

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017**

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SENATE BILL 703

Short Title: Tech Correct to Appropriations Act of 2017. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Chaudhuri, Van Duyn, Smith (Primary Sponsors); Bryant, Ford, Foushee, Waddell, and Woodard.

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

January 12, 2018

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO MAKE TECHNICAL MODIFICATIONS TO THE CURRENT OPERATIONS
APPROPRIATIONS ACT OF 2017 REGARDING CLASS SIZE IN KINDERGARTEN
THROUGH THIRD GRADE.

Whereas, pursuant to S.L. 2017-9, local school administrative units beginning with the 2018-2019 school year are required to set class size averages in grades K-3 that equal the State classroom teacher funding ratios and will have to meet more restrictive individual class size maximums across those grade levels; and

Whereas, an immediate reduction in the K-3 class size maximum will worsen an already very difficult environment for local school administrative units in finding licensed and qualified teachers to fill classrooms, most likely leading to more classrooms taught by long-term substitutes or lateral-entry teachers, who do not have the pedagogy and classroom management training necessary; and

Whereas, the immediate reduction in individual class size maximum in K-3 class size would in turn increase the number of physical classrooms required at these grade levels, adding to already billions of dollars in unmet capital needs across the State; and

Whereas, the immediate reduction will result in the loss of flexibility to generate State funding for teaching positions in program enhancement courses like art, music, and physical education; and

Whereas, local school administrative units that lack space to implement the class size reduction may convert art and music rooms into traditional classrooms and have those teachers travel from room to room with a cart to deliver program enhancement classes in traditional classes; but this does not work well with unique aspects of art and music education; and

Whereas, art classes require necessary supplies such as paint and clay while music classes generate sounds that, without adequate provisions and soundproofing, have the potential to disrupt learning in neighboring classes; and

Whereas, local school administrative units that lack space to implement the class size reductions may need to also convert gymnasiums into traditional classrooms, which would mean that physical education courses are held outdoors with no alternatives for days with adverse weather conditions; and

Whereas, it is estimated that in order to comply with the 2018-2019 class size requirement, local school administrative units will need to hire an additional 4,750 teachers at a cost of approximately \$300,000,000; and



1 Whereas, organizations representing teachers and parents have respectfully
2 requested the General Assembly to slow implementation of the K-3 class size requirement; and

3 Whereas, on February 16, 2017, the House of Representatives unanimously passed
4 the first edition of House Bill 13 which provided local school administrative units much-needed
5 flexibility from the class size mandate; and

6 Whereas, on June 30, 2017, the General Assembly declared in Section 2.1. of S.L.
7 2017-197 its intent to create a new funding stream for program enhancement teachers starting
8 in the 2018-2019 fiscal year; and

9 Whereas, on October 5, 2017, the General Assembly passed an adjournment
10 resolution that allows for technical corrections to S.L. 2017-57; and

11 Whereas, the language found below reflects identical language found in the first
12 edition of House Bill 13 as passed unanimously by the House of Representatives; Now,
13 therefore,

14 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

15 **SECTION 1.** Part VII of S.L. 2017-57 is amended by adding a new section to read:

16 **"SECTION 7.15A.(a)** G.S. 115C-301(c) reads as rewritten:

17 "(c) **Maximum Class Size for Kindergarten Through Third Grade.** – The average class
18 size for kindergarten through third grade in a local school administrative unit shall at no time
19 exceed the funded allotment ratio of teachers to students in kindergarten through third
20 ~~grade-grade by more than three students.~~ At the end of the second school month and for the
21 remainder of the school year, the size of an individual class in kindergarten through third grade
22 shall not exceed the allotment ratio by more than ~~three-six~~ students. The funded class size
23 allotment ratio for kindergarten through third grade shall be as follows:

- 24 (1) For kindergarten, one teacher per 18 students.
- 25 (2) For first grade, one teacher per 16 students.
- 26 (3) For second grade, one teacher per 17 students.
- 27 (4) For third grade, one teacher per 17 students.

28 In grades four through 12, local school administrative units shall have the maximum
29 flexibility to use allotted teacher positions to maximize student achievement."

30 **"SECTION 7.15A.(b)** This section is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning
31 with the 2018-2019 school year."

32 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.