

OKLAHOMA TO GET \$13.5 MILLION TO REDUCE CLASS SIZE

In his weekly radio address, President Clinton will urge Congress to work in a bipartisan spirit to continue his plan to reduce class size in early grades to 18 students per teacher. He will also announce that the U.S. Department of Education is releasing new guidelines to help states and local school districts use the funds they will receive this summer to begin hiring well-qualified teachers to reduce class size in early grades. As the U.S. Senate considers the Education Flexibility Act, it is more important than ever that the Murray-Kennedy amendment to continue the President's class size reduction plan is passed as well.

Studies show that smaller class sizes help teachers provide more personal attention to students and spend less time on discipline; as a result students learn more and get a stronger foundation in the basic skills. In 1998, President Clinton proposed to help local schools hire 100,000 well-prepared teachers in order to reduce class size in grades 1-3 to a national average of 18, and make sure that every child gets a solid foundation in the basics. Last year, the President signed into law the first installment of his seven-year, \$12.4 billion proposal to hire 100,000 new teachers nationwide. For the first year, \$1.2 billion was provided to help local communities hire 30,000 teachers. The funds will be available to school districts in July. Local school boards will be incorporating these funds into the budgets they are developing right now for the next school year. To give communities the certainty they need to effectively plan and phase in a seven-year reduction in class size, Congress must act now.

In July, Oklahoma will receive \$13.5 million as its first installment of funds to hire teachers to reduce class size in early grades. For Oklahoma's largest school districts, that means:

OKLAHOMA	
OKLA CITY	\$1,482,261
TULSA	1,355,513
LAWTON	400,710
MWC/DEL CITY	292,496
PUTNAM CITY	269,137
MOORE	228,660
MUSKOGEE	205,502
NORMAN	191,212
BROKEN ARROW	190,909
EDMOND	157,520
ENID	147,175
SHAWNEE	124,079
UNION	116,680
ALTUS	113,888
BARTLESVILLE	113,017
PONCA CITY	98,362
JENKS	98,053
DUNCAN	97,602
OKMULGEE	97,471
WESTERN HGTS	97,445

The guidelines and total estimated school district allocations are available on the Internet at <http://www.ed.gov/inits/ClassSize/index.html>.