

# Sex-segregated schools: enough evidence to

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



There is great debate in society today in regards to whether our school systems should reintegrate a gender segregated education system. In the article " If Girls Can Succeed Only at the Expense of Boys, Maybe We Need Segregated Schools, " Link Byfield proposes that by reintroducing segregation into our educational structure it could eliminate the declining performance of male students and allow both sexes to achieve greater scholastic success. Although Byfield presents some valid points to support his argument, upon close examination many biases become evident which weaken his case. These generalizations of why girls are achieving higher success opposed to boys fail to persuade the reader to accept his standpoint. Byfield reports that according to research gathered by the national School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP), in conjunction with Statistics Canada and the Council of Ministers of Education, girls are accomplishing the same level of knowledge in math and sciences as boys as well as exhibiting even higher achievement in reading and writing. However, Byfield fails to present further research or actual numbers of these statistics in order to support his claim and he openly admits the fact that " while the information is useful it is far from conclusive" (Byfield). Furthermore many would say this is a great progression for females as there has been past experience of a much more male dominated level of educational achievement. The assumption that there is a shift within the public school system towards accommodating and designing the curriculums towards the female student more so than the male students is blasphemous, and he presents no evidence in order to prove this theory. Where is this shift? The manner in which he concludes that " boys are more competitive, risk-oriented and dominant... [And] intuitive, co-

operative and circuitous... female mind" (Byfield) is simply unjustly alleged. There still remain the same amount of maths, sciences and technology courses available to students in today's public schools as there are family studies courses. In fact, there remain more opportunities for so-called "male-dominated" studies versus "women-dominated" studies in our public high schools (<http://www.brits2bc.com/school-curriculum.htm>). There are definitely signs of progression from how the school curriculum was organized 50 years ago however, the possibility of integrating more women's studies into secondary schools exists. Byfield utilizes his personal experience, as well as his wife's, to portray a narrow-minded viewpoint of the necessity to integrate sex-segregation. He states that he was schooled in a segregated manner after grade 5 and "it seemed to work well enough" (Byfield), does not provide legitimate support even when in corroboration with his wife's experience of moving from segregated to non-segregated classes the following year how both the girls and boys grades dropped (Byfield). All children and young people learn differently, regardless of their gender. What works for one student will not work for another. Real life is not separated by gender, and young people need to learn, work, and play in all different kinds of situations, with all different sorts of people. One of the strengths of public schools is the opportunity they provide for students of different sexes, races, and religions to learn from each other. Indeed, these lessons are some of the most important that schools teach. Sex-segregated education goes in the wrong direction, by diminishing real diversity in education. A pattern of underachievement may be addressed in many other proven ways to improve the learning of both girls and boys in a coeducational setting, rather than in

a separate school or a separate classroom. In conclusion, not only does Byfield generalize and lack evidence to support and persuade his audience he fails to recognize the importance for students to socialize, compete, and collaborate with students of the other sex at school. They are more prepared to succeed in the world when they have acquired these skills.