



Intercambio

Education Research Bulletin of the IDEA Network

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PUBLIC EDUCATION: A Social Right Faces the Obsession with Testing



Content

Introduction

Actions:

Teachers' strikes spread through the USA.

Rosemary Lee, Steve Miller (USA)

A Social Right Faces the Obsession with Testing:

Prepare to challenge the OECD's PISA explosion

Larry Kuehn (Canada)

Labour and Popular Unity Stops the Orlando Hernández Regime's Assault on Public Health and Education

Ruy Díaz Díaz (Honduras)

Standardized exams and teacher's work

Edgar Isch (Ecuador)

Old formulas and new business in education

Liliana Pascual y Luz Albergucci (CTERA)

Standardized assessment and the transformation of public education in Mexico

Lucía Rivera Ferreiro, Marcelino Guerra, Roberto González Villarreal (Mexico)

The political uses of standardized testing in Ontario: implications for teachers' professional autonomy

Paul Bocking (Canada)

Teachers in Mexico: from resisting the neoliberal reform to constructing alternatives

José David Alarid Dieguez (Mexico)

Professionalism and micromanagement: the struggle of Chicago Teachers

Chicago Teachers Union (USA)



Intercambio

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INTRODUCTION

We are going through a time in which standardization is intensifying on a global scale. Evaluation as a mechanism of control and a tool of privatization plays a central role in determining public policies and has become one of the fundamental components of educational reforms which, far from improving school conditions, have impoverished the course of public education and the teaching profession.

In this context, critical reflection by our organizations becomes more and more necessary, and gives new meaning to resistances seeking alternative forms of assessment that meet the public education needs of our peoples.

The contents of this issue of *Intercambio* Magazine describe the expansion of standardized tests on a national and international scale, the related emerging businesses and the effects on public education systems. Also analyzed are the impacts of this on professionalization and teaching work, as well as resistance to neoliberal reforms and the alternatives being developed.

Larry Kuehn, in his article “Prepare to challenge the OECD PISA¹ explosion,” shows the global educational and political influence of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) through the imposition of international PISA exams.

The article by Edgar Isch, “Standardized Tests and Teaching Work,” discusses the consequences of evaluation systems on various aspects of teaching work.

Under the title, “Old Formulas and New Businesses in Education,” Liliana Pascual and Luz Albergucci deal with the topic of quality in the educational system and its evaluation, focusing on the use of results of standardized testing as a justification for adjustment policies and commodification in the educational field.

Lucia Rivera Ferreiro, Marcelino Guerra Mendoza and

1. Programme for International Student Assessment. [translator]

Roberto Gonzalez Villareal, in their article “Standardized Assessment and the Transformation of Public Education in Mexico,” show how standardized evaluation was rapidly established in Mexico as the only accepted model of determining the professional capacity of teachers and the learning level achieved by students.

“The Political Uses of Standardized Testing in Ontario: Implications for Teachers’ Professional Autonomy,” by Paul Booking, analyzes the political use of exams, applied from the preschool to the preparatory level in Ontario, and the impacts on teachers in the province of Ontario.

Ruy Díaz Díaz in his article, “Tyranny of Teacher Evaluation in Honduras,” analyzes the entry of new teachers into the public system by means of competitions and evaluations and looks at the characteristics of the educational system.

José David Alarid Dieguez, in his article, “Teachers in Mexico: From Resisting the Neoliberal Reform to Building Alternatives,” describes processes of resistance to neoliberal educational reform and the development of teaching alternatives.

Finally, “Professionalism and Micromanagement: The Struggle of Chicago Teachers,” an article from the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU), describes the implementation of a system of discriminatory teacher evaluation which has given rise to important union action for the defense of teaching in Chicago.

We are grateful to all the authors for their contributions and to the editors for their observations and corrections. Thanks to this collective work and collaboration we can present the current edition of the journal of the IDEA Network which humbly seeks to contribute to resistance in the face of increasing commodification in the educational field.

Educational Committee

Teachers' Strikes spread in the USA¹

Rosemary Lee, Steve Miller²

Teacher strikes stormed across the US in early 2019, following the statewide walkouts of the previous year. The first was in Los Angeles in early January that led to some contract gains, along with an energy that swept across the city and led to a major moral victory. The strike was a popular setback for the billionaires who have spent tens of millions to privatize Los Angeles schools.

The UTLA strike was followed by strikes in Denver, Colorado, West Virginia and Oakland, California, as well as successful walkouts by Charter school teachers in Los Angeles and in Chicago where they are part of the Chicago Teachers' Union. More are anticipated as

the year develops as teachers across the US are fed up with the low salaries and the attack on public schools.

The United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA) strike extended the success of the earlier strikes in the US against an aggressive neo-liberal national campaign to make education serve corporate interests. The state-by-state corporate attack has cut funding and budgets for public education services, weakened public sector unions, and slashed corporate taxes. State governors and the federal government have claimed they are "saving public schools by privatizing them" through imposing charter schools and vouchers.

The real story is that corporations manage most charter schools for profit. They are commonly tied to real estate schemes that drive poor people from their communities. Unlike private schools, which are required by law to accept all children, charters are not legally required to do so. Government allows charter schools to "cherry-pick" high achieving students, and routinely drive out English language learners, children with

1. We present a selection from the original article: "Portfolio Schools: the Latest Corporate Scheme to Commodify Education; that deals with the Los Angeles teachers' Strike that took place in early 2019.

2. Teachers in Los Angeles, California and members of the US Section of the Trinacional Coalition to Defend Public Education.

special needs, and children who challenge the routine.

Los Angeles has the largest concentration of corporate charter schools in the US. One in five students attends a charter school and the charter industry costs the district \$600 million a year. Diverting money to charters severely reduces the ability of schools to provide students the basic necessities to succeed. Yet the government is supposed to help all children, many of whom have their only meal of the day at school.

It was in this context that the union in Los Angeles went on strike for much more than teacher salaries. They won demands for reduced class sizes, the hiring of more school nurses, counsellors and school librarians, as well as providing access to immigration services for students and their families.

The strike also brought the issue of the future of charter schools to the centre of political discussion. To settle the strike, the Los Angeles school board had to agree to vote to ask the state to put a cap on the number of charter schools and the governor of the state initiated a study on whether charters are having a negative impact on public schools in California.

Charter schools are only one of the tools being used to privatize the public schools and Los Angeles is the latest site of another attempt to bring business approaches and profits into public education—“portfolio schools.”

The portfolio schools approach is based on the way the stock market works—where an investor holds a portfolio of stocks, selling those they don’t think are performing and acquiring new ones that they hope will be profitable. Except, instead of stocks, the managers are acquiring or dumping schools, trimming the “failures” as determined by standardized testing by privatizing or closing them and opening alternatives, like charters.

Students are the revenue sources in the system, with vouchers that follow them to the school as they are moved around the system.

Already there are 25 cities in the US that have adopted the portfolio schools model aimed, in their own words, at “disrupting” urban school districts. Portfolio districts replace democratic public control of schools by local



PHOTO: AFP

school boards with corporate-controlled Community Education Councils.

The portfolio model opens up a bonanza of new investment opportunities for privatizers. Corporations and foundations—like Bill Gates and the Waltons of Walmart-- provide consultations and grants for reorganizing districts. The Cities for Educational Entrepreneurship Trust defines itself clearly as “a network of city-based education reform organizations, initiatives and foundations dedicated to accelerating the growth of entrepreneurial education ventures.” Money is also made from behavioral programs that track students’ entire education history used in tandem with portfolio schools.

Capitalism’s drive is relentless and takes advantage of crises and evolves new forms in seeking profit and public funding of education presents attractive opportunities. Portfolio schools are another of these. Maintaining public control of public education requires vigilance and making the public aware of the challenges of those who seek to privatize education.

Charter schools and privatization were major factors in the strike in Los Angeles and they are significant issues around the US and in the rest of the world as public education is under attack. The UTLA strike helped to raise public consciousness and public debate about privatization in its community as well as beyond LA, an important contribution to the struggle for public education everywhere.

Prepare to challenge the **OECD PISA** explosion

Larry Kuehn*

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)¹ is expanding its global influence on education through its Education 2030 program and more international testing.

The OECD is a primary promoter of neo-liberal economic and education policies. It is made up 36 countries, primarily the most economically wealthy, such as the U.S., Canada and those in the European Union. OECD members produce 60% of the global Gross Domestic Product and it represents the interests of the dominant classes in those countries, with a focus on economic, not social and cultural development.

* Director of Research, British Columbia Teachers' Federation

1. The OECD is an international organization composed of 36 states – the majority from the “global North,” whose objective is to coordinate economic and social policies. The OECD was founded in 1961. In Latin America, only Mexico and Chile are full members.

So why should educators be worried about the OECD?

The OECD has set out to define and influence education policy on a global basis—it reaches into your education system, wherever it is.

It began with PISA—a test given every three years (most recently in 2018) that began assessing math, science and literacy. PISA stands for Programme for International Student Assessment, but is universally known as just PISA.

Not just the 36 OECD countries take the test—it has expanded to over 70 countries. One of the key problems with PISA is that the results are released in the form of ranking of countries on how they compare to all the rest of the countries. PISA rankings are used to symbolize the quality of a country's education system, despite being only the results of a representative sample of 15 year-olds in each of the countries on three test areas.

The rankings are determined by scores that reflect a complex of factors—but these factors are seldom ex-

Educación 2030

The image shows the title 'Educación 2030' in large, bold letters. 'Educación' is in red and '2030' is in blue. To the right of the '0' is a circular icon representing Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education), which consists of 17 colored segments arranged in a circle, with a white center. The entire graphic is crossed out with a large red 'X'.

mined or understood. In fact, since it is a comparison among countries, a country's scores could improve, but their ranking falls at the same time.

The rankings are used by education ministers to justify pursuing education policy directions, whether or not they have any relationship to the what produced the scores. The rankings get very wide publicity—promoted by the OECD and often sensationalized by media. They are often used to “shame and blame” teachers for results, even though the results may not be an accurate reflection of a country's education purpose or goals.

