

Your Question:

You requested information on class-size reduction programs. Specifically, you asked us for:

- Current information on states that have class-size reduction programs
- Legislative trends concerning class-sizes.

Our Response:

Education Commission of the States Publications – Class size policy is an issue ECS has followed for a number of years. States have approached the issue in various ways, though the approaches generally fall into one of two categories: (1) class size caps and (2) initiatives to reduce class sizes. Please note, that the 2005 study you found is listed below, as are several other more recent ECS reports on the issue.

- [Class-Size Policies](#) (April 2010) – This publication provides information on the two main approaches to class-size policies and provides state policy examples.
- [Maximum P-12 Class-Size Policies](#) (November 2009) – This publication provides state-by-state information on state policies limiting class sizes. It categorizes the policies as follows: hard caps; semi-hard caps; mandates that can be waived; and recommended maximums.
- [State Policies Focusing on Class-Size Reduction](#) (September 2009) – This publication provides information on class-size reduction policies in 23 states and a brief primer on the evidence for the effectiveness of class-size reductions.
- [State Class-Size Reduction Policies](#) (March 2005) – This publication provides state-by-state information on policies limiting teacher/student ratios to 20 or fewer students per teacher.
- [State Class-Size Reduction Policies](#) (June 1999) – This publication provides information on state policies limiting class sizes to 20. It also includes several marginal class-size reduction policies that do not meet the 20:1 ratio.

Education Commission of the States State Legislation Database – ECS maintains a database of enacted policies on a wide variety of education-related topics including class sizes. On the [class size page](#) you will find summaries of 118 policies, dating back to 1994. So far in 2016, we've seen two enacted policies on class size in Virginia and Idaho. We saw three in 2015, six in 2014 and two in 2013. Based on this research, legislation concerning class-sizes is trending down from the previous decade. The number of bills run in the past 3 years indicates that class-size reduction is not currently a major point of emphasis addressed by legislatures.

Additional data & links

Most Recent Legislation Concerning Class-Size Reduction:

[Virginia](#) - Requires school districts to notify parents if a class exceeds established class size limits after September 30 of the school year. Mandates the districts to provide notification within 10 days, including the reason the class size limits have been exceeded and what steps the district will take to reduce the class size

[Idaho](#) - Amends existing law to establish provisions regarding the statewide average class size. Allows for comparisons of school districts based on their student enrollment.

[Oregon](#) - Establishes Task Force on Class Sizes to determine appropriate class sizes of students, identify methods to reduce class sizes, and determine cost for methods to reduce class sizes. (Note: Task Force presents findings on December 6th, 2016)

Outside Resources – In addition to the ECS resources above, we have collected a number of outside resources that may be of interest:

- [*The Effectiveness of Class Size Reduction*](#) (National Education Policy Center, June 2016) – This publication provides an overview of some of the research on class size as well as policy considerations.
- [*Reducing Class Sizes in New York City: Promise vs. Practice*](#) (Education Law Center, June 2016) – This report is an analysis of a class size reduction plan. New York City is an interesting case because class size limits were initially imposed in response to a 2003 lawsuit.
- [*Smart Class-Size Policies for Lean Times*](#) (SREB, March 2012) – This publication summarizes class-size reduction policies in the SREB region, reviews prominent research on the issue and offers recommendations.
- [*The False Promise of Class-Size Reduction*](#) (Center for American Progress, April 2011) – This publication addresses the conflicting evidence about the effectiveness of class-size reduction.
- [*Class Size: What Research Says and What it Means for State Policy*](#) (Brookings, May 2011) – This publication is exactly what the title indicates—an examination of the research.