ministry requirements there will be an increase in the number of combined classes in our system and an increase in the number of combined classes containing a small number of students in one grade.

**PROCEDURES:**

1. Upon the third release of projected enrolments from the Halton District School Board Planning Department in March, Human Resources create and distribute school organizations to all elementary administrators.
2. Human Resources attempts to create organizations with combined classes containing no fewer than six (6) students in one grade.
3. Where there are unique enrolment circumstances and with board of trustees' approval, a triple grade organization may be created in a school. It is highly likely a triple grade class will contain at least one grade level with a small number of students and /or a small gender number in one grade.
4. Under the Education Act, the principal is responsible for the organization of the school. Principals may build classes with fewer than six (6) students in one grade of a combined class due to the total number of students in a particular grade and to ensure compliancy with Primary Class Size. (e.g. Where a school has a total of 24 Grade 1 students and 16 Grade 2 students the principal will build a Grade 1 class with 20 students and a combined Grade 1-2 class with 4 Grade 1 students and 16 Grade 2 students.)
5. Principals will notify their Family of Schools Superintendents when they organize classes with fewer than six (6) students in one grade of a combined class and discuss strategies for building, supporting and monitoring these classes. Principals will also notify their Family of School Superintendents of split classes with a gender imbalance (less than 3) in one grade. They will discuss the monitoring and supporting of these classes.

6. The Principal and Superintendent will review the following questions:
  - What is the rationale for running a combined class with 4-6 students in one grade?
  - What criteria were used to build the class? (Gender grouping, academic, instructional groups, social considerations)
  - What is the teacher's plan to support students in the combined class? (E.g. flexible instructional groupings, differentiated program, instruction and assessment, subject integration, open-ended units, a focus on learning process and development of a positive class climate.
  - Are there opportunities to implement cross-class grouping for some subjects while remaining compliant to class size expectations? (E.g. group of 4-6 students work with another class for certain subjects)
  - Will teachers offer the same opportunities for common field trips for students in same grades?
  - Will there be opportunities to cluster students in the same grade for nutrition breaks?
  - Does the school offer opportunities for same grade extra-curricular activities?
  - If enrolment changes during the school year is there a possibility of creating a triple grade?
  - If enrolment changes during the school year, is there an opportunity to eliminate the combined class or the small gender number in one grade?
7. Principals and teachers will communicate to parents the teaching plans and opportunities to ensure a positive learning experience for students in blended classes or in classes with a small gender number in one grade?
8. Principals, Superintendents and Human Resources will monitor school organizations throughout the year with specific discussions following June class building and at the end of the first week in September.