

Debate!

Do boys and girls learn better together or apart?

OCTOBER 21, 2011 | By TFK Staff



DAN BANNISTER—GETTY IMAGES

Are single-gender schools good for students?

Can separating boys and girls improve their performance at school? Or do boys and girls need to be together to learn to get along? There is no right answer. But many people have strong opinions about the topic. Some people believe that single-gender schools are the best bet. Others believe that coed schools give kids a stronger start.

Single-gender education is on the rise. In the mid-1990s, there were only two single-gender public schools in the nation. Today, more than 500 public schools in 40 states have only boy students, only girl students or some classes that are single-gender.

The authors of a new report in *Science* magazine reviewed existing research about single-gender schools. Their report argues against this type of education. They say it reduces boys' and girls' opportunities to work together, and reinforces gender stereotypes. A stereotype is an inaccurate oversimplified image of a group.

"Boys who spend more time with other boys become increasingly aggressive," the article says. "Similarly, girls who spend more time with other girls become more gender-typed." The authors also argue that there is no scientific evidence that single-gender schooling leads to better academic outcomes.

► ***What do you think? Should girls and boys study together or apart? Would you learn better if you only studied with kids of your own sex? Motivate your answer!***