

Eric Roof

September 13, 2008

Ed. Psych

Standardized Testing

“No test is good enough to serve as the sole or primary basis for important educational decisions”, this is quoted from the National Fair Testing website. High stake assessments are not an accurate way of testing a student’s knowledge, and society today puts too much pressure on students. A child could be very strong in his or her academics, but does not get into their school of choice because they do not perform well on standardized tests such as the SAT. This is a unfortunate concept. We are putting more emphasis on a three hour test then we are the work a student has put in for the past four years.

Types of high stake assessment are the praxis, SAT, ISTEP, and the ACT. Those are just a few that I have encountered this far in my life. These tests put a lot of pressure on the student because he or she knows they must pass to move on in school. One must pass the ISTEP in order to graduate. Then, the student must have high enough scores on their ACT or SAT to get into college. Why isn’t the work they did in high school looked at more? Colleges base acceptance off of one Saturday test instead of their career in high school. In college if a student chooses the education department, they must pass the praxis. I think the decision makers don’t take the time to look at the applicants; simply looking at the scores is more efficient. I can say I am not a good test taker. I struggled with all the tests I have taken. I am fine when it comes to school assessments, but in pressure situations when I know I must pass I do not do well.

I believe parents get equally frustrated about standardized testing. They want their children to do as well as possible, but in some cases, they may not be good test takers. This

brings up the cost of taking these tests; it's not cheap. The National Fair Test website say, "Students from low-income and minority-group backgrounds are more likely to be retained in grade, placed in a lower track, or put in special or remedial education programs." Money should not be an issue with testing. All people should have the same right, no matter rich or poor. Another important issue now is that schools are gearing their lesson plans to the test. "In many districts, raising test scores has become the single most important indicator of school improvement. As a result, teachers and administrators feel enormous pressure to ensure that test scores go up" (Fair Test).

In an article I found at Fair Test, the national center for fair and open testing. It says, "Standardized tests are tests on which all students answer the same questions, usually in multiple-choice format, and each question has only one correct answer. They reward the ability to quickly answer superficial questions that do not require real thought. They do not measure the ability to think or create in any field." (Fair Test). I agree with this statement, all students answer the same questions. Those gifted to read quickly and comprehend what they read do well on these tests. All those who do struggle look bad, when in they could be better students in school.

The book defines measurement as, the assignment of numbers or ratings to certain attributes of people according to a rule governed system. Measurement is used to evaluate students. There are many types of tests that have many advantages and disadvantages. For example students respond well to essay tests where they are given the opportunity to explain themselves instead of choosing an answer. Another useful technique is short answer tests. These tests are not as good as the essay but allow the student to show his knowledge of the subject.

In conclusion I believe standardized testing is not good. Not everyone can pay to take the test. Testing does not measure the difference between students, it shows what students can read and comprehend quicker than other students. Colleges and states are putting way too much pressure on the results and the student. Look at the student as a person, not as a number on an answer sheet.

Work Cited

Fairtest, "Whats Wrong With Standardized Tests?." Fair Test 12/17/07 13 Sep 2008
<<http://www.fairtest.org/facts/whatwron.htm>>.

Snowman, McCown, Biehler, Jack, Rick,Robert. Psychology Applied to Teaching. 12.
Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2008.