

Abstract

Educators are constantly looking for ways to increase student achievement and make their schools and districts more successful. While some of the changes that are implemented into schools are effective, many fail to make the desired improvements necessary for success. One change that many researchers are revisiting is the concept of the multiage classroom. This report reviews the studies that have been done and summarizes the research that has been published on the topic of multiage classrooms, specifically focusing on successful implementation, organization of curriculum and instruction and an evaluation of the cognitive and social effects on students. While there is a wealth of information on the topic of multiage educational models, a majority of the research is qualitative in nature and is based primarily on surveys and observations of those educators presently in multiage classrooms. The quantitative data that is available deals primarily with cognitive effects and the results do not lend themselves to a definitive conclusion supporting or opposing the multiage model. This research concludes that a multiage educational model can be a successful alternative to the traditional graded system, but specific consideration and attention to detail are vital for a successful program. The true benefit to the multiage model is in the social effects it can have on all students, specifically at-risk and minority population children. Cognitively, multiage classrooms simply are no better or worse than a graded classroom, they are merely an alternative that could potentially lead some students to success.