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# Small Schools Discussion

— March 2021 Board Study Session —

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# Presentation Format

**Section 1:** Presented by Organizational Effectiveness Department

- Quantify school sizes (defining)
- Review financial data and implications

**Section 2:** Presented by School Leadership & Improvement Department

- Effects on Students
- Effects on Patrons and Families
- Effects on Teachers

# Section 1: Small School Data and Profiles

	K-5	K-6
<b>Small</b> (appr. 2 classes/grade)	0-409	0-477
<b>Medium</b> (appr. 3 classes/grade)	410-572	478-668
<b>Large</b> (appr. 4+ classes/grade)	573+	669+

Number of Schools in Each Category			
Year	Large	Medium	Small
2017	18	34	11
2018	17	28	18
2019	14	29	20

# Section 1: Financial Limitations of Small Schools

- **School funding based on school enrollment**
- **LAND Trust allocations in 2018-19**
  - Small Schools ranged from \$32,493-\$50,672
  - Medium Schools ranged from \$44,821-\$72,090
  - Large Schools ranged from \$64,985-\$97,479
- **New teacher cost with benefits and family insurance: \$86,500.**

# Section 2: Small Schools do not Equate to Small Classes

## Twin Peaks Staffing Plan

<b>Total Projected Enrollment</b>	<b>201</b>
<b>Staffing Ratio</b>	<b>27.25</b>
<b>FTE (Enrollment divided by ratio)</b>	<b>7</b>

Grade	Enrollment	FTE allowed	Ratio	
	# of students	# of teachers		
Kinder	27	0.5	27	.5 FTE; .5 OEK all students in AM, OEK in PM
1st	34	1.5	17/34	.5 in AM
2nd	33	1	33	share 1 FTE for intervention (1 FTE supports 4 different grades @ less than 2 hours per day, per class)
3rd	33	1	33	
4th	37	1	37	
5th	37	1	37	
		1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>7</b>		

# Small School Effects on Students

- Classes are often at or over capacity and split classes of two or more grades are often needed causing students to receive less support
- Schools with specialized programs (such as Dual Immersion) have unique challenges related to class sizes
- Split classes make it more difficult to be attentive and aren't ideal for age-level development
- There are fewer opportunities for students to receive differentiated instruction for reteach, extension, or small groups
- Fewer classrooms limit inclusion opportunities for students with special needs
- Fewer classrooms inhibit the ability to separate students with behaviors thus causing disruption to the learning environment and time away from learning
- Social emotional needs are less likely to be met consistently
- Extra-curricular opportunities are limited due to inadequate resources

# Small School Effects on Patrons and Families

- Parental choice is not available to best meet individual student needs and can be especially difficult when there are conflicts
- Students who have conflicts are not able to be separated causing disruption to student learning
- Parents share frustration that students receive less differentiated instruction because the teacher might work with multiple grade level curriculums, therefore there is less preparation for advanced and below grade level learning needs
- Fewer parents to serve in critical roles

# Small School Effects on Teachers

- Fewer staff members make it difficult to carry out non-classroom duties and assignments (recess and bus duties, teams and committees, extra-curricular activities) causing teachers to serve in multiple positions which imposes on their non-contract time and can lead to burnout
- Fewer teachers per grade level create challenges for effective PLC work making it harder to collaborate or impossible if you are the only teacher on that grade level
- Fewer classes to distribute challenging students means teachers have multiple hard students in a single class which can be more disruptive to the classroom environment and instruction
- Teaching split classes means having to plan, prepare, and deliver instruction for two or more classes at the same time, which leads to fewer individualized extensions and reteaching opportunities

# Review of Small School Concerns

- Split grade-level classrooms
- Lack of parental choice to match learning style and increase student success
- Difficult to team teach
- Reduced per-pupil funding can create lack of funds for extra staffing and program supports
- Harder to maintain effective SCCs and PTAs because of smaller parent base
- Teacher workload concerns (fewer teachers to meet same number of school requirements)
- One ineffective classroom can greatly impact school or grade-level data
- High administrator-to-student ratio
- Less access to social/emotional and special education supports
- PLC and Granite Way processes are much less effective or even non-existent
- Fewer students equal fewer resources

# Discussion