Are Smaller Classes Beneficial Essay, Research Paper

Commentary: Are smaller classes beneficial?

We all know what it feels like. Everyone hates it when his or her arm goes numb. Why do students’ arms go numb? Contrary to popular belief, it is not from sniffing white out or permanent markers. Numb arms are a common result of raising your hand for an extended period of time. Wouldn’t it be nice if America’s children could avoid numb arms and receive the attention they deserve from the classroom teacher?

Sometimes school districts can’t find the space or the money to reduce class sizes. “The state and federal governments have given over 100 million dollars to schools. The money aids the schools in shrinking the class size to the magic number, 18. School administrators can use the state and federal aid to hire more teachers, buy more supplies and add more classrooms” (Wasserman 6).

Some people think that smaller classes are the most important. Others feel that a computer in every room is a bigger priority. If you stop and think, it’s a lot easier to throw money around and buy things than it is to sit down and devise a plan to minimize the student to teacher ratio. People are very concerned about having Internet access in every classroom. How are all the students supposed to take advantage of this opportunity if they have to wait in a long line for their turn? Smaller classes seem to be the answer.

No more numb arms because some poor kid raised their hand and the teacher did not even notice. With fewer students in a classroom, teachers can spend more one-on-one time with each student, giving them the individual attention they need.

Not all grades benefit from class size reduction, though. A national study proved that “smaller classes improve learning in the third grade and lower and the class rosters were no smaller than 15 children. Above this grade and this number of students, there was no substantial change” (Cooper 2).

So, should every school push for funding to reduce class size? Of course they shouldn’t. Schools need to be granted the money and authority to decide for themselves. There are small rural high schools out there with a student: teacher ratio, 17:1, that doesn’t need to be reduced. All will be right with the world when there isn’t a numb arm in any classroom again!

Works Cited Page

Cooper, Richard T. “Education; A Call to Focus on Techniques of Teaching.” Los

Angeles Times 22 Sept. 1999: B2+

Wasserman, Joanne. “No Room to Improve.” New York Daily News 4 Oct. 1999: A6+