

# 2019 Class Size Initiative Review

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2019 Class Size Initiative Review  
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# Executive Summary

The Class Size Initiative has been in place for the last 15 years, with over \$3.4 billion being allocated to school jurisdictions to reduce class sizes. After a thorough review, Alberta's Class Size Initiative does not appear to be effective, and the class size grant's targeted funding may be better put to use to support other priorities to improve student learning.

In September 2019, Alberta Education announced it was undertaking a funding and assurance framework review. The overarching feedback Alberta Education has heard at the time of this report is that class size funding should be rolled into base instruction funding and that school jurisdictions should have the flexibility and local autonomy to make decisions on where class size funding is spent.

School jurisdictions employ various methods to assign funding to the classroom. With only a small percentage of funding being targeted specifically towards hiring teachers under the Class Size Initiative, some jurisdictions may have decided to allocate other funding towards other educational resources, such as supports for English language learners, First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and special needs students.

Smaller class sizes are given significant funding support and consideration by policy-makers, teachers and parents across Canadian provinces. A number of provinces have made comprehensive class size reduction a priority, but there is heated debate regarding smaller class sizes. On one side, policy-makers and educators argue smaller class sizes are expected to improve student achievement; on the other, there are arguments that the effectiveness of class size reduction is uncertain and there are more cost-effective strategies for improving education standards. Classroom complexity and teacher quality are two such areas. Teacher quality, for instance, has been shown to have a greater impact on student learning and should be explored further to improve student outcomes.

## Terms of Reference

During the April 2019 provincial election, the government committed to conducting an immediate audit of class sizes to determine what happened to the previous funding dedicated to class size reduction. Department staff were tasked with reviewing the financial component and instructional efficacy of the class size initiative. To review the efficacy of the current class size funding model, staff:

- Reviewed how school boards plan for and spend the targeted class size funding grant.

- Conducted interviews with school board and school leadership staff to gather perspectives on the current class size funding model.
- Reviewed student and board-level outcome data against current class size funding allocations to determine if correlations exist between outcomes and the class size funding allocations.
- Conducted a literature review of recent studies on the efficacy of providing targeted class size funding and the impact of class sizes on students.

# History

On October 7, 2003, Alberta's Commission on Learning (ACOL) released a report, *Every child learns. Every child succeeds.*, which listed 95 recommendations for achieving the commission's vision for education. The report was a culmination of months of work listening to the views of hundreds of Albertans, reviewing research and trends, seeking the best advice from experts, exploring options, and developing ideas and recommendations.

Recommendation 14 urged government to “establish and implement province-wide guidelines for average class sizes across school jurisdictions.” The report suggested the provincial recommended guidelines should be:

- Kindergarten to Grade 3: 17 students;
- Grades 4 to 6: 23 students;
- Grades 7 to 9: 25 students; and
- Grades 10 to 12: 27 students.

In the 2004/05 school year, the Class Size Initiative was introduced.

## Early Implementation

For the first three years after implementation, school jurisdictions were required to provide an outline of how they would use the funding to achieve the class size averages. School jurisdictions reported hiring approximately 1,250 teachers in 2004/05, 450 teachers in 2005/06 and 830 teachers in 2006/07 with class size funding, for a total of over 2,500 teachers. By 2018/19 there have been an estimated 2,900 teachers hired and/or retained with class size funding. The reporting requirement was later eliminated because, after the initial phase-in implementation period, school jurisdictions found it difficult to continue tracking which teachers were hired specifically for the initiative compared to which ones were hired for general enrolment growth.

When Alberta Education introduced the class size grant, it was first calculated based on the jurisdiction's 2003/04 class size average or a combination of per-student funding (50 per cent) and the jurisdiction's 2003/04 class size average (50 per cent), whichever provided the jurisdiction with the most funding. This calculation method ensured all school jurisdictions, including those that had already met the ACOL guidelines, would receive funding. For those

jurisdictions that had already met the guidelines, the funds could be used, with prior ministerial approval, to directly benefit students in the classroom.

By the end of the 2009/10 school year and with many school jurisdictions across the province having reached the ACOL guidelines for almost all grade cohorts except Kindergarten to Grade 3, this cohort became the Class Size Initiative's focus. In 2010/11, a new formula took effect, with the majority of class size funding being allocated to Kindergarten to Grade 3 students at a rate of \$1,358.05; Grades 4 to 6 students were allocated \$285.36. For students in Grades 10 to 12 taking specific Career and Technology Studies (CTS) courses, additional funding rates of \$11.45 or \$32.28 per credit enrolment unit were provided to address safety and teacher/student ratios. Funding was not provided for students in Grades 7 to 9 because the ACOL guidelines had been met.

A year later, in the 2011/12 school year, class size funding for Grades 4 to 6 was eliminated due to government budget constraints, which reduced class size funding by \$16.9 million. By this time, the majority of school jurisdictions had already reached the recommended class size averages for this grade cohort.