The intention of PISA is to demonstrate a crisis that can be turned into a catalyst for reform:

...the release of a highly publicised report on disappointing educational outcomes or performance may engender a sense of crisis, not because educational outcomes have changed, but because assessments of those outcomes have.

(OECD, 2010, p. 355)

It is through this sense of crisis that countries then turn to the OECD for advice on what it should do, creating a “global governance of education” as countries

follow OECD prescriptions, hoping to climb up the rankings or to stay on top.

To expand the impact of PISA, the OECD has created a “PISA for Development Programme” that “aims to encourage and facilitate PISA participation in interested and motivated low- and middle-income countries.” Of the nine countries in this program, five are in Latin America.

The OECD has not been content to stick to math, science and literacy as areas of assessment. It has expanded to critical and creating thinking skills, “global competencies,” as well as a PISA for 5-year-olds, all of which are even more problematic areas of assessment than the initial three.

The central assumption on which all this is based is that education should be standardized everywhere—that the criteria for what is valued in education should be set on a global basis. It is a decontextualization of education from social and cultural frames that may differ substantially. It is the opposite, for example, of indigenous ways of knowing that are set in a particular place and in the stories and cultural skills of a particular group.

The PISA assumes that the interests and values represented by the OECD should apply globally—a

neo-colonial project. It is built on a claim that it is possible to construct valid assessments that go across cultures and languages and apply universally. Its method of publicizing results is based on using them to influence policy in similar directions everywhere.

These same assumptions are the base of the expansion of PISA to a new program called “Education 2030.” It is built on a framework that, according to Andreas Schleicher, Director of the OECD Education department, “is relevant across the globe.” That framework is in turn to be the basis of identifying pedagogy, assessment and the design of an instructional system.

Education 2030 has four elements: Developing a global “conceptual learning framework,” doing an “international curriculum analysis,” defining “principles

of instructional designs to implement curricula” and describing “competencies and profiles of teachers.”

In other words, its intent is to create a global system for evaluating teachers through an assessment and, in the tradition of PISA, producing country rankings of how close teachers and the system are to what the OECD thinks education should be.

The OECD through its PISA and now its Education 2030 program plays a central role in spreading and normalizing neo-liberal education policies globally.

What should be done in response? Inform and educate about the OECD and the PISA and the Education 2030 process, challenge the assumptions it is based on, reject the process, and campaign against the OECD global governance of education.



Labour and Popular Unity

Stops the Orlando Hernández Regime's Assault on Public Health and Education



Standardized exams and teaching work

Edgar Isch L.*

Not long ago in Los Angeles (USA) teachers, families and students protested and demanded more time for learning and less for preparation for standardized exams. They delivered a clear message that confirmed that these exams had no educational purpose. The standardized exams that had been introduced into schools were foreign to their *raison d'être* and had changed the purpose of evaluation itself, which should always be to improve teaching and learning.

The fundamental supposition of this type of exam is that if an education system passes on knowledge to students, then by evaluating that knowledge we can determine the “quality” of the education system itself. This is, however, a mechanistic vision that doesn't understand education in a holistic and rigorous way. This is why it has been criticized for a long time by many different authors and identified with a technical and technocratic paradigm of education whose results have only supported marketing systems through which the best advertised is sold but doesn't necessarily deliver the best education. Among the authors that early on

criticized this technocracy are Pérez Gómez and Gimeno, 1983; Trillo, 1994; Zeichner and Liston, 1987. More recently, there have been many studies such as the one carried out by Education International for Latin America (Arancibia, 2015), which analyzes the failure of both the PISA exams in the region and of teacher evaluations.

Evaluating the quality of educational institutions is another unfulfilled promise of standardized exams as they aren't able to evaluate the system as a whole, and not just results for the learning of content in specific areas or topics, without taking into account

the factors associated with learning or the weight of the state's education policies.

Looking at the PISA exams, one of the most important at the global level, (Barquín, Gallardo, Fernández, Yus, Sepúlveda y Serván, 2011) state that:

It is not so clear that this type of exam has an immediate impact on the quality of educational systems so, as such, this evaluation can hardly be seen as an educational or formative evaluation. In addition, its design and conclusions do not allow for the detection of the system's

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faults in enough detail to be able to intervene. In fact, in the official PISA documents, it states that, “we don’t claim to measure what students learn.” What is certain is that the international projection that these exams have and the disruption that they cause, through the media, on the governments of different countries are real and clear, despite that from PISA they reiterate that “their intention is not to evaluate education systems.” Simply, they say that they try to measure results or performance, the outputs selected by PISA based on the inputs carried out by different education systems. There is nothing about what happens at both extremes, that is to say, a black box model (pp. 325-326).

Popham (2000, p.4) summarizes it categorically: “Using standardized exams for results in order to assess the quality of education is like measuring temperature with a spoon.”

Standardized exams and teaching work

However, despite the inefficiency shown by standardized exams, they have become the main instrument of control over teaching work and the life of schools. Through them, curriculum and the work to be carried out is directed. Some of the effects on teachers’ work are the following:

Loss of teaching freedom

Teaching freedom involves the teacher being able to sustain their philosophical position and determine their methodology and resources, and together with this, the expected learning results of their activity. Standardized exams already establish these expected results and they correspond to the textbooks that are given to teachers and students. Their work methodology is also pre-determined, through which the education

professional becomes merely a simple executor of foreign decisions, without their own thinking. Thus, they are not working in relation to the real needs of students but rather repeating, in a bureaucratic manner, one particular theme and learning exercise.

Abandonment of pedagogy

This relationship between standardized exams, texts and imposed methodology, results in a social and scientific degradation of teaching work. It is no longer necessary to study pedagogy as the general science of education, nor other specific sciences, since the teacher is not allowed to decide how to guide the work of the student group, their connection with the community and any appropriate activities. They must simply prepare those who will be taking the tests and prepare themselves to cover topics that are not relevant.

Greater control generates higher teacher stress/burnout

Foucault identifies exams in the following manner (2002, p. 71):

“The exam combines the techniques from the hierarchy that monitors and those from the punishment that normalizes. It is a normalizing gaze, a monitoring that allows for grading, classifying and punishing. It establishes a visibility on individuals through which they are differentiated and punished. Due to this, in all mechanisms of the discipline, the exam finds itself highly ritualized.”

Control, submission and punishment weaken the health of teachers and lead them to lose their morale and enter into states of anxiety and depression. This is a risk and reality that are not justified if we consider that these exams don't improve learning.

Teaching work is, in fact, complex work under pressure. Evaluation should happen constantly, but this is better reflected in results when the basis is self-evaluation, self-criticism, and an individual and collective intention to improve.

Reduction of labour rights

Even though the social sciences, and within them the field of education, are differentiated from the natural sciences as relates to multi-causal phenomena, most standardized exams claim that the sole responsibility for learning results lies with teachers. This criteria is used to apply a series of typically neoliberal measures: making work more flexible, facilitating mass lay-offs, justifying low salaries, and reducing the right to participation.

On the other hand, the dissemination of results seeks to damage the social image of educators and their unions. Teachers remain alone in the face of measures by authorities and they are threatened by the use of the results in rankings that leave them socially condemned. Teacher stress, once again, increases.

We must not forget that this is also the way that the privatization of schools is justified, in which teachers, parents and students have their rights curtailed and defined by the bosses.

Competition weakens the group

“Compete or die” is the logic that weakens the teaching team, its teamwork and their shared goals. It is justified through the application of a “meritocracy,” a mechanism that has nothing to do with either democracy or quality (Isch, 2013), but that deceives those who are caught off-guard.

To propose that a salary or a bonus be awarded in an individual manner according to the results of exams increases this competition, divides teachers as a social sector and increases egoism in all situations.

The super individualization of teaching work is, in reality, contrary to good education. And competition between teachers is fundamentally a tool of pressure and control that leads to a senseless busyness: producing papers that no-one will read, writing at the margin of reality, proposing innovations that, even if useful, no-one will take on, and constantly running without ever knowing what the goal is.

First-class and second-class courses and teachers

Exams, as we know, are concerned with only a few subjects or disciplines. Because of this, they create the idea that some subjects are more important and others mere fillers. Being a teacher of filler subjects not only makes it possible to lose one's job, as happens when hours are eliminated or reduced for philosophy or art, but it also places teachers in the same categories. A "filler" teacher loses respect among the community and their knowledge is presented as insubstantial.

The attack on social sciences by this system is part of training a workforce that may have technical skills but lacks a social conscience. This weakens the social function of schools, at any level, which then leads to complaints that place the responsibility once again on educators.

Conclusion

It is a fact that standardized evaluation destroys the individuality of students and teachers, since there are no "standardized" people and cultural origins are not standardized either. In this way its effect on education is undeniable. However, the promoters of these systems do not want to be evaluated or to have the changes they impose on the education system and on the lives of communities to be examined in a critical manner.

An important impact, of which very little is spoken, is how these types of exams have affected the teaching career, its social value and working conditions. Education professionals have seen themselves become less able to support learning and now feel obligated to prepare students for the exams. This activity is combined with

reports, checklists and other forms of bureaucratization of their work that kill off initiative and create conditions rife for illness and teaching malaise.

Here we find an additional argument to oppose standardization - to recover the role of the educational community in which teachers can exercise leadership guided by the principle of putting our rights and those of our students first, thus opening up the possibility of dignified education for a humanized society.

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Old Formulas and New Business in Education

Liliana Pascual, Luz Albergucci*

Summary

The quality of the education system and its assessment have become the main subjects debated in society today when speaking of education. In Argentina, the current government has exacerbated these questions and set the agenda of educational debate, displaying the results of standardized evaluations to justify policies of adjustment and commodification in the public sphere, starting from a plan of neoliberal and conservative restoration in the education field. Standardized evaluation and information regarding the education system have become a major educational business. The public agenda has come to be defined by private interests, with the entry of companies and NGOs into the educational field by means of agreements with the

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state to define, implement, and evaluate public policies. The results of evaluations are like scores “listed on the stock exchange,” and teachers and students are blamed, denying the importance of public policy in generating the best conditions for teaching and learning. Evaluation thus conceived serves to prepare the ground for educational privatization and meritocracy and answers to the interests of the companies which seek to profit from education understood as a business.

