

TUA NEWS RELEASE

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Give Chicago Teachers Pink Slips

CHICAGO—The financially troubled Chicago Public Schools (CPS) should lay-off scores of teachers and significantly increase class size to save money, according to the president of one of the nation's largest taxpayer organizations.

“Study after study has established that there is no appreciable correlation between class size and academic achievement,” said Jim Tobin, President of Taxpayers United of America (TUA). CPS is on the brink of financial collapse, and its administrators need to bite the bullet and start laying-off teachers. The resulting larger class sizes will not affect academic performance and will save taxpayers millions of dollars. It is obscene to advocate raising property taxes once more on overburdened Chicago homeowners.”

Stanford economist Eric Hanushek's study on class size is the gold standard on this topic. He looked at the best studies and found that 89% of the studies show either no statistically significant advantage or a significant negative effect to smaller classes.

A Cato Institute study reports that the average American classroom has gotten substantially smaller over the past 40 years (by about 7 students) but achievement at the end of high school is essentially flat. A Harvard study by researchers Antonio Wendland and Matthew Chingos reported in 2010 that Florida's statewide class size reduction had “no discernible impact upon student achievement,” but has so far cost the state roughly \$28 billion.

The Chicago Teacher's Union (CTU) has been pushing for smaller class sizes, claiming that smaller class sizes will improve student achievement. According to the Illinois Policy Institute, the CTU even authored a report on the topic, asking the Chicago City Council to divert \$170 million of the \$351 million set aside for charter school expansion in 2012 toward reducing average class sizes from 28 to 20 students.

“This class-size myth is perpetuated by the union bosses and their legislative cronies to increase the number of union jobs for both teachers and laborers. It is a scam to extract even more taxpayer wealth from the pockets of the middle class,” added Tobin.

“Chicago homeowners can't afford another property tax increase in order to swell teacher-union membership. It's time to lay-off teachers and increase class size. This would be a significant step toward stabilizing CPS finances.”