



## **BP 3300 – Combination of Classes (Minimum Class Size)**

### **1. Purpose**

This policy defines how and when a decision is made to combine classes due to minimum student enrollment. Although it is common practice in Waldorf schools to combine different grades into one classroom, this policy is specific to the combination of students in the same grade level.

### **2. Background**

Blue Oak School believes in the value of small class size. However past history has shown that at times a particular class has had enrollment drop below a threshold in which it is not ideal for student learning and healthy socialization nor is it fiscally viable to the overall school budget. Due to the unique practice of “looping” in a Waldorf school, this often causes upset and confusion for students and teacher who have been together for several years.

### **3. Guidelines**

Blue Oak recognizes that enrollment tends to increase and decrease throughout the year. Most grades at Blue Oak are double tracked, meaning there are two classes per grade.

The current class caps are as follows:

Kindergarten 22  
Grades 1 – 3 28  
Grades 4 – 8 28

Each grade level should not have two classes that combined, are equal to or less than the cap for that grade level.

For instance, if the school has two 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes with 14 students in one class and 14 students in another; this would trigger a discussion on the combination of the two classes.

#### **4. Triggers**

The Board of Directors has the authority to review each situation on a case by case basis. A Board discussion to combine classes within a grade will arise when:

- 4.1 If parents from either classroom bring concerns to Administration related to the social health of the class relating to the class size or makeup.
- 4.2 Any particular grade experiences a sustained decrease in enrollment for more than 3 months and the total enrollment in that grade is less than a combined class cap.
- 4.3 If the Administration gains knowledge of a large group of students planning to leave/not return the following school year, bringing the enrollment for the grade below the combined class cap.
- 4.4 If there is not enough enrollment/interest based on the Registrar's enrollment records for the new school year.

For instance, the confirmed number of incoming Kindergarteners is 44. As the cap for that grade is 66, a discussion to combine will take place.

#### **5. Staffing**

The Blue Oak Board sincerely understands the turmoil which staff may experience upon the combination of classes. The Blue Oak Charter Council (BOCC), through the school Administration, will collaborate with all staff affected in a transition to meet a mutually agreeable outcome. The Board will be kept apprised of these decisions and will have final authority to approve.

If the decision to combine classes is made prior to hiring new staff, new staff will not be employed and current staff will have the opportunity to fill any vacant position for which they are qualified.

#### **6. Adoption and Review**

Date Policy Adopted: