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## In Case You Missed It: The Wall Street Journal – “Mr. Christie Must Be Doing Something Right.”

Monday, April 12, 2010 • Tags: [Education](#)

### Fewer Students, More Teachers

*Even as enrollment falls, school districts keep hiring.*

The Wall Street Journal

Posted: April 12, 2010

Teachers unions prefer fewer students per class because it means more dues-paying jobs, but the evidence that it improves academic outcomes is thin.

...

This disconnect between student enrollment and the number of teachers hired is growing nationwide. Between 2001 and 2007, 12 states saw student enrollment fall while teaching staffs grew, according to data from the Census Bureau and the National Center for Education Statistics. And in another half-dozen states, teachers were hired out of all proportion to increased enrollment.

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When hires are determined by the money available instead of the staff needed, school districts become bloated in the good times. Yet when tax revenue falls in a recession, union pressure makes it next to impossible to cut teacher rolls. States raise taxes instead of re-examining enrollment and student needs, which creates a hiring ratchet that leaves states with an ever higher number of teachers, regardless of enrollment.

The good news is that a few state officials are starting to push back. In addition to New York's Governor Paterson, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie is trying to reduce state aid to local school districts. In the past decade, student enrollment in the Garden State has grown by 3%, while total school hiring is up 14%. Instead of addressing this reality, a local chapter of the New Jersey Education Association responded to Mr. Christie's proposals by circulating a memo joking that it wishes the Governor were dead. Mr. Christie must be doing something right.

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