BOARD AGENDA ITEM
Board of Trustees Meeting March 21, 2017

Consider Approval of Class Size Waivers

SUMMARY:
This item requests approval to apply for a maximum class size exemption waiver from the Texas Education Agency as required by Texas Education Code (TEA) 25.112. These requests are based on enrollment as of March 8, 2017 for Kindergarten through fourth grade for the following schools:

- Atkins (1)*
- Bell (8)**
- Blanton (3)
- Borman (3)**
- Cross Oaks (7)**
- Evers (1)*

- Hawk (1)*
- Houston (2)**
- L.A. Nelson (3)
- McNair (3)
- Paloma Creek (6)**
- Pecan Creek (6)**

- Rayzor-EP (3)
- Rayzor-N (2)**
- Savannah (2)
- Wilson (3)
- WS Ryan (1)*

*Atkins, Evers, Hawk, and WS Ryan: These campuses can balance class sections; however, balancing/Reassigning students at this time would create a disruption to student learning.
**Bell, Borman, Cross Oaks, Houston, N.Rayzor, Paloma Creek, and Pecan Creek: We will closely monitor this campuses and enrollment; providing additional support as necessary.

BOARD GOAL:
Vision – In pursuit of excellence, the district will remain committed to providing equitable and outstanding opportunities for every student on campus.

PREVIOUS BOARD ACTION:
No previous Board action for the 2016-2017 school year.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
Maintaining a 22:1 student to staff ratio in all Kindergarten through 2nd grade classrooms is a priority for 2016-2017. Staffing guidelines for the 2016-2017 school year are 22:1 in Kindergarten – 2nd grade; 24:1 in 3rd and 4th grade; and, 25:1 in 5th grade. During the legislative session of 2011, the district was forced to revisit staffing guidelines in an effort to address significant funding issues. Since that time, the District has continued to move toward staffing that meets the 22:1 staffing guidelines for all sections of Kindergarten – 4th grade.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES:
In situations where enrollment warrants additional support, instructional aides and additional FTEs may be assigned to support student learning and teacher instruction.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:
Consideration(s) of additional FTEs and/or instructional aides are carefully weighed in collaboration with principal recommendations. Other fiscal implications to be considered are classroom space availability and program integrity (i.e., dual language, etc.). As the district maintains fiscal responsibility, while addressing limited state funding, we will continue to improve staffing guidelines with a goal of returning to the required 22:1 ratio for all Kindergarten – 4th grade classrooms. We will do so in a manner that avoids similar staffing cuts experienced in the wake of the 2011 legislative session. As of today's date, the cost to accommodate the state (unfunded) mandate related to maximum class size in Kindergarten – 4th grade would cost Denton ISD approximately $960,000 (16 FTEs x $60,000). The total number students impacted by the class size waivers is 71 students.

BENEFIT OF ACTION:
Passage allows flexibility in consideration of student/staffing needs and space availability while striving to maintain K – 2nd grade staffing at 22:1 for the 2016 – 2017 school year. Flexibility also allows campus principals to assign students based on the individual needs of students.

PROCEDURAL AND REPORTING IMPLICATIONS:
Texas Education Agency will process the formal request as approved by the Denton ISD board of trustees.

PUBLIC COMMENT RECEIVED:
None

ALTERNATIVES:
Add additional classrooms/portables and FTEs to alleviate the need for class size waivers.

SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATION:
The Superintendent recommends the Board approves the class size waiver requests to be submitted for consideration to the Texas Education Agency.

STAFF PERSONS RESPONSIBLE:
Tracy Johnson, Coordinator of Professional Personnel for Human Resources

ATTACHMENT:
Elementary Class Size Waiver Requests for 2016 – 2017

APPROVAL:
Signature of Staff Member Proposing Recommendation: Tracy Johnson_____

Signature of Divisional Assistant Superintendent: _____

Signature of Superintendent: _____