


Office of the Superintendent of Schools
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

December 18, 2006

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jerry D. Weast, Superintendent of Schools 

Subject: Official Class Size Report—School Year 2006–2007

The attached class size report reflects the status of class sizes throughout the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) as of October 31, 2006. The report demonstrates the ongoing impact of efforts by the Board of Education to provide appropriate staffing to reduce class sizes throughout the school system over the past several years, especially this year. This effort includes specific strategies to reduce the number of over-sized classes in secondary schools and eliminate combination classes in elementary schools.

The average class size chart below shows that average class sizes for 2006–2007 are lower than the previous year at all grade levels and are at an all-time low at all grade levels except kindergarten, primarily because enrollment is about 2,000 students below projection this year. Since this year’s enrollment deviations occurred across all grade levels and at schools throughout the county, changes in personnel deployment were minimized after the third or fourth week of school to avoid being too disruptive.

Average Class Sizes by Level

Grade/Subject	2002–2003 (FY 2003)	2003–2004 (FY 2004)	2004–2005 (FY 2005)	2005–2006 (FY 2006)	2006–2007 (FY 2007)
Elementary Schools					
Kindergarten	17.5	17.3	17.5	17.7	17.6
Grades 1–5	22.1	22.1	22.1	21.1	20.8
Middle Schools					
English	23.1	23.3	23.5	23.2	22.9
Other Academic Classes	23.9	23.9	24.2	23.8	23.7
High Schools					
English	24.3	24.5	24.8	24.7	24.0
Other Academic Classes	25.3	25.5	25.6	25.5	24.7

On February 8, 2005, the Board of Education adopted guidelines to reduce elementary class sizes for Grades 1–5. This class size initiative resulted in a reduction of maximum class size guidelines for all elementary schools by 2 students, from 28 to 26 students in Grades 1–3, and from 30 to 28 students in Grades 4 and 5. The Board of Education also approved additional positions to eliminate elementary school combination classes. MCPS has continued to use the Board of Education guidelines to maintain low class sizes. The only new class size initiative for FY 2007 was the addition of 25 high school teachers in general education to assist with the inclusion of special education students. These additional positions helped to reduce class sizes at the high school level this year.

Data in the following chart provide a summary of the number and percent of classes over the Board of Education maximum class size guidelines for the past four years. These data have been adjusted for FY 2004 and FY 2005 for the elementary level to reflect the new maximum class size guidelines.

Number and Percent of Classes Over Board of Education Maximum Class Size Guidelines

Grade/Subject/Guideline	10/31/03 (FY 2004)	10/31/04 (FY 2005)	10/31/05 (FY 2006)	10/31/06 (FY 2007)
Elementary Schools				
Kindergarten (over 25)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (.97%)	3 (1.0%)
Grades 1–3 (over 26)	111 (7.6%)	112 (7.9%)	49 (3.3%)	24 (1.6%)
Grades 4–5+ (over 28)	81 (10.0%)	99 (12.1%)	22 (2.5%)	16 (1.8%)
Middle Schools				
English (over 28)	135 (10.6%)	175 (14.1%)	169 (13.7%)	97 (7.8%)
Other Academic (over 32)	144 (2.7%)	109 (2.2%)	153 (3.0%)	128 (2.5%)
High Schools				
English (over 28)	248 (15.8%)	324 (20.5%)	292 (18.1%)	236 (14.3%)
Other Academic (over 32)	391 (6.0%)	457 (7.1%)	487 (7.4%)	293 (4.3%)

There is a significant reduction in the number of oversized classes in elementary schools this year from last year—in Grades 1–3, from 49 (3.3 percent) to 24 (1.6 percent); and in Grades 4–5, from 22 (2.5 percent) to 16 (1.8 percent). The number and percentage of oversized middle and high school English classes and other academic classes that exceed the maximum class size guidelines are lower this year than last year. It should be noted that 27.5 percent of middle school and 23.5 percent of high school academic classes have 20 or fewer students this year. Some of these smaller classes, which are a result of scheduling decisions at the local school level, are intervention programs for students who are below grade level in reading and/or mathematics. Other smaller classes are new Advanced Placement (AP) classes. As we increase rigor in our high schools and add more AP offerings, it often takes several years for these classes to reach full enrollment.

Middle schools have an average academic class size of approximately 23.5 students and high schools have an average of 24.6 students; therefore, having many of our classes with 20 or fewer students increases the likelihood that some classes will exceed class size guidelines. We will continue to work with staff at our schools to ensure that classes are scheduled by using the Board of Education class size guidelines while quality programs for students are maintained.

Additional data for class sizes are attached for your information. Attachment A reflects the changes that have resulted from Board of Education class size reduction initiatives since the adoption of *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence*, the MCPS Strategic Plan. The class sizes have been reduced at the elementary level, on average by 3.5 to 4.0 students, since the 1998-1999 school year. Attachment B shows the range of class sizes and how many classes are below the Board's class size guidelines. Information about secondary class size is reported by academic subjects for middle schools and high schools in Attachment C.

If you have any questions, please call Mr. Donald H. Kress, chief school performance officer, at 301-279-8715 or Mr. Larry A. Bowers, chief operating officer, at 301-279-3626.

JDW:vnb

Attachments

Copy to:

Executive Staff
Directors of School Performance
Principals and Program Directors

Average Class Sizes 1996-97 to 2006-07

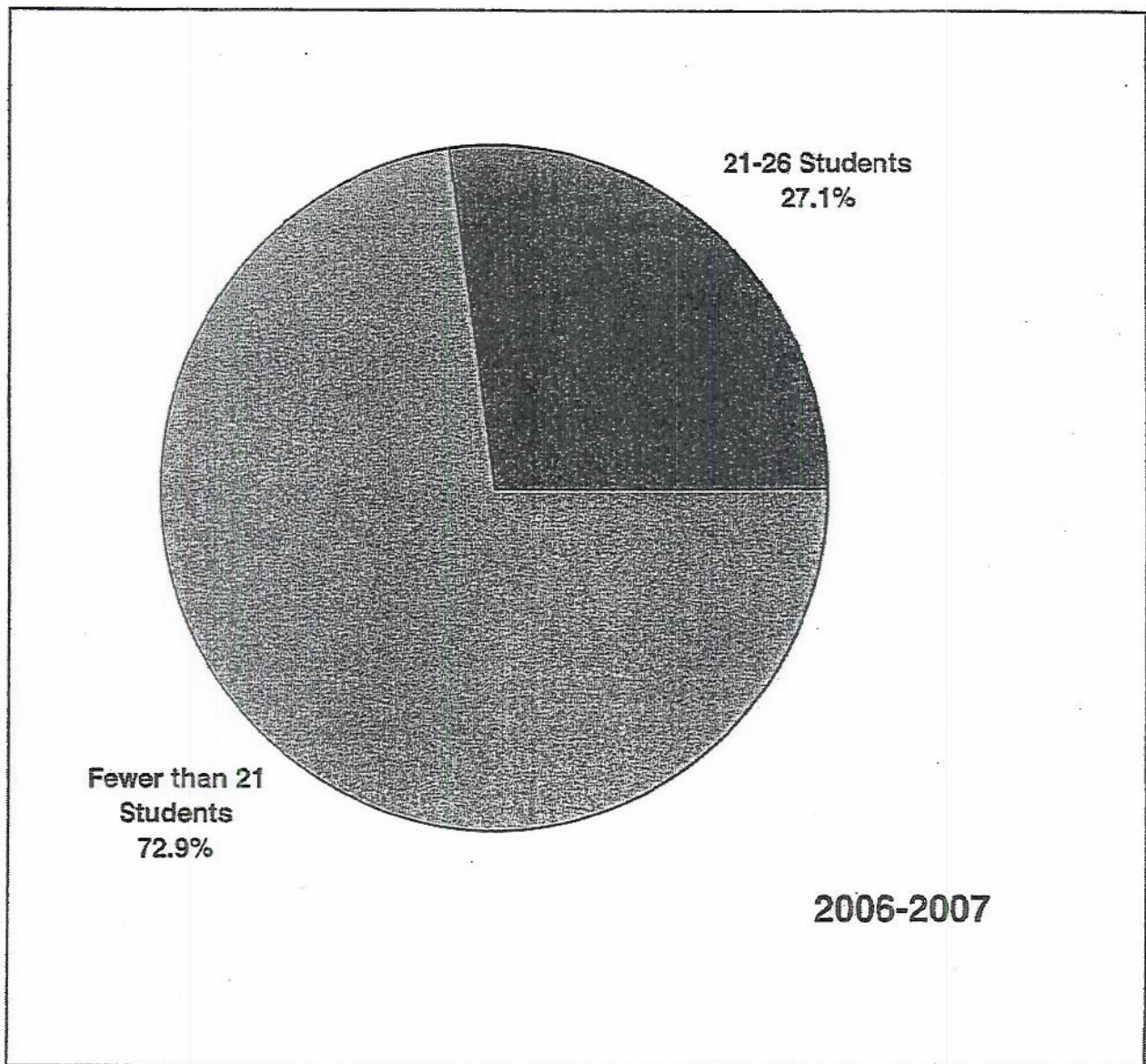
	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Elementary											
Kindergarten	21.5	21.3	21.0	21.3	19.8	17.9	17.5	17.3	17.5	17.7	17.6
Grade 1	23.7	23.8	23.6	22.8	20.8	19.7	19.2	18.9	19.3	18.4	18.4
1-2 Combination	22.7	22.8	22.8	23.4	21.9	20.5	20.0	20.8	21.1	15.7	N/A
Grade 2	24.5	24.5	24.3	23.7	21.7	19.6	19.8	19.8	19.7	19.1	18.8
2-3 Combination	23.4	24.0	23.3	23.2	23.0	23.0	23.4	21.3	24.0	N/A	N/A
Grade 3	24.9	25.3	24.9	23.8	23.9	23.1	23.7	23.3	23.1	22.1	22.0
3-4 Combination	24.4	24.2	24.4	20.0	22.9	21.2	22.7	23.0	23.0	N/A	N/A
Grade 4	25.5	25.6	25.5	24.8	24.3	24.3	24.2	24.6	24.5	23.1	22.5
4-5 Combination	25.4	25.6	24.7	24.1	22.8	24.2	23.7	24.4	22.6	24.8	N/A
Grade 5	26.3	25.3	25.5	25.4	24.7	24.8	25.0	24.9	25.0	23.5	23.1
5-6 Combination	24.0	24.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 6	24.8	24.0	22.5	23.5	23.9	23.3	26.3	26.0	26.0	26.5	24.0
Total 1-6	24.9	24.8	24.7	24.1	23.0	22.1	22.1	22.1	22.1	21.1	20.8
Middle											
English	24.2	24.1	23.3	23.0	23.3	23.3	23.1	23.3	23.5	23.2	22.9
Other Academic	25.5	25.4	24.4	24.4	24.2	23.7	23.9	23.9	24.2	23.8	23.7
High											
English	25.0	25.4	24.8	24.8	24.7	24.4	24.3	24.5	24.8	24.7	24.0
Other Academic	26.7	26.8	25.8	25.5	25.5	25.4	25.3	25.5	25.6	25.5	24.7

Distribution of Kindergarten Class Size Data

Year	Fewer than 21 Students		21-26 Students		27-28 Students		More than 28 Students		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
2006-2007	374	72.9%	139	27.1%	0	0.0%	0	0%	513	100%
2005-2006	382	73.9%	135	26.1%	0	0.0%	0	0%	517	100%

- Number of Classes

% - Percent of Classes

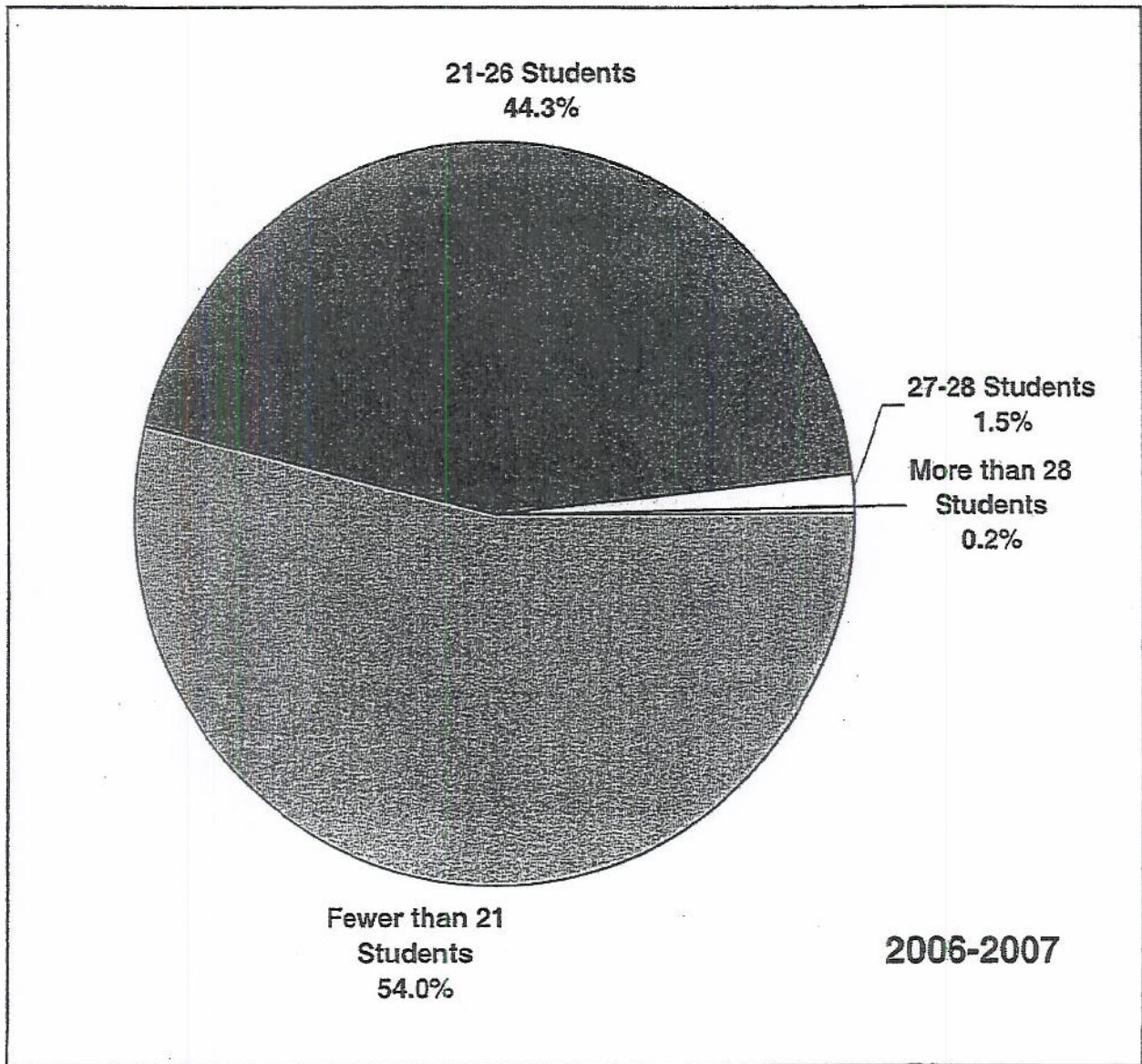


Distribution of Grades 1-3 Class Size Data

Year	Fewer than 21 Students		21-26 Students		27-28 Students		More than 28 Students		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
2006-2007	782	54.0%	642	44.3%	22	1.5%	2	0.2%	1448	100%
2005-2006	786	54.4%	610	42.2%	47	3.3%	2	0.1%	1445	100%

- Number of Classes

% - Percent of Classes

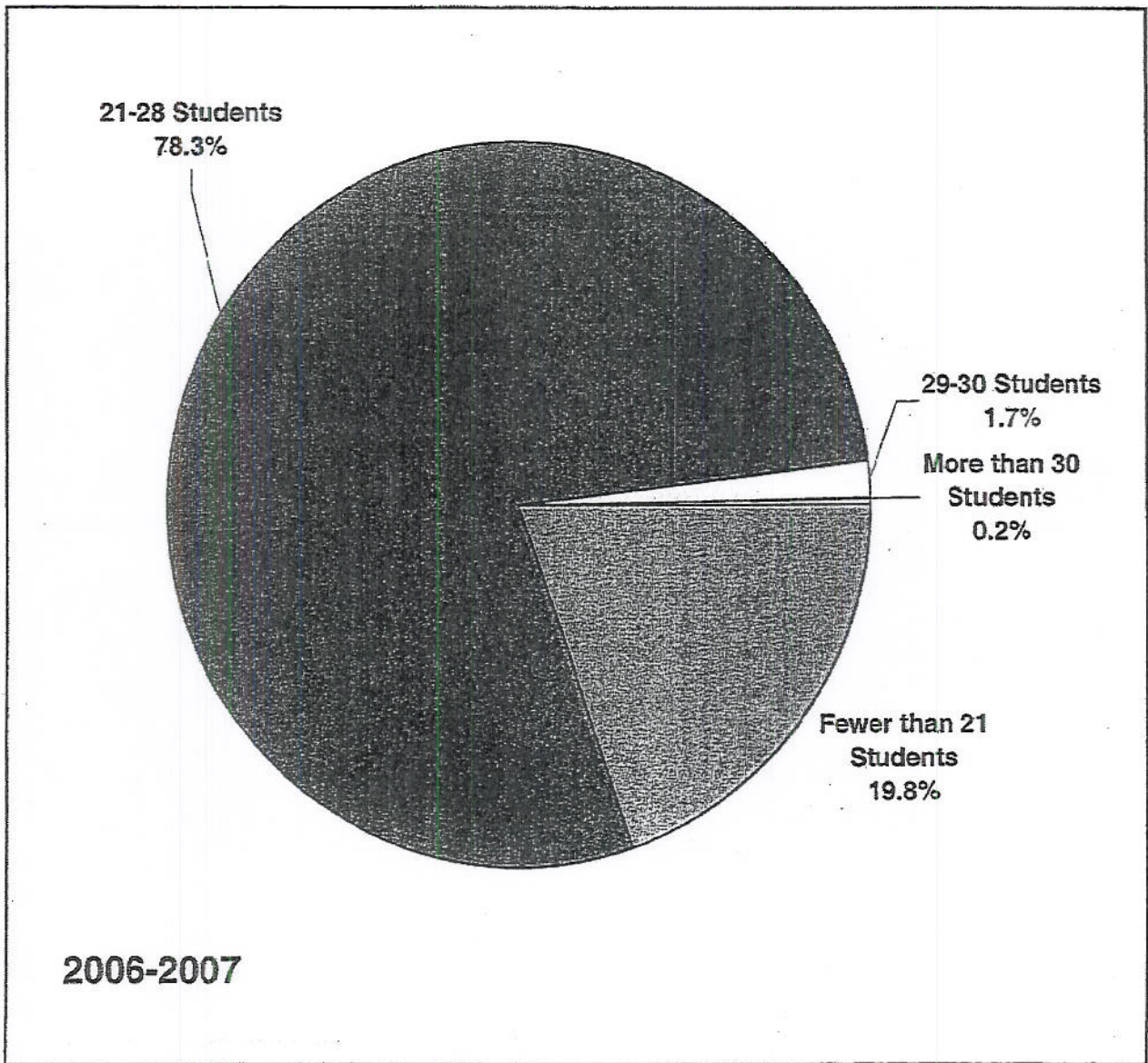


Distribution of Grades 4-5 Class Size Data

Year	Fewer than 21 Students		21-28 Students		29-30 Students		More than 30 Students		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
2006-2007	169	19.8%	669	78.3%	14	1.7%	2	0.2%	854	100%
2005-2006	137	15.9%	705	81.6%	22	2.5%	0	0.0%	864	100%

- Number of Classes

% - Percent of Classes



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MCPS SECONDARY CLASS SIZE FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2006-2007
 CLASS SIZE DISTRIBUTION: SUMMARY BY LEVEL
 BASED ON REPORT CARD ADMINISTRATIVE EXTRACT OF 10/27/06