Key words: commodification of education - standardized evaluation - meritocracy - quality.

Evaluation in the logic of the market

In our country, and in the rest of Latin America, standardized evaluation was established during the nineties through a technocratic approach, guided by the economist paradigm of accountability, hegemonized by neoliberal ideology, in keeping with recommendations of international credit institutions. The objective of

quality was defined as the formation of abilities for a market of flexible and changing work, and the function of education would consist in increasing the possibility of “less developed” countries to compete in the international market. Evaluation was also put at the service of the “accountability” of the hand of fiscal adjustment.

However, after the passing of the National Education Law, debated and passed during the governments of Néstor Kirchner and Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (2003-2015), educational evaluation began to acquire a different meaning in Argentina, as a tool which—among others—offers information to guide the actions of public policy. The concept of quality education was used to examine characteristics of educational institutions, management styles, curriculum proposals, available resources, working conditions, didactic strategies, learning, characteristics of job positions, and the process of teaching work, etc. This new framework considered that the evaluation of learning by means of standardized tests does not measure “quality,” but a very reduced aspect of one of the many components of “learning.” Further, the utility of tests does not lie in their being an “indicator of quality,” but a tool, among others, to

monitor public policy. At that time, the state had abandoned the role of controller to become the guarantor of the social right to “public education of quality.” From this perspective, the concept of quality, far from being associated with competitiveness and efficiency, is conceived as inseparable from the categories of inclusion, equity, relevance and pertinence of various forms of learning. The belief that “quality” can only be reached by a few is broken, because the only education that is truly of quality is for everyone. Note here an important conceptual change: one speaks of “education of quality” and not of “educational quality.” In this conception the substance is education and quality is only an attribute which is realized to the extent that everyone can gain access to it. Nevertheless, this new discourse did not fully take hold in Argentine society, nor within the teaching community, so that we currently see that, with the new government administration at the end of 2015, the most conservative sectors have resumed the economist paradigm in talking of “educational quality,” where “quality” is an attribute of education to which only some can have access.



Standardized evaluation: using results to justify adjustment and commodification

Since the coalition Cambiemos¹ came to power in December 2015, there has been a redefinition of public education and an opening up to private capital (Feldfeber and others, 2018); which can mainly be seen through the outsourcing of state educational functions.

Educational policies which are implemented through this conservative restoration place emphasis on educational evaluation, and preserve a link with various documents of international bodies, for example, the document “Excellent teachers: How to improve learning in Latin America and the Caribbean,” produced by World Bank economists in 2014. That paper promotes a formula for educational improvements based on three steps: 1) general tests for students with a transparent disclosure of results, under the slogan of transparency; 2) payment of bonuses to schools based on the learning progress of the students, under “the logic of the prize”², 3) individual and voluntary evaluation of teachers so that they are accountable for their performance, accompanied by financial compensation for those who accept being evaluated and turn in good performances.

In keeping with these changes to public policy, the evaluation budget grew at the expense of the budget for teacher training, school resources (netbooks, books, children’s play-centres, etc.) grants for students, infrastructures, etc. The budget for evaluation grew from 125 million pesos in 2015 to 988 million in 2018, which indicates a budgetary increase of 690%.³ In 2016, the new

administration tabled a bill for the creation of an autonomous “Institute for Evaluation of Education Quality and Equity.” Although it has not been passed because of strong resistance by various sectors, it has been taken up in presidential speeches at every opening of regular sessions of Congress. Until the Institute comes into effect, the government has decided to raise the national entity devoted to evaluation, in the administrative hierarchy, transforming it from a Department of Evaluation within the Ministry of National Education to a Secretariat of Education Evaluation. This Secretariat has implemented standardized general and annual evaluations for both secondary schools and the primary level (Operative Learning), and a new standardized evaluation for the last year of teacher training (Operative Teaching)⁴. This latter measure was implemented in 2017. It couldn’t be implemented in all the schools due to the resistance of teachers and students, but has been used to discredit teacher training and to justify adjustment policies which were already being implemented throughout the country: closure of teacher training institutes, closure of degree programs and courses and transfers to the private sector of teacher training activities. It is important to point out that policies of adjustment, and especially the closure of courses and degree programs, were rejected by the affected educational communities. Several protest actions were undertaken, enrolment continued, and other actions were undertaken that, by the beginning of 2019, had diminished the impact of these policies in some areas of the country.

Without a doubt, these old neoliberal formulas have

1. Cambiemos (“Let Us Change”) is an Argentine center-right coalition. Their candidate, Mauricio Macri, won the Oct. 2015 presidential election. (Translator’s note.)

2. This refers to the logic of prizes and punishments which consists of awarding money to schools which obtain good results, and punishing those that do badly by withholding money. – L.P.

3. CTERA (2018), “The adjustment in educational financing in Argentina: An analysis of the Educational Budget during the government of the Cambiemos Alliance.” June 2018. Marina Vilte Institute, Secretary of Education, Confederation of Workers of the Argentine Republic. Available

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[CTERA stands for Confederación de Trabajadores de la Educación de la República Argentina --Confederation of Education Workers of the Argentine Republic – Translator’s note]

4. “Operative Learning” and “Operative Teaching” are two kinds of standardized evaluations. The first applies to students of primary and secondary levels. The second applies to students of the Institutes of Teacher Training which belong to the higher level. – L.P.



been accompanied by the establishment of new power relations between members of the dominant elite and the state and its education policies, arrangements which Ball (2008) calls new “networks” or “political community.” In these new networks, various hegemonic groups carry out agreements with the state to define, implement and evaluate public policies. In terms of evaluation, various initiatives which were already being developed in our country by international bodies such as the International Development Bank and World Bank are continuing. These organizations, together with local consultants, such as the Centre for Public Policy Foundation and others created when agreements were reached with the state, offer technical assistance to schools and provincial governments to carry out external standardized tests in accordance with the interests and demands of these international bodies. The public agenda has begun to be defined by private interests, starting from the sale of digital educational platforms, the training of teachers,

and the “exam industry,” centred on standardized evaluations. This business, which is carried out in the public schools and at the expense of the right to education, has spread widely in various countries of Latin America.

Argentina has also increased its participation in international evaluations. In 2018 there was an increase in the number of jurisdictions which participated in the PISA⁵ tests as regions considered independent. (Until 2015, only the City of Buenos Aires participated, and currently three provinces more have been added). This means that each one pays the sum of 43,000 euros to the EST (Educational Testing Service, International Syndicate of the OECD⁶), in addition to the levy which each country pays for its participation. This business transaction is then completed through the sale of educa-

5. Programme for International Student Assessment.

6. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

tional contents, such as the “Singapore Method” for the teaching of mathematics. Singapore gained first place in international PISA tests of 2015 and the international tests of TIMMS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Studies) of 2014.

At the same time, the new education goals established through resolutions of the Federal Board of Education use the results of the PISA tests as indicators of success. This exponential growth of standardized international tests on the public scene indicates the opening up of new business opportunities for Pearson Education, the world’s leading education company which was chosen by the OECD to develop the framework for the PISA test after 2015. Pearson is one of the four most important publishing companies of the world, the majority of its gains being obtained through digital texts, virtual education tools, and the development of digital platforms for online exams. This multinational company owns shares in Penguin Random House, in Penguin Longman, in the Financial Times newspaper, and in the magazine The Economist, and is owner of the U.S. company National Evaluation Series which is dedicated to the preparation of standardized exams. Furthermore, in the U.S., Pearson has taken charge of directly administering teaching evaluations through filming of classes and peer reviews.

Educational information has also been converted into business; the agreement with the NGO “Argentines for Education,” created months before the establishment of relations with the Ministry of Education, has seen the privatization of the definition of policy on information and data publication which was previously in the hands of the Director of Information and Statistics of the Ministry [of Education] and the Federal Network of Education Information.

Conclusion

With the new government administration, standardized evaluation and information regarding the educational

system have been transformed into a big educational business carried out through agreements with companies, either directly or through NGOs. The participation of business is also seen in the sale of products and educational services which are presented as solutions to the supposed low quality of the educational system, measured through standardized tests.

The results of standardized evaluation are also used to instill judgements. Thus, teachers and students are blamed, ignoring the importance of public policy to generate the best conditions for teaching and learning. Evaluation thus conceived serves to prepare the ground for educational privatization and meritocracy, responding to the interests of companies which seek to profit from education, and the decision of the state to implement adjustment policies in educational matters. Nevertheless, the privatizing blows by the new administration have been met with a strong rebuff from the educational community (unions, teachers, students and academics), who have mobilized massively in different ways to reject these policies and have succeeded in some cases in putting a halt to their advance.

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Tri-National Coalition in Defense of Public Education

Internationalism: a strategy for struggles to defend education as a social right.
13 th Conference, November 2018

The Orizaba Declaration

The one hundred and sixty participants of the 13th Tri-National Conference ratify our conviction that education is a universal right of the peoples and a responsibility of the State. It is also a social right, and an international commitment the governments are obliged to acknowledge, since education and culture are paramount for the humane, critical and scientific development of our peoples.

Teachers and education workers have been the pillar of the educational system to generate and transmit knowledge for the cultural, economic and social development of our countries. Our work has been the basis of the humanistic, critical and scientific development of our peoples.

We reconfirm the democratic principles that the Tri-National Coalition in Defense of Public Education has put into practice during its twenty five years of existence. We also reaffirm our commitment to sustain our international solidary action to defend public, secular, free and universal education as a social right; and to defend the rights of education workers in our countries, while constructing societies with social justice.

