



BILL LEE
GOVERNOR

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NINTH FLOOR, ANDREW JOHNSON TOWER
710 JAMES ROBERTSON PARKWAY
NASHVILLE, TN 37243-0375

PENNY SCHWINN
COMMISSIONER

Via Electronic Mail and USPS

October 24, 2019

Dr. Linda Gilbert, Director of Schools
Murfreesboro City Schools
2552 South Church Street, Suite 100
Murfreesboro, TN 37127-6342
linda.gilbert@cityschools.net

Re: Waiver for Average Class Size for K-3 Classes at Salem Elementary School

Dear Dr. Gilbert:

I am in receipt of your October 23, 2019 letter requesting a waiver of the class size average for K-3 classes found in T.C.A. §49-1-104 for Salem Elementary School for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year.

The commissioner's waiver authority under T.C.A. §49-1-201(d) is limited by T.C.A. §49-1-104(a), which states that "neither the commissioner nor the state board of education shall grant waivers from the maximum class sizes established in this section."

With the understanding that none of the K-3 classes at Salem Elementary School will exceed 25, the maximum number of students per class specified in the above referenced law, your request for a waiver of the class size average is granted for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year.

Please do not hesitate to call me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Penny Schwinn", written over a white background.

Dr. Penny Schwinn
Commissioner

October 23, 2019

Dr. Penny Schwinn
Commissioner of Education
Tennessee Department of Education
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Commissioner Schwinn:

Murfreesboro City continues to add students. That is a very, very positive thing. But during this time of the year, adding teachers to a school can be a challenge. Salem Elementary School has now exceeded the K-3 pupil-teacher average requirement; however, none of the classes has exceeded the maximum individual class size. The principal feels strongly that it would be very difficult to find an exceptional teacher candidate and to incorporate that teacher into the school culture without disturbing that culture at this critical time of year.

I concur with the principal that this is not an ideal time of year to be adding a teacher. In fact, instead of creating a beneficial situation, it may create a detrimental one.

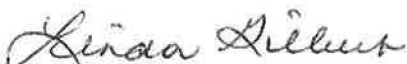
Here are the numbers for Salem's teachers, students, and pupil-teacher ratio, and individual class sizes:

Kindergarten	9	182	20.2	7 classes have 20 students, 2 have 21
First Grade	6	136	22.7	2 classes have 22, 4 have 23
Second Grade	7	146	20.9	1 class has 19, 5 classes have 21, 1 has 22
Third Grade	6	122	20.3	1 class has 18, 1 has 20, 4 have 21
K-Third	22	586	20.7	

We plan to offer a contract to a December graduate and to have that teacher in place by the end of winter break. But, for the 36 days until that time, I am requesting a waiver from the average PTR requirement for K-3. Please let me know if there is additional information you need or if you wish me to clarify any of the reasons for requesting the waiver.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,


Linda Gilbert
Director of Schools
Murfreesboro City Schools