

The Department of Education calculated average class size for kindergarten through third grade at the district and state level. Average class size equals the number of students divided by the number of classrooms for each grade level.

$$\text{Average Class Size} = \text{Number of Students} / \text{Number of Classrooms}$$

Since average class size uses the number of classrooms as the denominator, adding additional teachers to a classroom does not lower the average class size for that grade level. The use of classroom aides also does not reduce average class size at the district or state level.

Findings

This report provides class size data from 1998-1999 to 2008-2009 for kindergarten through third grade. Average class size increased in 2008-2009 for kindergarten, first and third grade compared to 2007-2008 (see Table 2 and Figure 1). The kindergarten and third grade averages were at the second highest level since 1998-1999. The second grade average remained steady when compared to 2007-2008. Despite the increases, average class size remained below 20 students for kindergarten and first grade in 2008-2009. Third grade continued to show the highest average class size per classroom of the grades examined, at 21 students per classroom for 2008-2009, and remained above 20 students in each year studied.

Overall the increase in average class size in 2008-2009 continued the trend in recent years. Average class size declined for kindergarten through second grade from 1998-1999 through 2001-2002 but increased in each of the subsequent years through 2005-2006. In 2006-2007, kindergarten average class size declined slightly. In 2007-2008, kindergarten was the only grade to increase average class size from 2006-2007. In 2008-2009, all grades with the exception of second grade increased slightly from 2007-2008. Third grade showed a decline from 1998-1999 through 2002-2003 but experienced alternating increases and decreases in the following years. Third grade remained steady in 2007-2008 when compared to 2006-2007, and increased slightly in 2008-2009. First and second grade show steady increases from 2002-2003 through 2006-2007. Both grades decreased slightly in 2007-2008.

Table 2

**IOWA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT
AVERAGE CLASS SIZES FOR GRADES K – 3
1998-1999 TO 2008-2009**

Grade	School Year										
	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
Kindergarten	19.7	19.0	18.6	18.6	18.9	19.0	19.2	19.4	19.0	19.2	19.3
1	20.1	19.4	18.8	18.5	18.8	19.1	19.2	19.4	19.5	19.1	19.4
2	20.7	20.1	19.7	19.4	19.7	19.8	19.9	19.9	20.2	20.0	20.0
3	21.7	20.8	20.6	20.4	20.4	20.6	20.4	20.5	20.8	20.8	21.0

Source: Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Planning, Research, Development and Evaluation, Class Size Survey File.