# Analysis

## Current State of Class Size

While school jurisdictions had stopped reporting on the number of teachers they hired using the class size grant, they continued to self-report their averages through the online Class Size Information System, which was introduced at the inception of the grant and is still used today to calculate the annual class size survey results. To determine class size averages, school jurisdictions are surveyed annually for the number of classes taught, the number of students in each class and the number of teachers. These averages are calculated for all public, separate and charter schools, and the annual survey results for each jurisdiction are posted on Alberta Education's website. The current methodology for calculating class size averages excludes the deployment and spending on non-certificated teaching and educational assistants in a classroom.

Although Alberta Education allocates class size funding based on a specific grade cohort and specific CTS courses, school jurisdictions are expected to use this funding to hire or retain teachers based on local needs. This approach is consistent with the principle of making the majority of education funding flexible, where school authorities have the discretion to use funds to meet the needs of their students. Since the Class Size Initiative's inception, school jurisdictions have hired and retained more than 2,900 additional teachers to reduce class sizes, and Alberta Education has invested over \$3.4 billion.

**Table 1: Class Size Funding Provided by School Year Since Inception**

School Year	Yearly Allocation	Cumulative Total
2004/05	\$90 million	\$90 million
2005/06	\$119 million	\$209 million
2006/07	\$191 million	\$400 million
2007/08	\$197 million	\$597 million
2008/09	\$215 million	\$812 million
2009/10	\$228 million	\$1.04 billion
2010/11	\$242 million	\$1.28 billion
2011/12	\$225 million	\$1.51 billion
2012/13	\$238 million	\$1.75 billion
2013/14	\$257 million	\$2.00 billion
2014/15	\$275 million	\$2.28 billion
2015/16	\$290 million	\$2.57 billion
2016/17	\$291 million	\$2.86 billion
2017/18	\$292 million	\$3.15 billion
2018/19	\$291 million	\$3.44 billion

Schools and school jurisdictions have the flexibility to organize classrooms in a way that supports local priorities and parent and student educational choice. This means some classes will have more students and some will have fewer than ACOL's recommended averages. Government does not specify a maximum class size because there is no one-size-fits-all solution.

## Kindergarten to Grade 3 Class Sizes

School jurisdictions have struggled to reach the ACOL guidelines for Kindergarten to Grade 3 classes since the Class Size Initiative's inception. In the 2018/19 school year, 89 per cent of

school jurisdictions' class size averages for this grade cohort were above the ACOL guideline. Of 71 jurisdictions, only eight had reached ACOL's recommended 17 students per class.

**Table 2: Comparison of Jurisdictions Averages**

Grade Cohort*	Jurisdictions at or Below Guidelines (2018/19)	Jurisdictions Above Guidelines (2018/19)
Kindergarten to Grade 3	11% or 8 jurisdictions	89% or 63 jurisdictions
Grades 4 to 6	70% or 51 jurisdictions	30% or 22 jurisdictions
Grades 7 to 9	89% or 64 jurisdictions	11% or 8 jurisdictions
Grades 10 to 12	97% or 62 jurisdictions	3% or 2 jurisdictions

\*Not all school jurisdictions offer classes in each grade cohort.

As Table 3 shows, class size averages have increased since the first year of implementation.

**Table 3: Class Size Averages**

Grade Cohort	ACOL Commission Guidelines	2003/04 (Pre-ACOL)*	2004/05 (Year 1)	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Kindergarten to Grade 3	17	21.8	19.7	20.4	20.2	20.4
Grades 4-6	23	23.9	22.3	22.8	22.8	22.8
Grades 7-9	25	25.0	22.7	23.6	23.5	23.5
Grades 10-12	27	25.1	23.0	23.5	23.3	23.5

\*Core subjects.

A review of historical class sizes by geographic area showed there is a consistent trend of higher class sizes across all geographic areas over the last 15 years of class size funding. As shown in Table 4, the average Kindergarten to Grade 3 class size for rural/francophone/charter jurisdictions is lower than school jurisdictions that have schools in larger population centres.

**Table 4: Class Size Comparison by Geographical Type**

Kindergarten to Grade 3 (ACOL Rec: 17)	2004/05 (Year 1)	2018/19
Rural/Francophone/Charter	18.9	19.2
Urban/Rural-Urban	19.8	20.3
Metro	20.3	21.1
Provincial Average	19.7	20.4

## 2018 Auditor General Report

In February 2018, the Auditor General released *Alberta Education: Processes to Manage the Student Class Size Initiative*, a report that concluded the department had spent billions of dollars to reduce class sizes but did not know why school jurisdictions had not achieved ACOL's 17-student target for the Kindergarten to Grade 3 cohort over the past 15 years.

