

Kaitlin Hughes

Professor Gust

September 16, 2008

High Stakes Assessment Position Paper

Some of the biggest arguments towards high-stakes tests are their imposition towards students with learning disabilities, the scores are misused, and the many things that the scores cannot tell you about the student (Stucker). Some may argue that many students can be bad test-takers, and taking a serious test to determine their future can be intimidating for that student. The list goes on and on about why high-stakes testing is unreasonable, very often the reasons repeat themselves. Nevertheless, I feel that high-stakes testing programs are beneficial to the students, parents, teachers, and the school cooperation in many ways that no other test can provide.

High-stakes assessment tests are a big part of building and strengthening today's schools. They are important in determining whether the student is learning the appropriate material and can continue to remember it for the future. Assessment tests determine if you can graduate, attain further schooling, get into a certain program, and much more; clearly showing how important they are to complete. Many people are against relying on a test score to show whether a child should be kept back from a grade, not graduate, or if a school should be rewarded or approved for their efforts (Schaeffer). I believe that high-stakes tests are appropriate for all students to take, to determine whether they are academically ready to undergo the next step in whatever their decision.

I believe that the most important aspect of high-stakes testing is to see how well the teacher has taught their students; seeing if the basic information stuck with them or is needed to

be taught over again and more in depth to the students. I know from experience that high-stakes tests are complex and can be very stressful; however, throughout the course of the test I realize that if I do not know a lot of the material on the test and am not prepared for it, that would tell me that either my teacher taught me poorly or mentally, I am not ready to take that next step without learning a few more things.

High-stakes testing can of course benefit students and their parents. These tests motivate students to work harder and to achieve the higher standards to be able to graduate, move up a grade, or continue with a program or degree. (Snowman and McCown and Biehler 532). High-stakes tests can benefit the parents in showing how well their child is doing academically compared to other students their age all across the state. It also shows how much their child is progressing from year to year based on the subject. The tests show if their child excels in a specific subject or if they need to work on a particular subject matter. High-stakes testing also proves to the parent that their child is learning the basic information needed to know and is getting a good education from the school cooperation they attend.

Not only do high-stakes testing programs benefit students and parents, they benefit teachers in several ways. These testing programs help teachers learn more about the standardized testing procedure. Teachers are encouraged to attend professional development workshops and seminars to learn more curriculum based, teaching techniques so the students will be learning solely what they will need to know for their high-stakes tests and for the future. Many times, students are taught insignificant information that will fail to help them on these very important tests, rather than the basic questions that will help them to successfully pass. High-stakes testing can provide useful information to teachers. Most importantly, these tests influence teachers to teach more effective lessons and understandable methods so the school will uphold its

accreditation. If the students understand the information being taught, their test scores will be higher, resulting in financial bonuses and benefits for the school district (Snowman and McCown and Biehler 531-532).

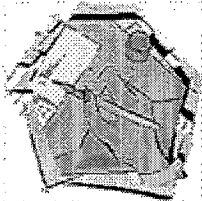
Testing is an extremely valuable part of educational assessment, but it is only a part of the formula for quality learning. I believe that testing is useful and beneficial to the students who take them, the parents, the teachers, and the whole student cooperation that benefits from the tests outcomes. However, without good teaching methods and instructional lessons, the tests would be meaningless and unneeded, which I think would be a mistake since the tests have many positive outcomes and advantages that result from them.

Works Cited

Schaeffer, Robert, ed. "The Case Against High Stakes Testing." Fairtest. 2008. 15 Sept. 2008 <<http://www.fairtest.org/k-12/high+stakes>>.

Snowman, Jack, Rick McCown, and Robert Biehler. Psychology Applied to Teaching. 12th ed. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2009. 531-532.

Stucker, Hal. "The Trouble with High Stakes Testing." National Center for Learning Disabilities. 2008. 13 Sept. 2008 <<http://www.nclld.org/content/view/542/>>.



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High Stakes Testing- Pro or Con

Name Kaitlin Hughes

Due Sept. 16, 2008

	Criteria				Pts.
	4	3	2	1	
Position Statement	Position is clearly stated and consistently maintained. Clear references to the issue(s) are stated.	Position is clearly stated and consistently maintained. References to the issue(s) at hand are missing .	Position is stated, but is not maintained consistently throughout work.	Statement of position cannot be determined.	3
Supporting Information	Evidence clearly supports the position; evidence is sufficient .	Evidence clearly supports the position; but there is not enough evidence .	Argument is supported by limited evidence .	Evidence is unrelated to argument.	3
Organization	Structure of work is clearly developed.	Structure developed reasonably well, but lacks clarity .	Some attempt to structure the argument has been made, but the structure is poorly developed .	There is a total lack of structure.	4
Tone Of Letter	Tone is consistent and enhances persuasiveness.	Tone enhances persuasiveness, but there are inconsistencies .	Tones does not contribute to persuasiveness.	Tone is inappropriate to purpose.	3
Sentence Structure	Sentence structure is correct .	Sentence structure is generally correct. Some awkward sentences do appear.	Work contains structural weaknesses and grammatical errors .	Work pays little attention to proper sentence structure.	4
Punctuation & Capitalization	Punctuation and capitalization are correct .	There is one error in punctuation and/or capitalization.	There are two or three errors in punctuation and/or capitalization.	There are four or more errors in punctuation and/or capitalization.	3
				Total---->	20/24

Teacher Comments: