

PURE protests standardized tests

"Most outstanding minority students see their scores go down sharply under this high-pressure environment. It's not a measure of intelligence."
Gary Orfield, Harvard University

Test scores trip up a few good pupils

Ban on promotions feels unfair to some

Protestan contra el examen de Iowa

Chicago Parents' Fair Testing Campaign

Voice of the people

Schools' abusive testing policy

Chicago Sun-Tri

Thursday, May 25, 2000

METRO

Margin of error in Iowa Tests raises red flags

Parents urge schools to change policy, graduate more eighth-graders.

Challenger de IOWA test

Basing Kids' future on testing isn't fair

Señalan que esta prueba no debe ser el único factor

Por Jorge Luis Mota

EDUCACION La organización Padres Unidos por una Educación Responsable (PURE) denunció en conferencia de prensa celebrada el 20...

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Chicago Parents' Fair Testing Campaign

How Parents Used Multiple Strategies to Force Changes
in the Chicago Public Schools Student Testing Policy

**Parents United for Responsible Education (PURE)
2002**

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How Parents Used Multiple Strategies to Force Changes in the Chicago Public Schools Student Testing Policy

Introduction

Parents United for Responsible Education is a parent-created, parent-run, non-profit group organized to provide advocacy and training for public school parents and others working to improve the quality of education in the Chicago Public Schools.

Since 1998, our organization has been involved in a campaign to challenge the Chicago Public Schools' misuse of Iowa test scores to make high-stakes decisions about children. This improper test use has had many adverse effects: higher dropout rate of children at earlier ages, misdirection of resources away from quality instruction and into test preparation, and misidentification of student needs. We have witnessed first hand the emotional devastation inflicted on students, parents, teachers, and school administrators by test abuse.

We are concerned that standardized testing fever is increasing and that our children and the quality of their education will continue to suffer.

In our Fair Testing Campaign, we compiled a great deal of information and research on the effects of a high-stakes student testing policy. We have had significant success using a variety of strategies to fight this abusive policy. They include organizing, policy, media, and legal approaches. We continue to build on our initial successful Office for Civil Rights complaint as a further strategy to keep the pressure on the Chicago Public Schools. We have gathered an effective set of resources, which we believe can be extremely useful to others fighting the same fight across the country. Our overall goal is to assure that schools and districts create high-quality assessment systems, especially in the wake of the No Child Left Behind legislation.

As a result of our work, we have concluded that standardized tests must be used responsibly, and as only one piece of a multiple assessment system. Using Iowa tests as a pass-fail test for Chicago students has been devastating to them personally, and has not led to an improvement in the quality of their education. The public has been grievously misinformed about the nature and value of standardized tests, and misled to undervalue teacher-developed classroom assessments. This situation must be changed. We believe that the only way to raise the quality of instruction, and fairly and accurately assess student progress in every important area of their education, is to establish a high-quality, balanced system combining local and standardized assessments.

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PURE

PURE's mission, programs, and populations served

Parents United for Responsible Education exists to build support for and enhance the quality of public education in the city of Chicago by informing parents about educational issues, bringing the views of parents into the decision-making process, and acting as an advocate for parents in their relationships with the school administration. PURE is a citywide organization, run by and for Chicago Public School (CPS) parents.

PURE's Board of Directors, membership, staff, and constituency are multiracial, multi-cultural, and economically diverse. Each year, PURE provides direct assistance or referrals to hundreds of parents and local school council (LSC) members calling our hotline for help and information.

PURE provides workshops for LSCs in all areas of their responsibility. PURE also offers a variety of workshops to meet parents' expressed needs. PURE publishes four newsletters to keep parents, LSC members, and other school leaders informed of current educational changes and issues. PURE works actively to focus attention on the parents' perspective in any discussion of critical school problems through such means as press conferences, public testimony, and editorials. In support of this mission, PURE has engaged in a "Fair Testing Campaign," an intensive and effective effort to organize CPS parents around the issue of high-stakes testing in Chicago.

**This book is a description of the history and strategies
of PURE's Fair Testing campaign.**

**It is dedicated to the thousands of students
who have been hurt by the misguided Chicago Public Schools
testing and retention policies,
and to their parents who fought for them and won.**