In general, smaller classes are associated with increased student achievement, usually measured by standardized tests in multiple subjects such as mathematics and reading.

There are benefits of smaller class sizes when variation in class size (due to maximum class-size rules) and random fluctuations in population are taken into consideration.

The positive relationship between smaller class size and student achievement holds for students in different grades as well as in different countries and across continents.

Reducing class size is a clear education policy that is popular with students, parents, teachers, and policymakers, and hence easy to argue for.

Several high-quality studies find no relationship between class size and student achievement.

Reducing class size is a very expensive policy reform relative to other reforms, which may also provide better value.

Because most studies focus on elementary schools, much less is known about the relationship between class size and student achievement in secondary schools.

Reducing class size in many schools in developing countries is unlikely to improve achievement as these schools have more fundamental challenges, such as high teacher absenteeism.

Reducing class size is a popular education policy measure with parents, teachers, and policymakers. However, research shows that reducing class size leads to, in most cases, only modest improvements in student achievement. Also, students in early grades appear to gain more from smaller classes than older students. Despite extensive research on class size, much about this relationship is still unknown. Policymakers should be aware that reducing class sizes can be costly, is no guarantee of improved achievement, and is only one of many possible reforms.