

Policy Title: Draft Healthy Class-size Policy

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Policy Number: Faculty-2

Body of Origin: Faculty

Review Authority: Faculty, Council

Purpose: This policy is to guide the review of class sizes for maintenance or development of healthy social settings for children. It will be used to guide class combinations, class separations, and recommendations for hiring skills or assistant teachers in affected classrooms.

Policy Details: We, the faculty, are always holding children's needs in the center of our work and planning. We must consider whether their social and academic needs are being met with sufficient diversity regarding gender, emotional safety within the class and peer acceptance of the diversity within the class in small classes (12 or fewer students); and that there is sufficient adult support to guide learning and possible special needs of individual students in large classes (20 or greater students). In larger classes this adult support could include but not be limited to a classroom teaching assistant or a separate skills teacher, because of the need for individual attention, especially during the establishment of literacy skills in grades 1, 2 and 3.

Considerations we find important:

- Waldorf education is inherently developmentally based. The process of combining grade levels must be carefully designed to meet the needs of individuals.
- Needs of individual students with special needs can impact the feasibility of size changes of a particular class.
- The skills of an individual teacher play a major role in the possibility of combining classes.
- There must be great attention given to timing of combining or separating classes in the students' academic journey.
- Family support of class combination or separation is crucial.
- Timing of the decision to combine or separate a class is very important. Teachers, parents and students need proper notice for preparation.