

STUDENT TESTING: NO WALK IN THE PARCC

My husband Dick and I have the opportunity to listen to a lot of school chatter with our nine grandkids. Hockey, football and lacrosse always work their way into the conversation. The University of Chicago Everyday Math program is very difficult. And then there's school lunches. They say the food is disgusting.

Last spring a new topic came up – PARCC, which is the newest standardized test to be imposed on students in 11 states and Washington, D.C.

Teachers and parents are upset. Students are opting out in protest. They all argue that the new exams are excessive and take too long. Students are spending 13-14 hours just to take the test over several days, not counting prep times. Generally, current state tests take 7-8 hours. As we know, teachers are "teaching to the test" in order to preserve their performance evaluations.

Why are we subjecting our kids to this? Follow the money. States rely on federal subsidies to help fund public education. And school districts across the country rely on government money to pay teachers' salaries and fund pensions.

- Repercussions to saying no to PARCC. Chicago Public Schools (CPS) initially opposed administering the exams. When the state of Illinois threatened to pull \$1.4 billion in state and federal funding, CPS had to reverse its position.
- In a recent survey of more than 16,500 Ohio teachers and administrators, 80% did not feel the time spent to administer the tests was appropriate, and 77% did not think the implementation went well. In July, Governor Kasich signed legislation banning these tests in Ohio.
- One school district in New Jersey allows students to opt out of taking final exams in order to get their participation rate up so they don't lose funding. How much time should be devoted to testing versus learning?

The biggest problem with PARCC – it represents a move toward nationalized education. In my opinion, the idea of national standards that started with "No Child Left Behind" sounded good. The reality is just a mess...

Liz Uihlein



Liz and Dick Uihlein



CAN YOU JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER?

Uline cranks out 60 catalog covers a year. In general, the warehouse guys like covers with lots of product. In Creative, they go for a "glam" cover. But occasionally, we let go and just have fun featuring one product.

Past covers that customers responded favorably to are to the right. In fact, the "Corrugate Is the New Black" cover probably more so than any other cover. Only in the upper Midwest could we accidentally use an Asian carp versus a walleye on our wildlife cover...oops!



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