Current economic and social realities

We are experiencing a radical change in the international juncture. The big financial groups, that dominate our economies and governments, are redefining their strategies to try and find a way out of the economic and political crisis we are living, due to the failure of the neoliberal model. We are witnessing the implementation of a new free trade agreement between Mexico, the United States and Canada (USMCA) that is more aggressive against our peoples. The US government intends to have more concessions for its companies, to avoid competing against China.

In an attempt to hide the exacerbated poverty, the lack of dignified labor and the insulting wealth concentration of our societies, caused by the dispossessing neoliberal model, a xenophobic and racist discourse has been invented to blame migrants for the model's failure. A supremacist narrative is accompanying authoritarian and dictatorial policies- such as the ones implemented by US president Donald Trump- that violate the migrants' human rights, as well as those of African Americans, Women, Indigenous Communities and workers in general.

The hardening of power exercised by the big financial groups at a world-wide level seeks to maintain their hegemony, by restricting democratic freedoms, social and human rights, and the sovereignty of our societies.

Now more than ever, education is in great peril. Not only because of the aggressive privatization and commodification measures, but also because it is a vehicle to install supremacist, xenophobic and racist ideas in our peoples, to promote hate, and a rejection of all things collective, social and public.

Nevertheless, the fact that in Mexico, the fight of educators, students and the people to defend public education, their labor rights and political freedoms continues is encouraging and inspiring. In the United States, we have seen a consolidation of the organization and alternative proposals of the Chicago Teachers' Union, as well as their outreach towards society. Democratic organization of education workers throughout the country has been boosted. Important resistances have emerged from the grassroots of unions in Oklahoma, West Virginia, Kentucky and Arizona. They have risen to defend their labor conditions but also, to stand against the commodifying model that is closing public schools to open charter ones. In Los Angeles and other American cities, the defense of migrants triggered initiatives such as the creation of sanctuary schools and cities. Canada has also sheltered migrants, with the adoption of such sanctuary measures. Meanwhile, Canadian unions have held important fights against budget cuts and to defend collective bargaining agreements. Currently, in order to make the universal right to education advance; as well as the right to a dignified living and the democratization of our communities, a change of the economic model and political regimen is required, for having a society with social justice.

The Impact of Neo Liberal Globalization

- It is an ideology that places the market above social rights;
- It produces a budget reduction while diminishing the role of the State in the rendering of public services, and the collection of the taxes necessary for said services;
- It promotes the privatization of all of the natural and social goods and resources, so that the market supplies those services, instead of the public interest and equality;
- It reduces labor rights and collective bargaining. The employers have greater "flexibility" to hire workers under precarious working conditions and without social security.
- It uses the power of governments to regulate in favor of the corporations' interests, instead of having the public interest of social and environmental concerns prevail. It uses State repression against the people who defend their rights.
- It curtails the power of the State to regulate on behalf of the public interest, and social and environmental concerns;
- It creates economic inequality within the countries, while the large financial groups claim an increasingly larger share of the wealth;
- It increases the power of the public sector to finance elections and the corporate means to influence them.

In the educational sector, the common trait in all of our countries is the continuous commodification process, with new forms of privatizing the right to education. This is evident in the educational financing cuts, the erosion of full-time secure jobs, the constant attacks against collective bargaining and the rights of teachers and education workers, and the use of standardized tests to control teaching and changing the curricula in favor of instrumental measures and thus, abandoning the scientific and humanistic nature of education. It is also observed in the privatization and investment of public funds in "subsidized" and private schools, forcing students in the US to acquire a massive debt in exchange for higher education.

An international agency –the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)- is having an increasingly larger influence over education at a world-wide level. Its PISA test is used to create tables that classify countries according to what the OECD considers the most valuable elements of education. The underlying assumption is that certain types of learnings are necessary for a successful economic development in a global competition. But it intentionally ignores the many other valuable elements education

has, aside from those assessed by the test.

Standardized tests –instead of being used as instruments to improve education- are used as weapons against students and educators. The most serious case is found in Mexico, with the “Educational Reform” that has imposed the assessment of teachers as the justification to fire them. It is being used as an instrument to change the purpose of education and to end the role of the teaching profession. Standardized tests are increasingly a controversial issue, since business people and their governments promote them, while teachers and parents question their validity, launching campaigns to object them. Some teachers are even refusing to administer them.

Building a fair and democratic future

For many years, plenty of educators, students and communities have resisted privatization and other elements of neoliberalism.

Even though it is important to defy the elements that harm public education, it is essential to go beyond and develop our own alternative proposals, from a transformational pedagogy perspective. For the sake of humanity’s and Earth’s future, we need to present an alternative vision of what public education must be and can be, along with the strategies to make that possible.

Groups from each one of our countries have taken on the challenge, and have produced alternative pedagogical approaches: for indigenous education, in high schools, at universities, for all educational levels and in different regions and communities.

International actions

After 25 year of its creation, we recognize that the Tri-National Coalition in Defense of Public Education has been a valuable tool to articulate our fights; and to contribute to a fairer and more democratic future. In the current juncture, we decide to move even further in the construction of a common agenda of strategies and ways of operating amongst the different unions and social organizations that defend public education, and labor and social rights. Thus, we come up with the following AGREEMENTS:

Unity in action, through two axes and articulation paths:

1. - Aligning demands, visions and language.

We consider making similar demands in collective bargaining that connect with international solidarity. These demands would oppose budgetary restrictions, violation of labor rights and call for recognition of the rights of the union to represent teachers on education policy matters. Unions in contract negotiations will express mutual solidarity with other unions in negotiations and struggle.

In the next contract negotiations of BCTF and CTU, which will start in January, we will trigger joint mechanisms of solidarity; and we will explore other options with Mexican higher education unions and the democratic sections of CNTE.

We will continue with the experiences developed by our organizations and movements, and we will strengthen them, to tie the fight of teachers to other social and popular movements in general.

2.- Tri-National Campaigns for 2019:

We will fight to increase the financing of education and to stop the use of public resources to strengthen private schools, such as the charter ones.

We stand against the use of standardized tests as tools of exclusion and punishment, and we support the elimination of the PISA test. We demand our countries withdraw from the OECD, since it is an organization that imposes business policies on education.

We defend dignified labor and the revaluing of the teaching profession against the precarization of working conditions in education. We support the professionalization of educators.

We are against the criminalization of social movements, and the teaching profession; while highlighting the contributions of world teacher towards equality and social justice.

Communication: The development of a broader website for the Tri- Nation, to revitalize the communication.

We will make more use of social networks, taking more advantage of Facebook, to share videos and documents. We will explore having a YouTube channel.

Research and Training.

We will create tri-national and/or continental work groups on the subjects of:

Standardized tests and the evaluation of teachers’ performance.

Educational alternatives for the development of a critical pedagogy and a de-colonized educational curriculum, by rescuing the experiences of teachers in our countries, both for elementary as well as higher education.

We will reinforce having workshops and/or seminaries on specific subjects, in a format that will allow for two or three brothers and/or sisters to have short stays and carry out activities in different regions of our countries. We will promote feedback from the country of origin.

We will explore creating a “school of teachers’ critical training”.

Special Resolutions.

We will issue a solidarity political declaration towards the fights and movements in defense of public education; as well as labor, social and democratic rights for all workers in our countries.

We demand respect towards migrants, as well as the opening of borders. We support sanctuary schools and cities.

We raise an alarm due to the environmental deterioration and demand the governments take actions to reduce the degradation of nature. We will coordinate simultaneous actions in our countries against the transnational corporations that are operating against public education and our rights.

We express our solidarity towards the demand of education workers in Mexico, grouped under CNTE, for the cancellation and abrogation of the laws that installed the Neoliberal Educational Reform.

We back up the fight of indigenous educators in our countries in their demand of respecting the history and culture of the original peoples, and their right to define their own educational contents.

We support the strikes of: 1) Costa Rican teachers against the fiscal combo, that reduces educational budgets; 2) Students and professors from Colombian universities to defend the public nature of their institutions; and 3) the 35,000 members of UTLA against the austerity program imposed on the LA schools.

We will celebrate the 14th Tri-National Conference in Defense of Public Education in the United States. The delegations from the American unions and social organizations will inform us on the place and the host union for the 2020 meeting.

Standardized assessment

and the transformation of public education in Mexico

**Lucía Rivera Ferreiro,
Marcelino Guerra Mendoza
Roberto González Villarreal***

Summary

Using the metaphor of an infection, we describe the origin and evolution of standardized assessment in the Mexican educational system. Taking stock of the political changes and different official reforms, we show how standardized assessment quickly became the only acceptable way to determine the professional skills of teachers, or to prove the level of learning achieved by the students during their formal education. The conclusion is that standardized assessment is, without a doubt,

a fundamental vehicle for the neoliberal educational projects which have so deeply damaged public education both in practice and in the discourse of experts, economic organizations and the entrepreneurial sector of civil society.

Key words: standardized assessment, educational reforms, learning achievement, teachers' performance

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Introduction

How and when did standardized assessment take hold in Mexico? What effects has it had on teachers and students? By using the metaphor of an infectious process, we attempt to answer those questions. First we identify the time in which standardized assessment emerged. Then, we explore its transformations and applications until we get to the 2013 Educational Reform. Considered to be a reconfiguration of the national education system (Gonzalez, Rivera and Guerra, 2017), this reform made the assessment of teachers mandatory.

The breeding ground: 1970-1980

During those years, the educational system did not have psychometric or statistical techniques to guarantee the comparability of results and the stability of scales. Efforts centered on obtaining census data to create reliable statistics about coverage, graduation figures, efficiency parameters, drop-out rates, etc. The first large scale tests were applied in 1972, for junior high school entry. In 1974, the Assessment and Accreditation Sub-Directorate was created.

The first large scale learning assessment was known as the “Academic achievement evaluation for students in the 4th and 5th year of elementary education”. It used sample students with national representativeness (Martinez, 2008). It was done during the 1976-1982 administration.

