



Class Size Matters

1. Class size is a proven and effective reform.

Studies from Tennessee, Wisconsin and states throughout the country have demonstrated that students who are assigned to smaller classes in grades K-3 do better in every way that can be measured: they score higher on tests, receive better grades and exhibit improved attendance.

2. NO threshold has to be reached before class size reduction provides benefits.

Researchers have found that any reduction in class size increases the probability that students will be on-task and positively engaged in learning.

3. Large scale class size reduction programs work.

In 1996 the California legislature lowered class size across the state. Every controlled study of the California class size reduction program has shown significant gains from smaller classes.

4. Class size reduction does not lower the quality of teachers.

Though anecdotal reports in California claimed that teachers fled disadvantaged schools when class size reduction opened up jobs in other schools, follow-up studies show that after a temporary rise in all schools, teacher migration rates fell to much lower levels than before, most notably in schools with large numbers of poor students.

5. Class size matters at all age levels.

Although there have been no large scale experimental studies done for the middle and upper grades, numerous studies show that smaller classes are correlated with achievement gains and/or lower dropout rates in the middle and upper grades.

6. Class size reduction narrows the achievement gap.

Researchers have found that the reductions in class size that took place nationally in the 1970s and 1980s might account for part or most of the substantial test score gains among poor and minority students that took place over this period. Students from disadvantaged groups experience two to three times the average gains from smaller classes than middle class students.

7. Class size reduction is cost-effective.

Many studies have shown that class size reduction yields economic and health benefits that well outweigh the cost.