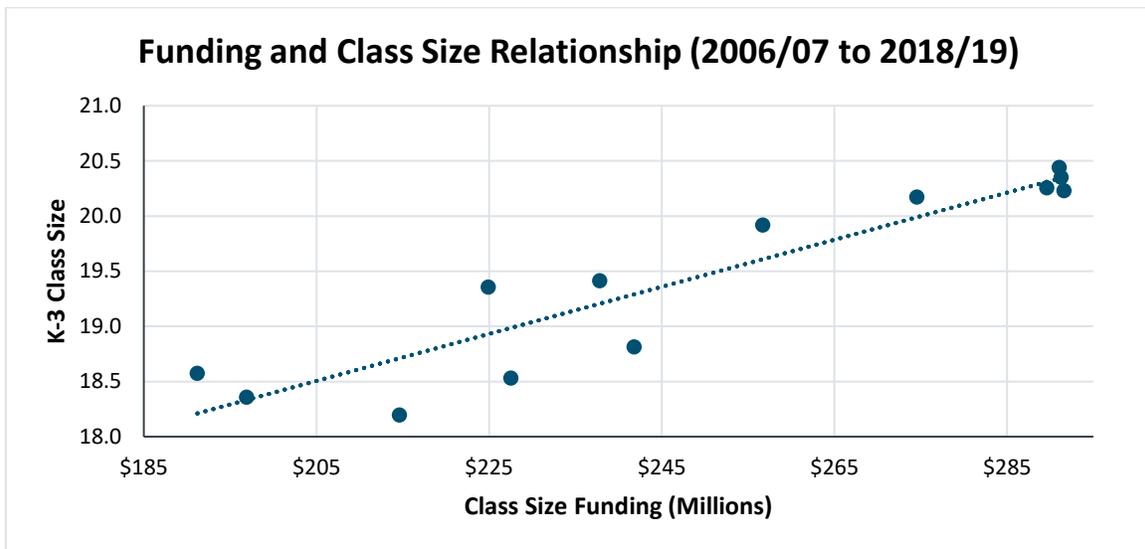
As part of the report's recommendation, school jurisdictions are required to report how class size funding was deployed within their jurisdictions and at which schools and grade levels in the 2018/19 school year. Raw class size data for all schools has been made available online for the public. While Alberta Education publishes and reviews the data for overall completeness to ensure all jurisdictions and all schools have been reported, the data is self-reported information by school jurisdictions and the department does not have the resources to review the data to ensure the submissions are 100 per cent accurate.

## Relationship Between Funding and Class Size

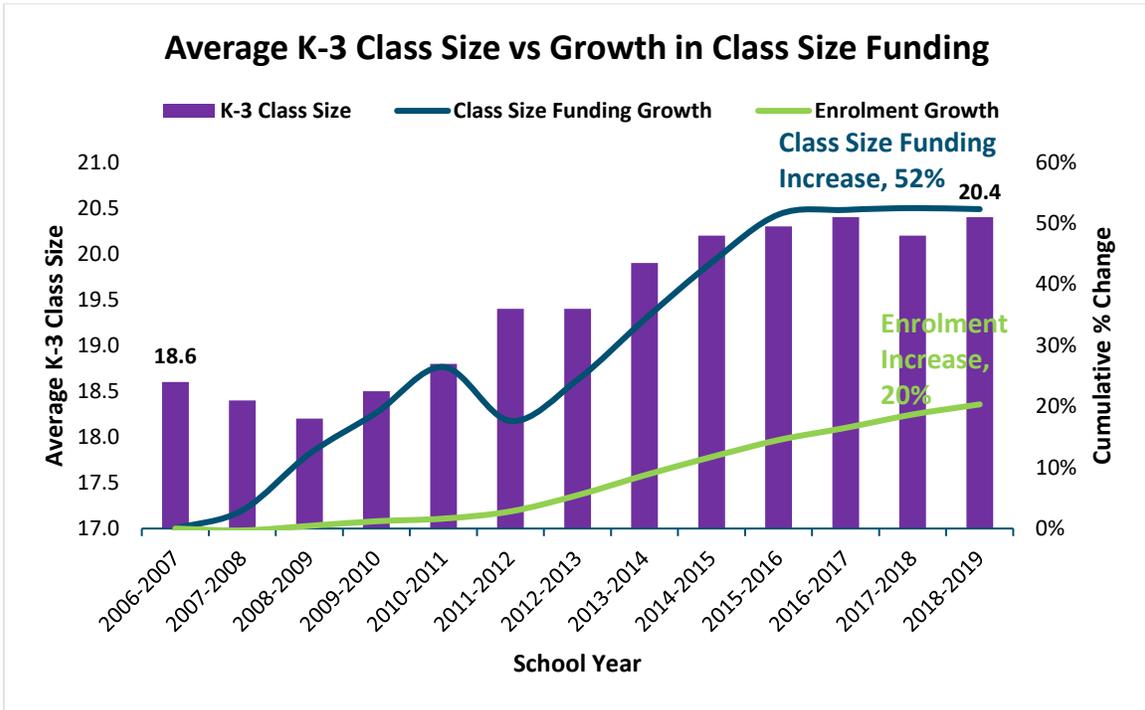
Consistent with recommendation 14 in ACOL's report, Alberta Education funds and monitors class sizes at the jurisdiction level to allow maximum accountability, flexibility and local autonomy. School jurisdictions are expected to use class size funding for teachers based on local needs with the goal of reducing class sizes.