The results were not shared publicly. Apparently, they were not used to justify political demands, neither were they used to make strategic decisions for education. Teachers were kings in their classrooms, since they decided on the strategies and instruments to perform assessment. Exams were the main tool to evaluate and control classrooms. They were either written by the teachers themselves, or they were bought from commercial test suppliers.

No one ever imagined the eruption that was about to happen when the results of the first international assessments started coming off the desks.

Innoculation (1990-2000)

During the 1990s, in the context of structural reforms that focused on the review, restructuring and reduction of public officials, the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP) continued applying the Diagnostic Tool for Junior High First-Entry students (IDANIS), which had been systematically used since 1989.

As of 1994, the School Learning Achievement Assessment was developed, in the framework of the Teachers Professional Development Program¹ and the Program to Reduce the Lag in Education (PARE). Two years

1. Carrera Magisterial was a program of economic rewards for teachers that was created as part of the School Modernization initiative during the Carlos Salinas de Gortari Administration (1989-1995). The Educational Reform in

later came the Elementary School Evaluation Program (EVEP) and in 1998 National Standard Assessments began (INEE, 2008). The assessment pilots and experiments multiplied. Mexico started to participate in international assessments such as TIMSS (International Association to Assess School Achievement-AIEA and the Latin American Lab for the Assessment of Educational Quality-LLECE).

At that time teachers were still the maximum classroom authority, and they still used their instructional assessment based on observation, experience or common sense. But they also started participating in the Knowledge Olympiads (1997), a competition between schools. There was no other reward rather than the acknowledgement of the authorities, students and parents for being the winning school. These seemingly harmless practices would soon be transformed into large scale assessments, fostered as a part of national education policies.

Contagion (2000-2011)

During the first decade of the twentieth century, assessment was clearly identified as part of state policy, and that is when it acquired relevance as an instrument to manage educational systems. Let us remember that by then, standardized national and international assessments had already been applied with merely comparative purposes. However, when PISA results began to be shared, assessment fever erupted.

The news that Mexican students had gotten low grades on the PISA assessment stirred social outrage, ignited in large part by the media, and it was used by the governments in power to accelerate the adoption of different measures. One very important one, because of the key role it would later play, was the creation of the National Educational Assessment Institute in 2002. New areas and organizations were created and multi-

2013, installed by the Enrique Peña Nieto Administration (2012-2018), ended the reward program and established the mandatory teachers' assessment.



plied to assess provincial state educational structures while larger budgets were allocated for the centralized evaluators, such as the General Directorate of the Public Education Secretariat. They designed the first general test, known as ENLACE, to assess the national level of student achievement, in spite of the fact that the INEE already existed.

Even though at that time teacher assessment was not yet mandatory, it did become a very important criterion for the granting of economic incentives for teachers. Just to give an idea of how relevant this was, ENLACE's grades represented 50% of the total points required to have access to an economic incentive or to improve the already existing one.

Soon afterwards, all teaching became focused on preparing for the exam. When the exam date approached, most teachers devoted all of their time on training the students for the test. There is no doubt that the idea that Mexico was seen as a country of failures led the public to accept standardized assessment without questioning it.

Epidemic (2012 to the present)

Standardized assessment came to stay. The outbreak became a full-blown epidemic and no one is safe from it. On February 26, 2013, the passing of a constitutional reform of all laws and regulations regarding education changed teachers' working conditions completely and abruptly.

Tests to assess students also changed. In 2015, the general assessment called ENLACE was cancelled and replaced by PLANEA (INEE, 2015) which is still current.

As part of its international commitments and responsibilities for 2018, INEE considered applying around ten different assessments to teachers, schools and students: TALIS², a video to assess teachers while teaching; the Comparative and Explicative Regional Study (ERCE), the Latin American Lab to Assess Education Quality (LLECE); the Knowledge Olympiad; PLANEA for preschool, elementary and high school education; PISA 2018; and the Diagnostic Assessment CENSAL which is self-applied and meant for teachers to plan their classroom activities based on the results. These are just some examples of INEE's assessments.

But as if the list were not long enough, there are also exams for entry, promotion and permanence in the teaching profession. "An assessment that started as an invitation to test skills and knowledge became an ongoing obligation that operates as a production control device, and that keeps teachers under the constant threat of losing their jobs" (Rivera, González y Guerra, 2016:94).

Conclusions

The fever for standardization is not exclusive to the Mexican educational system. It affects practically all systems around the world. For some time now, assessment -or rather measurement- has become a part of the agendas of all politicians; in effect, it has become a political problem. Therefore, the implications for public education supersede by far the mere technical dimension of education, since they are now placed in the political and even ethical dimensions.

Assessment is a government tool that was created to regulate behaviors, first through punitive measures but later through self-control. Today, it is a series of discursive practices –programs, norms, organizations-, which are widely accepted and determine what ought

to be said and done, separating good practices from those that are not and dictating who is considered the successful ideal and who is not. (Vasquez, 2013).

There is no doubt that assessment fever has had serious consequences in daily practices, such as distorting the educational process and limiting teaching to only those things that will be assessed. The constant threat of the tests causes teachers to excessively "teach to the test" and to use methods that are not always ethical.

The situation became even trickier when the measurement of student learning and competition among schools were added to the teacher assessment policies that offer economic incentives based on test results. Or even worse, they condition job security, as with what happened with the Reform in 2013.

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2. TALIS: Teaching and Learning International Survey.

The political uses of standardized testing in Ontario: implications for teachers' **professional autonomy**

Paul Bocking*

Summary

Ontario initiated its province-wide system of standardized testing in the early 2000s, within an emerging global context of standardized testing as a form of 'accountability'. The tests have since been administered under governments of varying ideologies. Public attention has waned when times were good and test scores rose reliably, and refocused with greater intensity when they dipped. What has remained constant is their usage as the quantifiable metric which governments, opposition parties and media have held, alongside high school graduation rates, to be the definitive means of assessing the state of K-12 education in Ontario. This has had serious implications for the professional autonomy of the province's teachers.

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According to Verger, Parcerisa and Fontdevila (2019), the usage of National Large Scale Assessments (NLSAs) has more than doubled globally since the mid-1990s. The initial adopters were predominantly Anglo and developing countries like Chile that were early implementers of neoliberal education policies. Since the mid-2000s they have spread rapidly, particularly in states affiliated with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). This growth has been propelled in considerable part by the expansion of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). Its tests of the math, science and literacy abilities of 15 year olds grew from 28 participating countries in 2000 to 72 in 2015 (Addey and Sellar 2017). Participation in PISA has become a marker of a modern education system. The criteria it uses to assess students increasingly influences governments worldwide, keen to 'teach to the test' and reap the political rewards of rising scores.

Verger, Parcerisa and Fontdevila (2019) and Addey and Sellar (2017), have probed the largely political rationales for why governments turn to standardized testing. Past the rhetoric of ensuring 'quality' and 'excellence', the explanations are far more mundane. Within a national or local context in which education is popularly perceived to be in 'crisis', standardized tests are a relatively easy and quick way to signal something is being done. Pressure is then shifted from the government to individual schools and teachers through 'accountability' to 'standards' which can then be monitored at a distance through the scores. In the context of managerial authority over teachers being decentralized to school principals through 'school autonomy', teachers' professional autonomy is undermined as principals are tasked with ensuring their staff prioritize preparation for the tests. A key claim of the neoliberal discourse of the Global Education Reform Movement (Sahlberg 2011) is that funding levels aren't the problem with education, teachers' performance is, and they must therefore be held accountable. This is fiscally convenient for austerity-driven states, as both testing and creating new 'standards' tend to be cheaper

than lowering class sizes, hiring more support staff or repairing schools.

As will be seen in Ontario, 'test-based accountability' can be used for different ends by different governments, as evidence of progress or failure. As Steiner-Khamsi explains:

"The terms 'international standards', 'twenty-first century skills', and 'best practices' greatly resonate with politicians and policy makers, and they resort to them at particular moments of agenda setting: whenever there is a need to generate reform pressure. These terms effectively function as catalysts for change even though there is no agreement what they actually mean... they serve as empty vessels that are, whenever needed, filled with local meaning. Nevertheless, they are politically powerful because they generate fears of falling behind on a global market place..." (2016: 383-384)

First proposed in Ontario by a Royal Commission on education under a centre-left New Democratic (NDP) government in the early 1990s, the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) was established in 1996 by the Conservative government that followed. The EQAO tests the literacy and math skills of grades 3 and 6 students, the math skills of grade 9 students, and the literacy skills of those in grade 10. Unlike higher stakes testing elsewhere in North America, failing these tests does not have direct consequences for individual students, with the exception of the grade 10 test, which must be passed as a condition of graduation (with multiple forms of second chances). More significantly, test results have been used to assess the performance of both individual schools (and subsequently to rank schools by various groups from right-wing think tanks to real estate agents), and of the larger system as a whole. Teachers are not subjected to 'value-added measurement' schemes, as is common in the US or under Mexico's former ENLACE exam, where algorithms attempt to calculate how much an individual teacher added or



subtracted from a student's score. However, the scores are used as a definitive means to assess school (and by extension, teacher) performance, and justify subsequent interventions.

The Liberals who succeeded the Conservatives in 2004, largely retained the EQAO testing structure, promoting the results as one of the primary means by which to demonstrate to the public that their subsequent education policies were effective. EQAO (and high school graduation rates) became the key quantitative metrics to which other policies were tied. Under influential academics including Michael Fullan of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, the use of test scores to guide intervention was part of the model of 'pressure and support', portrayed as a progressive alternative to

contemporary 'name and shame' policies in the UK, or the threat of school closures and mass firings of teachers associated with No Child Left Behind legislation in the US (Fullan & Doyle 2014). Nevertheless, as I argue in my dissertation from interviewing grade 10 English teachers in Toronto, considerable top down pressure exists to raise scores and improve the standing of their school, and that of the school board and ultimately of the provincial education system (Bocking 2017). This has impacted professional autonomy, to the extent that teachers are obligated to allocate increasing classroom time to test prep, at the expense of teaching the curriculum itself.

