

RESOLUTION

On Class Size Reduction

WHEREAS the International Reading Association supports the idea of reduced class size, but expects the full benefits of this reform to be realized only with well educated teachers and reading specialists. Smaller is better, according to new research on reducing class size, and smaller classes in the early grades can lead to higher reading achievement if teachers are adequately prepared to take advantage of the change through high quality professional development.

WHEREAS reductions in class size can change the dynamics of a classroom. Smaller classes can allow teachers to better assess student needs and to more appropriately individualize instruction. In smaller classes each student receives a larger portion of the educational resources represented by the teacher's instructional time and, consequently, has an opportunity for greater learning. Each of these benefits can best be realized with well prepared teachers who provide exemplary reading instruction.

WHEREAS the International Reading Association recognizes that every child should get more personal attention, that discipline should be maintained in classrooms, and that optimal reading achievement occurs when we give our young people a solid foundation in the early grades. A smaller class size by itself is not sufficient to improve reading achievement; however, class size reductions can increase opportunities for well trained teachers to meet these critical needs.

WHEREAS the International Reading Association recognizes that research has found that students, teachers, and parents report positive effects from the impact of class size reductions on the quality of classroom reading instruction; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the International Reading Association believes excellence in classroom reading instruction can be achieved by a combination of reduced class size, high quality teacher preparation, and ongoing professional development.

RESOLVED, the International Reading Association believes that if class size is reduced to below 20 students, the increase in reading achievement can be substantial. For disadvantaged and minority students the effects can be even greater. Class reductions of this magnitude will allow knowledgeable teachers to make the adjustments necessary to provide the best reading instruction; therefore be it further

RESOLVED, the International Reading Association supports reduced class size which demands a concurrent commitment to increased and improved professional development so the benefits of this policy can be fully realized.

(Adopted May 1999; Reaffirmed February 2010)