LEVEL	SUBJECT	TOTAL NUMBER	AVG. SIZE	CLASSES LT 21		CLASSES 21-25		CLASSES 26-28		CLASSES 29-32		CLASSES GT 32		
				N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
MID	RQD ENG.	PUPILS	28117	22.9	5590	19.9	11234	40.0	8394	29.9	2798	10.0	101	.4
		CLASSES	1230		389	27.6	484	39.3	310	25.2	94	7.6	3	.2
	OTHR ENG	PUPILS	12854	18.0	6026	46.9	4004	31.1	1865	14.5	959	7.5	0	0.0
		CLASSES	716		440	61.5	175	24.4	69	9.6	32	4.5	0	0.0
	FORGN LANG	PUPILS	15952	24.6	2575	16.1	3736	23.4	3683	23.1	4977	31.2	980	6.1
		CLASSES	648		160	24.7	190	24.7	136	21.0	163	25.2	29	4.5
	SOCIAL STUDY	PUPILS	29415	25.8	2866	9.7	6780	23.0	7414	25.2	11037	37.5	1318	4.5
		CLASSES	1140		173	15.2	290	25.4	274	24.0	364	31.9	39	3.4
	MATH	PUPILS	30188	22.6	7134	23.6	10807	34.1	6532	21.6	5714	18.9	501	1.7
		CLASSES	1334		440	33.0	447	33.5	242	18.1	190	14.2	15	1.1
	SCIENCE	PUPILS	30147	26.0	2688	8.9	6902	22.9	7947	26.4	11091	36.8	1519	5.0
		CLASSES	1161		164	14.1	294	25.3	294	25.3	364	31.4	45	3.9
	TOTAL ACAD*	PUPILS	146673	23.5	26880	18.3	42963	29.3	35835	24.4	36576	24.9	4419	3.0
		CLASSES	6229		1716	27.5	1850	29.7	1325	21.3	1207	19.4	131	2.1
	ESOL	PUPILS	2122	11.5	1932	91.0	190	9.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
		CLASSES	184		176	95.7	8	4.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	NON-ACAD	PUPILS	60138	27.3	5654	9.4	9458	15.7	9821	16.3	18496	30.8	16709	27.8
		CLASSES	2199		378	17.2	407	18.5	363	16.5	607	27.6	444	20.2

* INCLUDES REQUIRED ENGLISH AND OTHER ENGLISH (EXCLUDING ESOL), SOCIAL STUDIES, MATH, SCIENCE AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES.

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MCPS SECONDARY CLASS SIZE FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2006-2007
 CLASS SIZE DISTRIBUTION: SUMMARY BY LEVEL
 BASED ON REPORT CARD ADMINISTRATIVE EXTRACT OF 10/27/06

LEVEL	SUBJECT	TOTAL NUMBER	AVG. SIZE	CLASSES LT 21		CLASSES 21-25		CLASSES 26-28		CLASSES 29-32		CLASSES GT 32	
				N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SNR	ROD ENG.	PUPILS	24.0	5654	14.3	12437	31.4	14473	36.5	6791	17.1	270	.7
		CLASSES		346	21.0	533	32.3	533	32.3	228	13.8	8	.5
	OTHR ENG	PUPILS	20.8	2067	34.1	1239	20.4	647	10.7	1527	25.2	586	9.7
		CLASSES		147	50.5	54	18.6	24	8.2	50	17.2	16	5.5
	FORGN LANG	PUPILS	24.3	4809	17.7	6413	23.6	5451	20.0	9100	33.5	1418	5.2
		CLASSES		297	26.5	279	24.9	202	15.1	299	26.7	42	3.8
	SOCIAL STUDY	PUPILS	25.7	5592	12.3	8501	18.8	9187	20.3	18484	40.8	3565	7.9
		CLASSES		391	19.9	366	20.7	340	19.3	603	34.2	105	5.9
	MATH	PUPILS	24.4	7287	16.0	11488	25.2	9574	21.0	14905	32.7	2390	5.2
		CLASSES		462	24.7	498	25.6	354	18.9	489	26.1	71	3.8
	SCIENCE	PUPILS	25.1	5973	13.8	9082	21.1	8642	20.0	17435	40.4	1996	4.6
		CLASSES		375	21.9	393	22.9	319	18.6	569	33.2	59	3.4
	TOTAL ACAD*	PUPILS	24.6	31382	15.2	49160	23.8	47974	23.2	68242	33.0	10225	4.9
		CLASSES		1978	23.5	2123	25.2	1772	21.1	2238	26.6	301	3.6
	ESOL	PUPILS	14.2	3214	78.7	709	17.4	159	3.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
		CLASSES		250	86.8	32	11.1	6	2.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
	NON-ACAD	PUPILS	25.7	11256	14.7	11937	15.6	12151	15.9	25802	33.8	15266	20.0
		CLASSES		761	25.6	517	17.4	449	15.1	842	28.3	406	13.6

* INCLUDES REQUIRRED ENGLISH AND OTHER ENGLISH (EXCLUDING ESOL), SOCIAL STUDIES, MATH, SCIENCE AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES.