

More than a Score: The New Uprising against High-Stakes Testing

Jessie Hagopian, Editor

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This compilation of essays, interviews, speeches, and poems presents a united front against standardized testing in schools.

One core issue in education—standardized testing—seems to be galvanizing educators to rise up in a common bond of resistance. *More Than a Score* both documents the anti-testing movement in public schools and showcases a wide variety of voices speaking out against the notion of teaching to the test.

Editor Jesse Hagopian, a teacher who joined with others in a historic boycott of the MAP test in Seattle, wisely divides the volume into four distinct sections: Teachers, Students, Parents, and Administrators/Public Education Advocates. The eleven essays by teachers are passionate, heartfelt, and, in many cases, courageous, since these teachers and others who stand up against testing may well risk losing their jobs. Still, they each feel a need to rebel against convention. For example, Karen Lewis, president of the Chicago Teachers Union, writes, “The use and misuse of standardized testing to measure what students know is still a farce.”

Contributions by students are no less compelling. Amber Kudla, a student, decided to address testing in her valedictorian speech. “The dropout rate in some parts of the US is about 25 percent,” she said. “In Finland, it is less than 1 percent. Why? Because, in Finland, teaching is left up to the teachers. Standardized tests are few and far between. And guess what? They consistently outperform the US on international math, science, and literacy tests.” What parents, administrators, and advocates have to say demonstrates that others outside the classroom itself share a similar perspective.

More Than a Score is enriched by contributions from a broad spectrum of audiences, yet every contributor is in common agreement that the quality of education should not be compromised by teaching to generic standards or standardized tests. While the book may offer only a single viewpoint, *More Than a Score* represents a powerful unified statement, successfully calling attention to the shortcomings of mandated standardized testing. This collection is a must-read for everyone who is concerned about the future of America’s public education system.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (Spring 2015)

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