The use of EQAO test score results worked well politically while scores rose steadily. As annual scores

began to stabilize by the early 2010s, public and media attention generally declined. In this context in which the political value of the scores was waning, the Toronto-based research and advocacy group, People for Education launched the 'Measuring What Matters' project in 2013. Garnering government interest and collaboration from seven school boards, Measuring What Matters sought to broaden government and public conceptions of how the effectiveness of the overall system, as well as the experience of individual students, should be assessed, challenging the fixation on EQAO scores. People for Education maintained the accountability discourse, but in a milder fashion that emphasized the responsibility of the broader system (People for Education 2018). The project issued a report in early 2018 urging the prioritization of measuring citizenship education, creativity, health, social-emotional learning, and quality learning environments.

Less than two months before the 2018 Ontario election, the Ministry of Education released a review it had commissioned of the EQAO. It was lauded by the Liberal government, which presented it to the media and EQAO, but without committing to its recommendations to phase out the grade 3 and 9 tests, and replace the grade 10 literacy test with something not mandatory for graduation. The remaining grade 6 test would be substantially revised to ensure it could not be used to rank schools (Rushowy 2018). Meanwhile the opposition NDP adopted the stance of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation and the Elementary Teachers' Federation, vowing to abolish the EQAO and reallocate its \$36 million budget to schools.

However beginning especially in 2017, the EQAO tests were re-politicized as news headlines screamed about declining math scores. The issue was primarily exploited by the opposition Conservatives. Drawing on 'back to basics' tropes, they claimed the Liberal government had introduced a confusing 'discovery math' curriculum (emphasizing critical thinking and applied problem solving), and that a return to a focus on rote memorization was necessary. Math teachers

were not asked for their perspectives. Conservative leader Doug Ford further charged that the decline was evidence that teachers generally had poor math skills themselves, vowing to introduce an exam for future faculty of education graduates (Abedi & Patton 2018). Immediately following his election victory in June 2018, the report urging the scaling back of EQAO testing was removed from the Ministry of Education website.

The Conservative agenda for standardized testing is yet to be seen. If they are consistent, we can expect a raising of the stakes, perhaps with new measures of 'accountability' targeting teachers. In the months since the election of Doug Ford's Conservatives, education in Ontario has been defined by a conflict over his government's replacement of a recently created health curriculum with an earlier version. The newer version had earned the ire of social conservatives, with its discussion of sexual consent, gender and sexual diversity. Its removal drew protests from teachers and concerned parents, and tens of thousands of high school students walked out of schools to protest. Results of a public consultation obtained by the media indicated overwhelming support for retaining the modern curriculum (Canadian Press 2018). While placating a committed minority of right-wing voters, the conflict has drawn the concern and opposition of the large majority, particularly parents with children in school, creating the basis for a natural alliance with the teachers' federations. There will surely be many more aggressive interventions by the Conservative government in the coming years, directly confronting teachers' professionalism and the integrity of public education as a whole.

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Teachers in Mexico:

from resisting neoliberal reforms to building alternatives

José David Alarid Dieguez*

Summary

The following paper presents and analyzes alternative education proposals that those teachers who have been in active resistance for many years have put into practice. There are a number of educational projects that gather ideas for inclusive education, sensitive to the needs of a majority of the population and appropriate to their contexts. Often, the concept of an emancipatory education, grounded in Freirean precepts, has been explicitly seen as the seed of an alternative project to oppose what the international organizations have imposed on a large part of the world to standardize educational outcomes, encouraging students to acquire only the “basic” competencies to suit a precarious labor

market and to accept that the current world order is the only one possible. Their buzzword is “educational quality”, which is never accurately defined, and their tool is standardized assessment. This process must be seen as a fight to give meaning to education between the hegemonic powers and the counter hegemonic projects that seek to rescue and revalue the role of teachers. An analysis is made of the complex context of these alternative projects, as well as of their feasibility, the ideas that support them and the social actors that promote them, mainly teacher, but not exclusively.

Key words: Resistance, alternative projects, counter-hegemony.

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The context

In Mexico, as in many parts of the world, a series of educational reforms based on neoliberal ideas has been implemented to regulate teaching work. These reforms seek to synchronize the work of teachers with the visions of market deregulation. From their perspective, only the market, or the quasi-markets, can find the “optimum” way for teachers to contribute to a well-functioning social system. Amongst other things, and in many different ways, the collective organization of workers has been attacked, forcing teachers to individually face new rules imposed on their working conditions, including their professional development possibilities, through different tactics such as a results-based payment scheme. On the one hand, a salary restriction policy has been implemented to keep their income at a very low level. But on the other, if teachers wish to earn more, they are obliged to “show” that they “deserve” something better

by obtaining higher results in whatever the authorities decide, including the standardized tests that allegedly measure their professional capacity.

Standardized assessment

In their zeal to standardize teaching work and its results, multinational organizations – such as the OECD, the IMF and the World Bank- have directed the reformers to establish policies to measure the performance of teachers which are actually used to control their working life. In the case of Mexico, in order to achieve their aim, a whole apparatus has been constructed with a punitive, not an instructional, orientation. Its core is a series of measurements of teachers’ “efficacy”, which are applied from the moment they are hired, and continually measure their “performance”. If teachers do not achieve the scores unilaterally established by the authority, they will be sanctioned, labelled as “not

suitable” or perhaps even fired, without the employer -the Mexican government- being obliged to pay any type of compensation. Likewise, school achievement and students’ performance are measured by standardized assessments. There are the international ones: the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) being the standard-bearer. But there are also the national ones, in the case of Mexico, the Evaluación Nacional de Logro Académico en Centros Escolares (ENLACE), now substituted by PLANEA. The formally autonomous and pricey National Institute for Educational Evaluation INEE, which last year alone received a budget of around 1.250 million Mexican pesos (according to information from the Secretariat of Finance and Public Credit, 2018), was in charge of designing the strategy for the educational system’s standardized assessment¹. The truth is, contrary to what had been promised by the reform’s sympathizers, the Mexican experience has not shown the expected results. In spite of the large investment in the elaboration, application, dissemination and promotion of the assessment results, there is no perceptible evidence of student progress after the strategy was implemented. As a matter of fact, different studies show the null impact of the strategy, as in Marquez who, based on data analysis, concludes: “after more than a decade of large scale assessment -through a big investment and a significant amount of resources- something that is not clear and is very controversial is whether there has been any usefulness for the national education system and society as a whole.” (2017, p. 6).

Even the then-Secretary of Public Education acknowledged the lack of improvement in the results of PISA 2015 and warned not to expect anything different in 2018 since he thought a longer period of time was required, one of at least 10 years. He insisted this was “the right path” without offering any explanation of why that was the case.

1. Since the institution lacks all credibility, the new Administration is planning to end it and substitute it with another one that is less identified with an openly punitive orientation.

The problem is that this failed strategy, due to its very objectives and parameters, has had an enormous social and educational cost. According to B. Bernstein, it is possible to say that the assessment systems not only measure “educational” results, but that they also divert a great deal of students’ and teachers’ time into preparing for the assessments. There is by law a single curriculum design (in Mexico it starts with elementary education) which lies completely in the hands of the federal government.

Given this situation, a great deal of teacher training is devoted first to gaining entrance into the system and later, to staying in it. The contents of the assessments determine what is focused on. That is to say, there is no conceptual analysis of the educational problems they will face in their real and diverse classrooms, or in different social contexts. The whole emphasis is on knowing how to answer the test questions designed by the “experts”. The students’ learning is measured based on their scores within the parameters of international results. Teachers are forced to spend a great deal of their time on training students how to answer standardized assessments, a phenomenon known as “teaching to the exam.” The possibility of having teachers doing work that does suit the needs and features of their students is highly limited. The relevance of contents is not open to feedback, since teachers are not considered to be central players in the process. Their sole task is to follow orders and if not, to be sanctioned.

As a result, the benefits of teaching are lost, especially those that are not measurable but that are pedagogically more relevant and which only happen in interaction with students. Therefore, the complex interaction between teachers and students is at stake, as well as their interaction with other stakeholders because it has an impact beyond the institutional context and in the shared creation of the meaning and expectations of the role of a teacher. In other words, the role of a teacher is framed by social and cultural characteristics and the surrounding environment, but it involves teachers and students asymmetrically. Limits are placed on their



professionalism that have strong repercussions in their subjectivity and actions and thus, affect their sense of belonging. For all of these reasons, varied and intense forms of resistance have taken place.

Alternative projects as a form of resistance

The most visible type of resistance is manifested through mobilizations, strikes, etc. But another type is the implementation of alternative education projects that emphasize a better response to the needs of the least favored sector of the population - public elementary schools. These diverse and heterogeneous projects, with different concepts and possibilities, tend to reflect the anti-hegemonic view of teachers in the resistance -as well as that of other organized sectors of society- who seek another type of learning, one that is free from the commodifying view that has prevailed in educational reforms for the last 30 years in this country. The teachers' resistance organization that has had the strongest presence and has lasted the longest, the Coordinadora Nacional de Trabajadores de la Educación CNTE, has organized alternative education events for many years, out of which proposals and specific projects have emerged. Some of them have explicitly established the perspective of an emancipating education, clearly

influenced by P. Freire's ideas -as well as those of other critical pedagogy experts-as steps towards an alternative to that of the hegemonic block led by international organizations and imposed on our countries.

Alternative projects have emerged from a range of actors, from individual teachers and schools up to entire democratic union locals. Projects have achieved different degrees of consolidation and implementation, and they have manifested in diverse ways. For instance, in Mexico City, there is the emblematic case of the "Centauro del Norte" elementary school, where the director, a distinguished member of CNTE, has promoted a "community" education project, where the participation of parents is essential to achieve a "truly inclusive" education. Union sections have also proposed projects with a regional perspective to tailor education to the interests of the majority. Such is the case of the Oaxacan Strategic Transformation Program, the "Altimiranista Education" project by Section XIV in Guerrero, or the Michoacan project by Section XVIII.

We can see that the above-mentioned projects are part of the debate between the hegemonic powers and the counter-hegemonic projects that seek to rescue public education and revalue it as a social right, not a commodity. Revaluing the role of teachers is key for that purpose.



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Professionalism and Micromanagement: the Struggle of Chicago Teachers

Introduction

A significant change for Chicago teachers, which has taken place since 2012, is the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system, which Chicago Public Schools (CPS) named Recognizing Educators Advancing Chicago Students (REACH). The underlying law requiring the new system was rapidly pushed through the Illinois legislature in 2010, in anticipation of federal Race to the Top funds. Race to the Top was the competitive grant program initiated by president Obama and his Department of Education led by former Chicago schools CEO, Arne Duncan. Race to the Top is known for pitting school districts against each other to enact charter privatization and test based teacher evaluation systems. It is widely seen as the policy that caused the Atlanta test cheating scandal which led to the widespread criminalization of African American educators in that city. Ironically, the state of Georgia won the federal grant in part based upon these faulty test scores. Both, the Chicago teacher evaluation system and the federal system it was designed to mimic are a reflection of the test mania and bi-partisan efforts by Republicans

and Democrats to dismantle public education systems across the country.

Teacher evaluation mandates were developed and promoted by corporate funders like the Gates Foundation and TNTP (formerly, The New Teacher Project), who claimed that the main problem in education was that most teachers had inflated evaluation scores. This claim was wrong on both counts; teachers' evaluations were not inflated, and poor educational outcomes are mostly due to poverty and racism. Millions of dollars and countless hours of principal and teacher time later, the REACH evaluation system found that 89 percent of teachers achieved one of the top two ratings during the 2016-17 school year according to officials at the Chicago Public Schools. The main components of REACH look at a teacher's lesson planning, their students' standardized test scores or value added metrics, their classroom environment, academic rigor, level of pedagogical organization, and community/parent outreach. However, we have found that principal discretion, bias, low test scores and the status of a school community, greatly influences the ultimate score a teacher receives.

A Discriminatory System

On the other hand, teachers who have received lower ratings are disproportionately those who teach in economically-disadvantaged schools or are Black or male, according to a 2016, University of Chicago Consortium on School Research (CCSR) report. (<https://consortium-uchicago.edu/publications/teacher-evaluation-chicago-differences-observation-and-value-added-scores-teacher>)

These lower ratings, the CCSR found, are driven by evaluators' observation scores, not test scores. Schools serving high-poverty students are schools that lack

much-needed resources, including sufficient numbers of nurses, social workers, psychologists, and counselors. Their class sizes are too large and their schools are often disorganized. Teachers in those schools have, on the average, lower evaluation scores because of school climate issues, not because the teachers are less able.

The lower evaluation scores given to Black teachers in particular, are driving many to leave the system, voluntarily or otherwise. Further, CPS does not appear to value their importance in the classroom. In many schools, Black teachers, especially those at the top of the pay scale, are targeted for dismissal. Latino teachers

FIGURE 1
Teachers with Lowest Value-Added and Observation Scores are Over Represented in Schools Serving the Most Disadvantaged Students

FIGURE 1.A

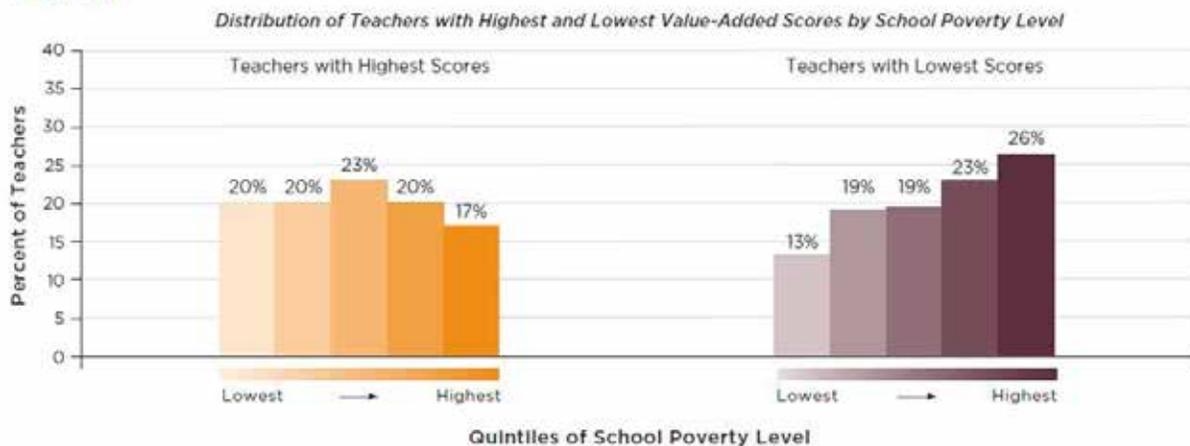
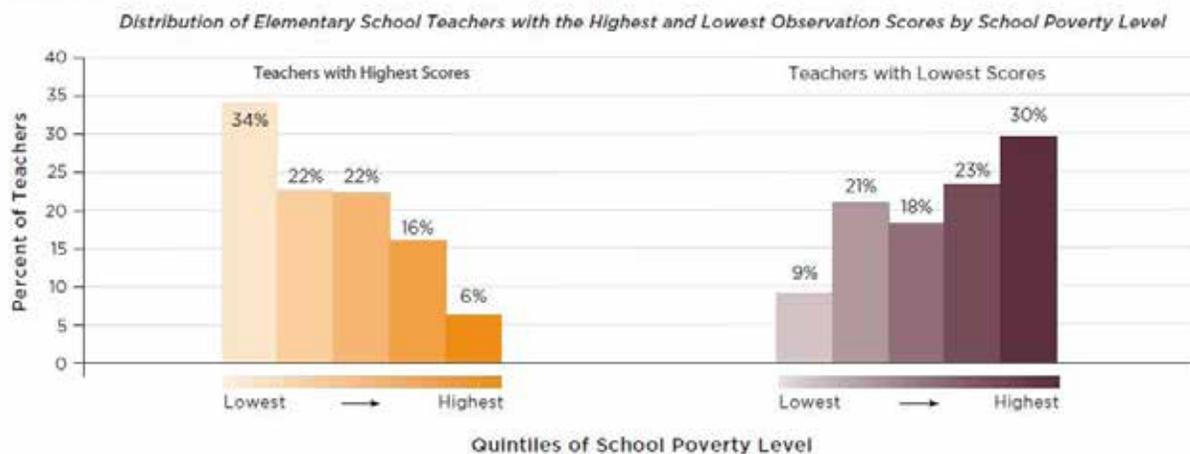


FIGURE 1.B



1. Report “Teacher Evaluation in Chicago: <https://consortium.uchicago.edu/publications/teacher-evaluation-chicago-differences-observation-and-value-added-scores-teacher>



and other teachers of color have also received lower evaluation scores. A win in the 2015 contract requires CPS to participate in a joint study investigating ways to remove these disparities. As we embark on another contract campaign (our current agreement expires in June of 2019) members are prepared to address the racial and economic disparities that are perpetuated by the current evaluation system.

While students in well-funded private and suburban high schools are engaged with dynamic, meaningful questions, concepts, and ideas, their public school counterparts are being fed quick-fix “test prep” that fails to nourish them emotionally, intellectually, culturally, and even morally. —CPS high school teacher

An important part of every teacher’s job is student assessment. Traditionally, teachers have used a wide variety of assessments, tailored to the class and subject. Standardized tests have been a feature of schools for decades, but their numbers have increased dramatically in this century. In 2005, Chicago’s students took two standardized tests, and CPS eliminated one of them, saying “they were spending too much time on standardized tests”.

By 2018, CPS testing was out of control. In addition to tests required by the state, tests used for teacher evaluation, and tests for special programs, CPS network chiefs regularly required progress monitoring every five weeks or made other testing demands. Because a school’s rating is heavily dependent on student test scores (65 percent of elementary and 40 percent of high

schools’ rating is tied to testing), principals feel obliged to mandate several *practice* tests as well.

The Union Action

In 2012, Chicago’s newly elected Mayor, Rahm Emanuel, attempted to eviscerate our collective bargaining agreement, usher in a wave of privatization, racist school closings and test based teacher evaluation system. Instead, CTU members engaged in a historic strike that stopped much of this plan dead in its tracks. Over 98 percent of CTU’s membership authorized the strike and blazed a trail of resistance to neoliberal school reforms that are reverberating today as teachers in Los Angeles, Colorado, Arizona, Oklahoma, Kentucky, West Virginia and even within the charter school industry itself embark on a historic strike wave. Tens of thousands of teachers took to the streets in both 2012 and 2016 and chanted “Hey Hey, Ho, Ho, Rahm Emanuel has got to go.” Rahm recently announced that he would not run for re-election as Chicago’s Mayor, a contest that will be decided this year by April, 2019.

The CTU has fought hard for changes to REACH, starting with the 2012 strike, which won an appeals process, a decreased weight for the testing component, and a rigorous Joint Teacher Evaluation Committee. The CTU won additional needed changes to REACH in the 2015 contract, including the incorporation of best practices that principals now must follow. The fight continues. As the results of both the old evaluation system and the new one indicate, the vast majority of teachers do not

need to be continuously evaluated. Some teachers need intensive supports, and they should receive those. For most teachers, however, having time to work with their colleagues in collaborative professional learning groups is considerably more helpful than REACH evaluations. Yet, most teachers have few opportunities to use their preparation periods in this way. Students deserve teachers who are treated as professionals.

The CTU won in the 2015 contract the right to vote on whether to give certain tests at their schools. Teachers and students have since received some much-needed relief from relentless testing, but the struggle continues to return testing autonomy to the teacher.

Similarly, CPS has attempted to micro-manage teachers' grading. This is another responsibility that teachers have always had, and one that is dependent on the objectives of the class and the particularities of the students in the classroom. The CTU won contract language on this issue as well, and some of the more odious impositions of grading policies have ended.

