Is there support from the educational community to eliminate ability grouped, G-level classes?

From the Robert Berry, President of the **National Council of Teaching of Mathematics (NCTM)**:

"*Tracking prevents students access to a high-quality mathematics curriculum, to effective teaching and learning, to high expectations, and to the necessary supports needed to maximize their learning potential. It is time to recognize and identify tracking as a systemic form of segregation. Tracking leads to the distribution of students in ways that are correlated with the inequities based on race, ethnicity, language status, and socioeconomic status found in our broader society. And it is time to begin the courageous work needed to intentionally and systematically remove the perniciousness of tracking and its associated curricular and instructional practices as we move toward creating pathways for success in mathematics for each and every student.*"

https://www.nctm.org/News-and-Calendar/Messages-from-the-President/Archive/Robert-Q-Berry-III/Initiating-Critical-Conversations-on-the-Discontinuation-of-Tracking/

Position from NCSM- Math Leadership Organization

Tracking: Policies and Practices Widening the Opportunity Gap

"Tracking is the practice of dividing students into separate classes for high-, average-, and low-achievers."[1] In practice, these might be considered low or high tracks, or some other, similar categorization, and students might be placed into these tracks based on questionable methods using grades and placement exams, perceived ability through teacher recommendation, or non-academic expectations adults have for the students. Much of the research on tracking policies demonstrates the negative effects on certain subgroups of students by denying them access to rigorous coursework.[2]

More generally, a number of studies point to the influence course-taking patterns have on academic outcomes.[3] This influence is true for student subgroups like emergent bilingual students[4] and students from low income backgrounds, different racial and ethnic groups, and different genders.[5] It may disable students from pursuing whatever course of study interests them when they get to high school, college, career or beyond. Tracking becomes worse for students year-over-year, as each consecutive year in a track makes it more difficult to move out of that track.

1 Oakes, 2005
2 Lee & Bryk, 1988; Gamoran, et al, 1997; Cogan, et al. 2001
3 Lee, et al, 1997; Gamoran, 1997; Wang & Goldschmidt, 2003; Riegle-Crumb, 2006; Riegle-Crumb & Grodsky, 2010; Gottfried et al., 2014
4 Umansky, 2016; Thompson, 2017
5 Oakes et al., 1990; Riegle-Crumb, 2006; Long, et al., 2012; Palarady, et al., 2015

NCSM mathedleadership.org

Policies and Practices Reducing the Opportunity Gap: Detracking

Detracking is the intentional practice of placing students into heterogeneous classrooms usually in an effort to reduce the opportunity gap and allow all students to learn mathematics at high levels. Detracking requires the interruption of policies that have led to the inequitable sorting of students into mathematics courses. If detracking is to happen, school districts and states must go through the difficult process of establishing a new vision for mathematics teaching and learning that dispels the culture of "low" and "high" students as well as "faster means smarter."

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NASSP (National Association of Secondary School Principals) *published a position statement on tracking and ability-grouping in middle and high schools*: "While tracking was originally intended for practical pedagogical purposes, its unintended consequences make it an obsolete practice in the context of high expectations for all."

"NASSP urges principals to:

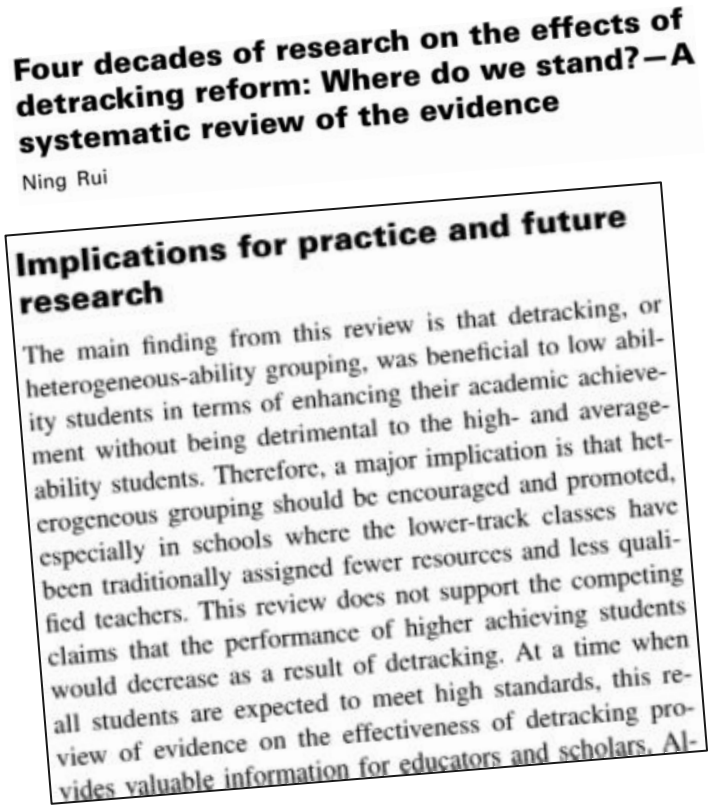
- Organize students in heterogeneous learning groups; diversity can help students learn from each other.
- Provide open enrollment for academically rigorous programs such as International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced Placement (AP) and honors classes, and provide tutoring and other instructional support to enhance chances for success.
- Provide additional time for struggling students. Interventions designed to remediate students who score two to three years below grade level in certain disciplines and in reading should not be construed as tracking. These students need immediate, intensive accelerated instruction in the form of additional time."

https://www.nassp.org/policy-advocacy-center/nassp-position-statements/archived-position-statements/tracking-and-ability-grouping-in-middle-level-and-high-schools/

Research on Tracking- Homogeneous Grouping

"Achievement follows from opportunity." (Burris & Wellner, 2005)

Rui (2009) synthesized 4 decades of research on tracking/detracking in a meta-analysis: "The findings suggest that the detracking reform has appreciable effects on low-ability student achievement and no effects on average and high-ability student achievement. Therefore, detracking should be encouraged, especially in schools where lower-track classes have been traditionally assigned fewer resources."



Four decades of research on the effects of detracking reform: Where do we stand?—A systematic review of the evidence

Ning Rui

Implications for practice and future research

The main finding from this review is that detracking, or heterogeneous-ability grouping, was beneficial to low ability students in terms of enhancing their academic achievement without being detrimental to the high- and average-ability students. Therefore, a major implication is that heterogeneous grouping should be encouraged and promoted, especially in schools where the lower-track classes have been traditionally assigned fewer resources and less qualified teachers. This review does not support the competing claims that the performance of higher achieving students would decrease as a result of detracking. At a time when all students are expected to meet high standards, this review of evidence on the effectiveness of detracking provides valuable information for educators and scholars. Al-