

Class Size Counts Questionnaire for FCPS At-Large School Board Candidates June 2017

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1. What are the most and least important provisions in FCPS Regulation 1302.1? What provisions, if any, would you like to see changed, how and why?

I strongly support keeping class sizes small. The biggest issue with Section VI (Communication) is that although it requires schools to notify parents when class sizes end up being larger than the guidelines, it does not give parents an outlet for communicating with school administration about their objections—we need more robust communication structures between parents, administration, and the school board itself to ensure that we are keeping sizes small across the county.

2. If FCPS staff revised Regulation 1302.1 to increase the caps for classes, what would you do?

I will always work to try and find ways to keep class sizes small. It has been shown time and again that students perform best when they have the opportunity to be in a smaller learning environment.

3. If elected, would you vote to amend the FCPS Legislative Program to explicitly support state bills that:
 - Reduced state law caps on 4th through 6th grade classes from 35 students to 29 students?
I will always support legislation that reduces class sizes while ensuring that the state is correctly funding schools and giving them the resources to keep class sizes small.
 - Required school districts to post on their publicly-available web sites the number of classes at each elementary school that had 25 or more students?
I believe that transparency is always a positive for the school system—we have to strike a balance between ensuring that parents have the information they need to act while also strongly encouraging schools to meet the guidelines in 1302.1.

4. What procedures, if any, would you vote to require FCPS staff to implement to ensure that the provisions in Regulation 1302.1 are enforced? Why do you think those procedures would ensure enforcement?

It is an issue when procedures no longer have means of enforcement. I support creating a feedback system that would allow teachers to anonymously give feedback to the school board and their administration (which would help bring up issues in enforcement as well), and I would also work to make sure that older regulations are being brought up to new principals and superintendents as they come into the system.

5. Would you vote for a new School Board policy to cap elementary, middle school and/or high school academic class sizes? If so, what caps (e.g., 28 students) would you support for academic classes in elementary, middle and high school and why?

I would absolutely consider voting for a new school board policy that would cap class sizes. We have to make sure that we are giving the proper resources to our schools to meet those new caps, and that the Board of Supervisors understands the urgency behind funding those requests.

6. Would you vote for a School Board Policy to cap science classes with labs (e.g., biology, chemistry and physics) at 24 students consistent with safety recommendations by the American Chemistry Association and other national groups? Why or why not?

Yes, I would support a policy that would cap science classes with labs—classes like these not only rely on teachers being able to properly supervise safety procedures, but would make it possible for students to have a better hands-on learning experience.

7. The state requires FCPS to report average class sizes at each school. Would you require FCPS staff to also post publicly on the FCPS web site the number of and course titles of classes with 25 or more students at each school? Why or why not?

I support transparency in schools, and I believe that any policy that helps increase transparency without overburdening teachers with red tape is something that I can get behind.

8. Should principals be allowed to create larger academic class sizes by trading classroom teacher positions for other positions or resources? Do your views change depending on whether it is an elementary, middle or high school principal, or based on any other factor? If so, how and why?

Schools have to have the flexibility to function, but not at the cost of our students. I will work with the Board of Supervisors to try and find ways to avoid making it a choice that teachers have to fight.

9. Should FCPS pull excess teachers and other staff out of schools where actual student enrollment (including FRM and ESOL counts) does not justify the number of positions allocated to that school based on the application of the needs-based staffing formula to enrollment projections? Describe any circumstances where you would not support pulling the excess staff and why.

Teachers deserve to have a say in where they are based, and it should only be a last resort if FCPS needs to move staff.

10. Should FCPS countywide staffing reserve positions ever be allocated to elementary schools with average class sizes (excluding Level 2 special education students) under 23 students? Under 20 students? When and why?

FCPS reserve positions should be allocated based on the needs of the school system. I support giving administrations the flexibility to react, while not hurting our students.

11. On May 25, 2017, a majority of School Board members voted against motions that would make other budget cuts to minimize across the board class size increases. If elected and those same amendments were on the agenda next May, which would you vote for, which would you vote against, and why?

It is critical that we remember how important a holistic education is for our children. I will always support finding ways to lower class sizes, but we have to make sure that the budget is also supporting our classrooms and our students.