

Help save public education and Say “NO!” to FIELD TESTING

Field Tests are used by Pearson and other companies to do research on test questions for future standardized exams. This kind of product testing uses NYC children for commercial purposes without informing parents or asking for consent. But there's hope: Parents and students can refuse stand-alone tests without any consequences for themselves, their teachers, or schools.

What's Wrong with Field Tests?

- Field tests plant the seeds of high-stakes-testing programs and promote a system that narrows curriculum and dampens children's natural enthusiasm for learning. In NYC, test scores have been factored into decisions about student promotions, teacher evaluations and school closings.
- Field tests provide unreliable data. Children aren't motivated to do well on "trial" tests. The misleading information perpetuates the development of faulty exams.
- Whenever studies are conducted, reputable researchers spell out their aims, invite participation, and pay subjects. This has not been the case with field testing by profit-making publishers like Pearson. Children provide free labor for product-testing, while their parents and even their schools are kept in the dark.
- Field tests waste valuable class time. This leaves less time for art, music, physical movement, and other essential activities—activities *proven* to increase learning.

Why Say No?

No child is required to take a field test. There is no mandate to take these "experimental" tests. Declining to participate will in no way hurt students, their records, their teachers, or their schools.

Publishers of field tests see them as essential for creating standardized exams. Without them, they argue, there would be no exams. Therefore, refusing to take them is a safe powerful way to demonstrate your opposition to high-stakes testing.

How to Say No

1. **Find out** if and when the tests will be given at your school. Keep in touch with your school principal and Change the Stakes for details: <http://changethestakes.wordpress.com>.
2. **Share** your concerns about field tests with other parents. Ask them to join you in saying "No More!"
3. **Send a letter** to your principal. See <http://changethestakes.wordpress.com> for samples.
4. **Understand.** Your principal and teachers can become powerful allies. Try your best to work with them to make sure parents are informed about tests and that students who refuse field tests are allowed to read or work quietly in a meaningful activity during the test.