

Island Lake families:

It's been a busy and challenging week for many in our community. Now that our new classrooms have been added and students have been reassigned, I'd like to revisit a few aspects of our recent changes.

Thanks to School Board action, Island Lake now has class sizes in every grade that are much lower than during the first weeks of school.

Grade Level	After addition of teacher	Prior to addition
½ Day Kindergarten	20.33	30.5
Second Grade	24	30
Third Grade	24	30
Fourth Grade	25.2	31.5

Reassigning students into new classes is never easy. However, I'm pleased by the flexibility, cooperation and patience displayed by our parents, staff and students during this time. I'm confident the Island Lake staff will continue to make this transition as smooth as possible.

In last week's backpack mailing, families of kindergarten, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grade students received a letter from Superintendent Dan Hoverman explaining our staffing timeline. I'd like to excerpt from his message to re-emphasize a few points:

- For the 11th year in a row, K-12 enrollment has declined. This fall's enrollment is down 53 students from last fall but about 125 students higher than we projected when the School Board approved its budget in June.
 - The District's enrollment varied greatly throughout the summer. This uncertainty is typical because enrollment is never clear until students actually begin school.
- Schools are funded on a per-pupil basis, so we staff our schools with teachers in January based on the number of students we expect in September. Fiscal responsibility says you can't spend money that you don't have, and you don't have the money necessary to hire additional teachers until you have confirmed the number of students in schools every fall.
 - Until the Board acted in September, there were no teaching positions to assign to any schools.
- Non-resident enrollment is not the cause of our temporarily higher class sizes this fall. For years, Island Lake's enrollment has been closed to new non-resident students, yet we're pleased to welcome so many new resident students to our school this year.

As always, please call me or e-mail me with any comments, questions or concerns.