Alberta has historically experienced challenges with high class sizes in the Kindergarten to Grade 3 cohort, which is where research shows reducing class size is most effective. This challenge was similarly highlighted in the Auditor General's 2018 report. In 2003/04, prior to the start of the Class Size Initiative, school jurisdictions were already largely achieving average class size targets for Grades 7 to 9 (69 per cent) and Grades 10 to 12 (88 per cent). By the 2018/19

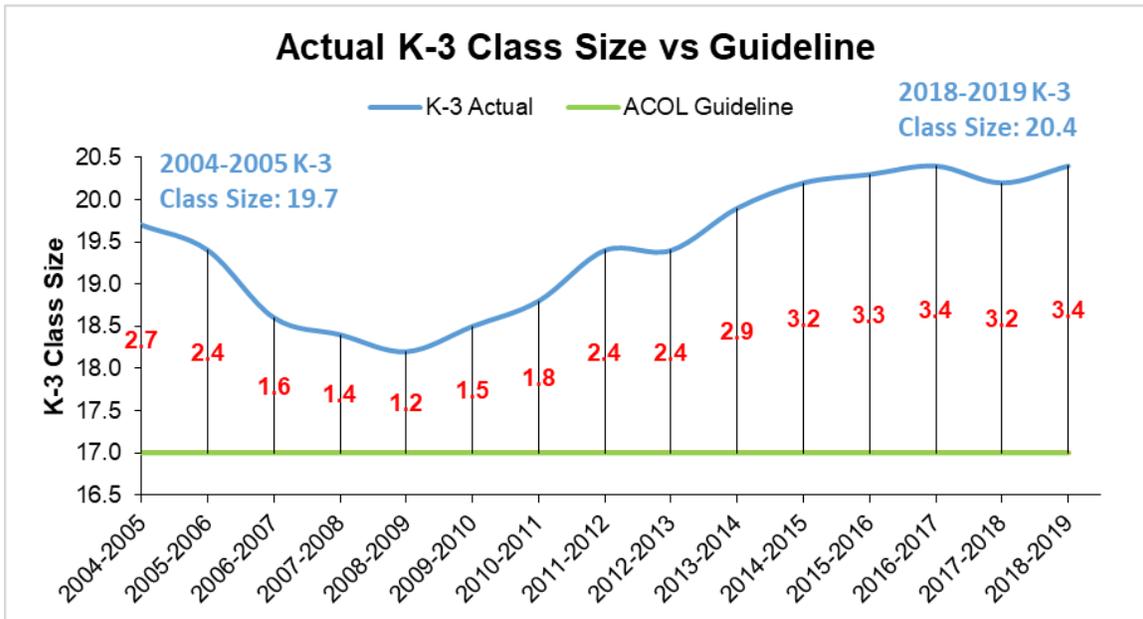
school year, 89 per cent of jurisdictions were at or below the guidelines for Grades 7 to 9 and 97 per cent of jurisdictions were at or below them for Grades 10 to 12. Analysis on class size funding has shown that although the Class Size Initiative was fully implemented in 2006/07, class size averages for Kindergarten to Grade 3 have continued to increase, which is contrary to the funding policy's intent.



Since the Class Size Initiative was fully implemented, funding has increased by approximately \$100 million. By 2018/19, funding had grown by 52 per cent, to \$291 million. Class size funding is responsive to increasing student enrolment because it is a per-student allocation. Funding for class size has increased annually to account for enrolment growth and teacher salary settlements.



Since 2006/07, the number of school jurisdictions that have met the ACOL guideline for Kindergarten to Grade 3 has decreased, from eleven jurisdictions to eight (out of 71). In 2008/09, the provincial average reported was 18.2 students per class, which is the closest the province has achieved in meeting the 17-student guideline. In 2016/17, Kindergarten to Grade 3 class size averages reached an all-time high of 3.4 students above the guideline. The average has also steadily increased since class size funding was focused on Kindergarten to Grade 3 in the 2010/11 school year, increasing from 1.8 students to 3.4 students above the guideline.



When asked, school jurisdictions have said that more progress on reducing the Kindergarten to Grade 3 class size average was not achieved due to lack of school space in growing communities, lack of teachers in rural areas and lack of funding for grid movement and inflation costs.

## Provincial Comparisons

As part of the MacKinnon report, released in September 2019, KPMG analyzed Alberta’s class size initiative in comparison to similar policies in British Columbia (B.C.), Ontario and Quebec. KPMG analyzed class size averages and how each of these provinces legislates and funds class sizes. B.C. and Ontario have implemented hard class size caps through legislation, while Alberta implemented guidelines to provide flexibility for jurisdictions. In addition, only Alberta and B.C. targeted funding towards class size, while Ontario provided class size funding through its Pupil Foundation grant and Teacher Qualities and Experience grant. According to the MacKinnon report, Quebec does not use any class size incentives or regulations.

**Table 5: Provincial Comparison of Class Size Policy**

	Alberta	B.C.	Ontario	Quebec
Grant Targeted	Yes Class size grant	Yes Classroom enhancement fund	No Included in other grants	n/a
Legislated Class Size	No	Yes	Yes	n/a

As shown in Table 6, there is a significant difference in recommended class sizes between the four provinces. The ACOL guidelines are the most aggressive. For example, when comparing students in Grades 1 to 3, Alberta’s recommended class size average is three fewer students than Ontario, seven fewer students than B.C. and up to nine fewer students than Quebec.

**Table 6: Provincial Comparison of Class Size Guidelines and Actuals**

Actual Class Size (2018/19)		Alberta	B.C.	Ontario	Quebec
Kindergarten	Guidelines	17.0	22.0	26.0–29.0	19.0
	Actual	20.4	18.0	25.6*	n/a
Grades 1-3	Guidelines	17.0	24.0	90% ≤ 20.0 10% ≤ 23.0	22.0/24.0/ 26.0**
	Actual	20.4	19.9	19.8*	23.0/25.0
Grades 4-6	Guidelines	23.0	<30.0	24.5	26.0
	Actual	22.8	23.9	23.8*	27.0
Grades 7-9	Guidelines	25.0	<30.0	24.5/28.0**	28.0/29.0/ 32.0**
	Actual	23.5	23.9 / 22.1	23.8/22.0*	27.0/30.0
Grades 10-12	Guidelines	27.0	<30.0	28.0	32.0
	Actual	23.5	22.1	22.0*	30.0

\*Ontario funds class size ratios; actuals not available.

\*\*Ontario and Quebec use different grade groupings. A "/" represents more than one grade guideline. For instance, Quebec has different ratios for Grade 1 (22), Grade 2 (24) and Grade 3 (26).

When comparing actual class sizes, as seen in the table above, Alberta's class size averages are comparable with those of the three other provinces.

## School Jurisdiction Allocation Methodology

When it comes to class size funding, school jurisdictions use a variety of funding mechanisms established at the local level to allocate these dollars out to schools based on the unique challenges and needs of their schools. School jurisdictions are expected to meet the ACOL guidelines on a jurisdiction level, which means there may be some classrooms within the jurisdiction that are higher or lower than the jurisdiction's entire average.

A sample of school jurisdictions were selected and their class size allocation methodology reviewed. Many school jurisdictions adopt a per-student allocation model for their schools similar to how Alberta Education funds jurisdictions, while a few choose to manage class size funding centrally and allocate teachers, hired specifically with class size funding, to schools.

The Auditor General's report states that if two schools in a particular jurisdiction had the same number of Kindergarten to Grade 3 students, they would be allocated the same amount of class size funding regardless of their class size averages (Auditor General, 2018). This would suggest there is no deterrent for schools who do not meet the class size guidelines for schools in their jurisdictions.

It is important to note that class size funding is one small component of Alberta's funding framework, which is the mechanism through which Alberta Education funds school jurisdictions. In Budget 2018, class size funding made up approximately four per cent of overall funding provided to school boards. With this in mind, some jurisdictions kept the Class Size Initiative funding separate in their allocation methodologies, while others included it in their classroom allocations.

When reviewing the jurisdictions' full allocation methodologies, only one jurisdiction incorporated the ACOL guidelines in its resource allocation model. For this jurisdiction, funding was provided on a per-student basis, which allowed it the ability to hire one teacher for every 17 students in the Kindergarten to Grade 3 cohort. Other jurisdictions allocated funding assuming 20 to 26 students per class in the Kindergarten to Grade 3 cohort. This is three to nine students higher than ACOL's 17-student guideline. One jurisdiction, for example, provided operational funding to its schools based on classrooms of 26 students per class; it then used the targeted class size funding to hire additional teachers to reduce the class size averages. In all of the jurisdictions sampled, none met the Kindergarten to Grade 3 ACOL guideline.

With school jurisdictions having the flexibility and local autonomy to allocate funding to best meets the needs of their students, the allocation methodologies jurisdictions use and the fact none of them have reached the Kindergarten to Grade 3 ACOL guideline shows that jurisdictions may be allocating funding that could have previously been used to reduce class sizes to other priorities. This is illustrated by the 13 jurisdictions that have increased class size averages above the 2003/04 pre-initiative averages despite receiving funding targeted to hiring teachers and reducing class sizes.

## Feedback from School Jurisdictions

As Alberta Education moves toward a new funding and assurance model, a department team has been meeting with school jurisdictions, and they have asked school jurisdictions for feedback on the Class Size Initiative. The questions asked included:

- How has class size funding impacted your jurisdiction?
- How does your jurisdiction allocate/use the class size funding provided?
- Is the current model of per-student funding effective?
- Do you use the class size survey information for planning purposes?

The overall theme of the responses was that the class size model is not effective and should be rolled into the base instruction funding amount. This would create added flexibility since class size funding is a targeted grant. Some of the specific responses included:

- “Helped decrease class size, but should be rolled into base instruction.”
- “There is not enough money directed to class size. It should be rolled into base [instruction funding] then allocated to school authorities.”
- “If there is no more funding, give us flexibility and hold me responsible for my outcomes through an assurance model.”
- “Classrooms are all different, complex and difficult; [class size funding] needs to [be] rolled into base [instruction funding] to give flexibility.”

The majority of these jurisdictions stated they are using class size funding to reduce/maintain classroom sizes and for classroom support. It was mentioned that class size funding is only one element of funding to the classroom. In some cases, with class size funding being targeted toward hiring teachers, the class size funding is allowing jurisdictions to re-allocate base

instruction funding to other areas, such as supports for English language learners, First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and special needs students.

When it comes to using the class size survey information, about half of the jurisdictions said they use the information for planning purposes. Some school jurisdictions said they like to see the class size data, that they do not mind the guidelines and that they appreciate the predictable funding. Other jurisdictions felt that if they did not spend so much time on reporting, they would have more time for ensuring the funding went to the right places; these jurisdictions suggested class size reporting is not useful because funding goes to teacher salaries.

Some additional comments the assurance team heard were that diversity is increasing, class size is not as effective as good teaching, the ACOL guideline of 17 is not realistic, and the Classroom Improvement Fund was an effective grant to provide classroom support and support classroom size.

On April 11, 2019, the Alberta School Boards Association released its “Class size caps are not the answer to class size pressures” article. The Alberta School Boards Association

“asked member school boards their views on class sizes and the main pressures:

- 77 per cent are opposed to class size caps;
- Urban and rural communities face different and unique pressures; and
- Stable and predictable funding is needed to support deficits in transportation, facilities, and special needs, which will help keep class size pressures down” (2019).

## Literature Review

Class size has been a topic of debate and research for many decades, and there have been many studies on the effects of reducing class sizes. Recent studies have shown classroom size reduction has a complex relationship with system outcomes. There are many variables in classrooms that may affect student success.

### **Commission on the Reform of Ontario’s Public Services**

In 2012, Ontario released the Commission on the Reform of Ontario’s Public Services report, also known as the Drummond Report. The report determined that “given the lack of convincing empirical evidence to support a policy of reduced class sizes, the Commission believes that scarce resources should not be applied to this goal” (Drummond Report, 2012). Some of the research reviewed for the report included:

- In 2005, research by the C.D. Howe Institute suggested that “no solid evidence exists to show that smaller classes improve student achievement in the later primary and secondary grades in Canada” (Guillemette, 2005).
- In 2010, the Canadian Education Association noted that class size reductions typically yield at least modest quality improvements, but questions of “what size class is ‘small enough,’” how and why reducing class size works, and under what conditions it works, are all under-explained” (Canadian Education Association, 2010).

## International Assessments

According to the Programme for International Student Assessment website, “every three years, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s [OECD] Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) tests 15-year-old students from all over the world in reading, mathematics and science. The tests are designed to gauge how well the students master key subjects to be prepared for real-life situations in the adult world.”

PISA’s data suggests countries that support high teacher quality tend to outperform jurisdictions that focus on smaller class sizes. For instance, the data shows that Korea has a class size average of 34 students, but outperforms jurisdictions with significantly smaller class sizes. Further data from Teaching and Learning International Survey has reported that Korea has one of the lowest percentages of principals reporting a lack of qualified teachers among participating countries (OECD, 2012; Alberta Education Research Brief, 2015). In 2009, data provided from PISA showed that higher-performing countries were not investing in smaller classrooms in general—they were investing in teachers. It was also noted that countries make policy choices of providing teachers with higher salaries at the expense of larger class sizes.

## What the Research Says About Class Size

In 2014, Basha Krasnoff released the report *What the Research Says About Class Size, Professional Development, and Recruitment, Induction, and Retention of Highly Qualified Teachers*. In relation to class size reductions, she concluded there is

“no evidence that minimal or arbitrary reductions in class size will improve student performance. Across the entire range of research studies on class size reduction, however, there are a few general conclusions that can be drawn about the effects of smaller classes on student performance:

- In the primary grades, boys and girls equally benefit academically from long-term exposure to small classes.

- Minority and low-income students gain particular academic and behavioural advantages that increase the longer they are exposed to smaller classes.
- Gains from small classes in the primary grades are larger when class size is reduced to fewer than 15 students.
- Poor instructional practice continues to yield poor academic results no matter how much the class size is reduced.
- Students who have been in smaller classes throughout the primary grades retain academic gains made in multiple content areas upon return to standard-size classrooms in the upper grades” (Krasnoff, 2014).

Class size reduction, in other words, has greatest impacts for disadvantaged students and when the class size is quite small (fewer than or equal to 15 students). Academic benefits persist when class sizes are small in the early grades, but class size cannot compensate for poor instructional practices. Krasnoff also discusses professional development and emphasis on teacher recruitment, induction, and retention, as alternative strategies to classroom size reduction.

## **Alberta Education Research Brief: Class Size Reduction Effects**

In October 2018, Alberta Education prepared a research brief to describe some of the effects of class size reduction programs on students, teachers, parents, stakeholders, legislation, policy, ideal class size and cost. The key highlights of the report were:

- Effects of policies to decrease class size appear to be contextual rather than definitive and universal.
- Class size benefits are reported mostly in the early years (Kindergarten to Grade 3).
- Benefits can be both academic and social.
- Changes in teaching practice in smaller classes are not universal.
- Experienced teachers are more effective in smaller classes than inexperienced teachers.
- Teacher quality has a greater impact on student learning than the number of students in a class.
- Class reduction can be very expensive. In addition to teacher salaries, there may be other expenses incurred, including infrastructure, professional development of teachers and instructional resources. Without full consideration of those factors, initiatives to

reduce class size may have unintentional deleterious effects, such as removing funding from other programs and worsening conditions for learning and teaching.

# Conclusion

Since 2004/05, government has shown a commitment to reduce class sizes across the province. Under the ACOL guidelines, \$291 million in funding was allocated in the 2018/19 school year to school jurisdictions with the intention of reducing class sizes, and over \$3.4 billion has been allocated over the last 15 years.

A review of class size funding shows that while funding has been directed towards the classroom, class size funding has been ineffective in reaching desired results. In spite of government providing significant funding to school jurisdictions and a focus on reducing class sizes for the Kindergarten to Grade 3 cohort, the class size averages have continued to increase. This appears to be the result of government allowing school jurisdictions to have the autonomy to decide how best to distribute most of their funding towards the classroom. While the majority of the funding provided to school jurisdictions is flexible, class size funding is a targeted grant. With only a small percentage of funding being targeted specifically towards hiring teachers under the Class Size Initiative, some jurisdictions may have decided to reallocate base instruction funding to other areas, such as supports for English language learners, First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and special needs students.

As Alberta Education works toward a new funding and assurance model, school jurisdictions were asked about their views on the Class Size Initiative. The overall theme of their responses was that the class size model is not effective and should be rolled into the base instruction funding amount. School jurisdictions also said they would prefer the added flexibility rolling class size funding into the base instruction grant would provide compared to the class size grant's current targeted nature.

The literature on class size has shown that there are many variables in classrooms that may affect student success. While some literature outlines the benefits of class sizes with 15 or fewer students for early grades and disadvantaged students, other studies question the effectiveness of class size reductions and, with limited resources, other cost-effective strategies for improving education standards, such as classroom complexity and teacher quality, should be evaluated. Teacher quality, for instance, has been shown to have a greater impact on student learning and should be explored further to improve student outcomes.

Although small class sizes are a hot topic among policy-makers, teachers and parents across the province, greater value may be achieved through other educational initiatives in a system with limited resources available. As Alberta transitions to a new funding model in September 2020, the effectiveness of the class size initiative should be evaluated as part of the broader examination of the educational priorities in Alberta.

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# Appendix 1: 2018/19 School Year Class Size Survey

School Authorities*	Kindergarten to Grade 3	Grades 4-6	Grades 7-9	Grades 10-12
Almadina School Society	20.7	23.2	22.9	n/a
Aspen View Public School Division No. 78	18.5	22.6	19.3	17.3
Aurora School Ltd.	20.0	22.0	24.0	n/a
Battle River Regional Division No. 31	19.9	22.3	21.9	19.8
Black Gold Regional Division No. 18	19.0	21.3	22.6	22.3
Boyle Street Education Centre	n/a	n/a	n/a	17.1
Buffalo Trail Public Schools Regional Division No. 28	18.4	19.8	20.7	16.4
Calgary Arts Academy Society	17.3	18.0	20.8	n/a
Calgary Girls' School Society	n/a	25.8	20.4	n/a
Calgary Roman Catholic Separate School District No. 1	21.5	23.8	22.6	26.9
Calgary School District No. 19	20.4	23.5	25.7	27.9
Canadian Rockies Regional Division No. 12	18.6	21.6	21.7	16.8
CAPE - Centre for Academic and Personal Excellence Institute	19.2	21.8	16.8	n/a
Chinook's Edge School Division No. 73	21.1	24.8	24.1	21.2
Christ the Redeemer Catholic Separate Regional Division No. 3	20.3	22.3	22.9	20.4
Clearview School Division No. 71	17.9	19.1	18.7	17.1
Connect Charter School Society	n/a	22.8	22.7	n/a
East Central Alberta Catholic Separate Schools Regional Division No. 16	17.6	19.7	19.0	17.7
East Central Francophone Education Region No. 3	16.3	17.1	15.2	9.6
Edmonton Catholic Separate School District No. 7	21.6	23.5	24.0	24.0
Edmonton School District No. 7	21.6	22.5	24.9	27.2
Elk Island Catholic Separate Regional Division No. 41	19.8	23.6	24.1	22.6
Elk Island Public Schools Regional Division No. 14	21.6	23.6	23.5	22.9
Evergreen Catholic Separate Regional Division No. 2	20.6	23.6	22.3	22.5
Foothills School Division No. 38	20.3	23.4	24.8	24.2

School Authorities*	Kindergarten to Grade 3	Grades 4-6	Grades 7-9	Grades 10-12
Fort McMurray Public School District No. 2833	20.5	22.8	25.5	21.9
Fort McMurray Roman Catholic Separate School District No. 32	20.4	23.4	21.5	21.4
Fort Vermilion School Division No. 52	17.3	18.9	20.5	15.4
Foundations for the Future Charter Academy Charter School Society	20.8	26.5	26.2	26.3
Golden Hills School Division No. 75	18.9	23.1	23.1	19.2
Grande Prairie Roman Catholic Separate School District No. 28	19.5	20.0	21.3	21.1
Grande Prairie School District No. 2357	20.7	24.4	24.3	21.6
Grande Yellowhead Public School Division No. 77	20.4	22.9	21.9	17.2
Grasslands Regional Division No. 6	18.2	21.4	22.4	19.5
Greater North Central Francophone Education Region No. 2	19.0	21.0	18.7	13.7
Greater St. Albert Roman Catholic Separate School District No. 734	20.7	23.7	24.3	22.1
High Prairie School Division No. 48	17.6	20.3	20.8	15.8
Holy Family Catholic Regional Division No. 37	17.4	20.4	19.9	16.7
Holy Spirit Roman Catholic Separate Regional Division No. 4	18.8	21.4	22.7	20.6
Horizon School Division No. 67	16.7	20.8	20.4	16.7
Lakeland Roman Catholic Separate School District No. 150	16.9	22.1	19.4	16.6
Lethbridge School District No. 51	19.2	22.2	25.8	25.7
Living Waters Catholic Regional Division No. 42	20.6	21.1	24.1	18.8
Livingstone Range School Division No. 68	17.4	21.7	23.3	18.2
Medicine Hat Public School District No. 76	18.5	21.8	25.2	23.9
Medicine Hat Roman Catholic Separate School District No. 21	20.8	22.0	24.6	22.2
Mother Earth's Children's Charter School Society	8.3	7.3	6.7	n/a
New Horizons Charter School Society	20.8	21.3	16.5	n/a
Northern Gateway Regional Division No. 10	19.5	22.6	21.9	21.0
Northern Lights School Division No. 69	19.7	21.8	23.3	21.6
Northland School Division No. 61	15.3	15.6	15.2	11.5
Northwest Francophone Education Region No. 1	15.9	16.2	10.5	7.1
Palliser Regional Division No. 26	19.4	22.1	21.4	18.2
Parkland School Division No. 70	20.1	22.8	22.5	25
Peace River School Division No. 10	18.2	20.0	19.6	16.4
Peace Wapiti School Division No. 76	17.8	19.9	19.1	17.9
Pembina Hills Regional Division No. 7	18.8	21.3	21.2	21.7
Prairie Land Regional Division No. 25	15.1	17.9	14.8	10.9
Prairie Rose School Division No. 8	17.1	20.1	18.9	18.8

School Authorities*	Kindergarten to Grade 3	Grades 4-6	Grades 7-9	Grades 10-12
Red Deer Catholic Regional Division No. 39	19.5	22.6	23.8	23.7
Red Deer Public School District No. 104	20.0	25.0	27.2	25.0
Rocky View School Division No. 41	21.4	25.1	26.2	24.6
St. Albert Public School District No. 5565	21.2	22.6	22.8	24.4
St. Paul Education Regional Division No. 1	17.9	21.0	18.0	15.8
St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic Separate Regional Division No. 38	20.8	22.9	23.6	18.5
Sturgeon School Division No. 24	21.1	23.1	23.7	22.0
Suzuki Charter School Society	23.1	22.7	n/a	n/a
The Southern Francophone Education Region No. 4	19.1	21.0	16.4	8.7
Valhalla School Foundation	12.8	13.5	9.5	n/a
Westmount Charter School Society	20.3	25.2	23.0	19.1
Westwind School Division No. 74	20.1	24.2	21.8	19.0
Wetaskiwin Regional Division No. 11	20.8	23.9	21.8	18.8
Wild Rose School Division No. 66	20.2	24.6	25.3	22.5
Wolf Creek School Division No. 72	21.1	22.5	24.1	22.8
<b>Total for Province</b>	<b>20.4</b>	<b>22.8</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>23.5</b>
<b>ACOL Guidelines</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>23.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>27.0</b>

\*School authority names changed under the *Education Act*, which came into force September 1, 2019.

#### Chart notes:

1. Grade 3/4 combined classes are included in the Grades 4 to 6 average.
2. Grade 6/7 combined classes are included in the Grades 7 to 9 average; Grade 9/10 combined classes are included in the Grades 10 to 12 average; and special education classes are included.
3. Team-taught classes, which are classes taught by more than one certificated teacher at the same time, are reflected as an instructional pupil-to-teacher ratio size. These classes are counted as multiple classes for the purposes of calculating the average. For example, a team-taught class of 47 students with two certificated teachers should be entered as one class of 23 and one class of 24. This is to avoid skewing the class size average. Colony/Hutterite schools have been excluded.
4. Outreach/alternative schools and virtual/home education/distance education programs have been excluded.