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A TALE OF TWO DISTRICTS: A CLOSE LOOK AT THE EFFECTS OF TRACKING IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

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Tracking is a highly debated topic in schools today, with much of the research supporting a shift towards mixed-ability grouping. Still, an estimated 85% of schools still track their students in some way. This study focuses on two neighboring school systems that hold very differing philosophies on tracking. Through interviews, surveys, and student writing samples, this study compares the effects of tracking and mixed-ability grouping on students’ social and academic welfare. Results suggest that the grouping policy implemented may have a significant impact on students in both of these arenas. Educators need to carefully consider the implications of tracking and mixed-ability grouping in order to make a decision that best meets the needs of their students.