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# The Well-Managed Classroom

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[Jay Mathews](#)'s March 10 Metro article, "Smaller Classes Don't Close Learning Gap, Study Finds," highlighted one of the main fallacies in education today.

The main beneficiaries of the "smaller class size" argument are teachers who use it to explain away problems with student achievement.

They say that smaller classes would allow them to provide more individualized instruction. In reality, teachers want fewer students because they are unable to manage their classrooms.

When teachers spend more time managing students' behavior than teaching, clearly the solution isn't smaller classrooms but better management of the classrooms they have.

Just one or two disruptive students ruin the educational experience for all, regardless of class size. Improved discipline and classroom behavior are crucial to improving student learning.

And closing the achievement gap? Giving all students the skills they need to be successful is the best solution to that problem. When up to 85 percent of a child's success depends on his or her social skills, providing education in that area to lower-income students will help them to learn today and succeed in the professional world tomorrow.

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