CPS initiatives that take classroom decision-making away from teachers are similar to *teacher-proof* curricula. These materials aim to minimize teachers' control through scripted curricula and other resources that give educators little room to deviate, even when student needs indicate they should. With the new emphasis on computerized *personalized* learning, many people imagine that CPS may start to decrease the role of teachers and increase the role of computers in student learning. This would be great for tech companies, horrible for

Chicago students, and something that would never be suggested for wealthy or private school students. The CTU will continue to fight for the teachers our students deserve.

Professional Teacher Demands

While the CTU no longer has Rahm as our most visible enemy, it is clear that the commercial and business interests are gearing up throughout Chicago to try and put reduce our rights and power. We will not stand down and will build upon the energy and momentum that has reversed the worst features of neoliberal school reform in Chicago. In our current contract fight, CTU members are demanding that the city pay all teachers and paraprofessionals fairly. In order to remove the worst discriminatory features of the REACH system it is imperative to diversify the teaching staff throughout the district, this will require more robust special education and bilingual education services, demands that are front and center in our current contract proposals. Additionally the most vulnerable members, such as substitute teachers, must possess clearer rights and be treated respectfully. Most importantly, in order to truly empower teachers to have professional autonomy over grading and assessment it will be critical to in the first instance demand the elimination of the REACH system or a wholesale revision that reflects the needs and interests of our school communities not those of the corporate elite.



The tyranny of teacher evaluation in Honduras

Ruy Díaz Díaz*

Summary

In accordance with the Fundamental Education Law, admission to the public system is done by competition, while permanent positions and job security are achieved through a combination of internal and external evaluations. The regulations of the competition and evaluations confuse certification with academic level and quantitative techniques with qualitative ones. They are not transparent in their implementation and they serve to maintain the existing policy for the assignment of positions, resulting in an educational system that on the one hand has too many older teachers and on the other is dependent on political compromise with no respect for professionalization.

Key Words: Assessment, Honduras, Fundamental Education Law, INPREMA, educator.

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Introduction

Article 125 of the 2012 law of the National Pension Institute for Teachers (INPREMA) defines educators who at the time of the law's approval were incorporated into the public system and paying dues to INPREMA as 'pre-existing'. The non pre-existing teachers must enter the governmental system through an entrance competition, according to the Fundamental Education Law (LFE) of 2012 and the Teaching Statute (1997). Nevertheless, the contest regulations are not workable, as they confuse degrees with academic levels and include subjective elements, such as psychometric exams and a semi-structured interview, into an assessment that is framed as quantitative.

In view of the confusion referred to in terms of Contest Regulations (Republic of Honduras, 2014) and the difficulty for the twelve citizens (2 parents, 3 teachers, 4 representatives of civil society, and 3 representatives of the Secretary of Education) who spent more than 500 hours (assuming an average of around

30 minutes for each teacher evaluated) in elaborating a series of open questions and using them to interview and quantitatively and objectively evaluate the more than 1,000 teachers who took this assessment, it was decided that semi-structured interviews via computer, without any specific guidelines, would be a better mechanism. This begs the question – what answers are appropriate via computer? How would these responses be quantified?

To date there have been two external evaluations and one internal evaluation, all failed and non-binding. Consequently, no teacher has been able to earn permanent status through these evaluations. To do so, the teacher must obtain a grade of 80% in 2 external evaluations over the course of two different years and permanent status is lost with three unsatisfactory evaluations, without any regard for the academic specialization in which they obtained their degrees.

Tragicomedy of the Non Pre-Existing Teacher in Honduras

According to the National Pedagogical University Francisco Morazan (UPNFM) (2018) between 2014-2018 there were 19,439 graduates in education, of which 9,755 specialized in different areas of Primary Education, a private project of UPNFM. Meanwhile, the government system of education has not created new openings for teachers in the last few years nor has it replaced teachers, resulting therefore in an existing surplus of teachers.

The assessment of teachers in Honduras can be divided into three levels:

- Entrance Evaluation
- Internal Evaluation
- External Evaluation

Articles 15 and 18 of the Evaluation Regulations of the Fundamental Education Law establish the criteria for internal and external evaluations (See Table 1).

Cuadro . Evaluación Interna y Externa.

EVALUACION INTERNA		EVALUACION EXTERNA	
Autoevaluación	20	Informe evaluación interna	10
Entrevista al docente evaluado	15	Portafolio	20
Reporte del inmediato superior	5	Reporte inmediato superior	10
Educandos	15	Entrevista docente	10
Portafolio de desempeño docente	30	Evaluación educandos	5
Padres y madres	5	Evaluación pares	10
Evaluación por pares	10	Evaluación familias	5
		Prueba de conocimientos	30
TOTAL	100%		100%

Fuente: Elaboración propia, con datos del Reglamento de Carrera Docente (2014).

For its part, the competition to obtain a spot in the government system, conforming to Articles 22 and 26 of the Regulation of the Teaching Profession, requires a written aptitude and basic competency test, an interview and an assessment of background (professional merits). From these exam results, a descending list is created with those who obtained a grade above 75% (Article 24). The selection committee then revises and assesses, through a ranking committee, the background of the professionals included on the list and assigns a grade according to the regulations of the National Selection Committee and a second descending list is created of those obtained at least a grade of 75% (Article 59).

The selection committee then proceeds with semi-structured interviews and they draft a third list with those who have an aggregate mark of at least 75% (Article 61). This means that a qualitative technique is being used as a quantitative one. Those who aspire to a leadership position in teaching or more technical pedagogy must undergo psychometric exams with a grade assigned according to the regulations set by the selection committees and a fourth list is obtained.

From the process that has been described so far we can see how really impossible and costly this competi-



tion was, as well as lacking in transparency. This is one of the reasons why in 2018 it was cancelled, and the last competition took place in December 2017 (Diario Tiempo, March 3 2018).

The internal evaluation, according to Article 51 of the Regulation of Teacher Evaluation, should occur annually while the external evaluation must be taken every three years at all levels of teaching (primary, elementary, and/or secondary). The teacher who enters the public system is a temporary worker until they achieve a minimum score of 80% on the two consecutive evaluations, thus achieving permanent status. Nevertheless, if they receive an unsatisfactory result in the evaluation (less than 70%) three times, they must leave the system (Article 77 of the Regulation of the Teaching Profession and Article 39 of the Regulation of Teacher Evaluations).

The language of Article 36 of the Regulation of the National Board and the Departmental Boards and the Selection Contest is practically incomprehensible, confusing diplomas or degrees with academic substance

and making it impossible to apply Chapter IX of the same regulation (evaluation of merits for the competition), which is not explicit enough.

The external evaluation of teachers currently working includes an evaluation by their students and the parents/family members (see Table 1). This means, for example, that a teacher who teaches first grade must be evaluated by both their students (the results are debatable) and their parents.

By the same token, the degree they obtain through the UPNFM is not respected once they enter the public system. For example if the number of students per class in high schools is less than 40, the departmental leadership can “reorient” (a euphemism for transferring) any teacher (generally to an elementary school) and give them responsibilities that do not respect their academic background. They will then be evaluated on whatever content is assigned to them (this, according to Diaz (2018), marks the beginning of pedagogical ‘black-outs’ in the Secretary of Education).

Thus, a physical education teacher could very well

be transferred to an elementary school where they must teach two or three new courses and be evaluated, for example, in mathematics with obvious results.

Finally, internal teachers' evaluations include a report from their most immediate supervisor who in turn will refer to their students' quantifiable academic performance by looking at the midterm test results that are a part of the academic calendar in Honduras and the PISA exams, the latter called "a pedagogical beauty pageant" by Pablo Gentile (Diaz 2018).

Conclusion

The evaluations to enter the public education system, to gain permanent work and to remain in the system have been badly designed and are impractical - since 2014 not one teacher has been hired on a permanent basis. Meanwhile, the UPNFM has graduated more than 19,000 teachers destined for unemployment or temporary employment. If they manage to weather these ups and downs it will be thanks to friendship and/or political activism with whatever party is currently in power.

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What is IDEA?

The Initiative for Democratic Education in the Americas (IDEA) is a flexible network that brings together organizations in the Americas that share a commitment to protecting and improving public education, seen as essential to democratic development and the protection of human rights.

The network works with other civil society organizations concerned about the impact on social rights of "free" trade agreements and other transnational neoliberal policies. The idea for a hemispheric network emerged from a meeting of teachers and students in Mexico City in November, 1998. IDEA's structure was broadened and formalized at the Initiative for Democratic Education in the Americas Conference held in October 1999 in Quito, Ecuador.

What does IDEA do?

The IDEA network carries out research, sets up communication networks, publishes documents and organizes conferences and seminars related to neoliberalism, trade agreements and the defense and democratic transformation of public education. It also organizes campaigns to defend public education and the defenders of public education.

The objective of these activities is to lay the groundwork for an understanding of the impact of neoliberal policies on education in the Americas and to develop alternatives to ensure inclusive, democratic and quality public education.

IDEA also has two hemispheric subnetworks: the Education Research Network (RIE) and an Indigenous Educators' Network (REI).

The RIE involves researchers working with educator, student and community organizations in collaborative work to produce studies that analyze and compare similar situations and policies in a range of American countries.

The REI enables first nations educators to communicate with their counterparts in other countries of the Americas and to share strategies and ideas related to defending culture and autonomy within a publicly funded education system.

Coordinating Committee

The work of IDEA is directed by a Hemispheric Coordinating Committee made up of representatives of the following organizations:

- National Union of Educators (UNE/Ecuador)
- Confederation of Education Workers of the Argentine Republic (CTERA)
- Federation of Central American Teachers' Organizations (FOMCA)
- National Confederation of Education Workers (CNTE/Brasil)
- Caribbean Union of Teachers (CUT)
- British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF/Canada)
- Latin American and Caribbean Students' Organization (OCLAE)

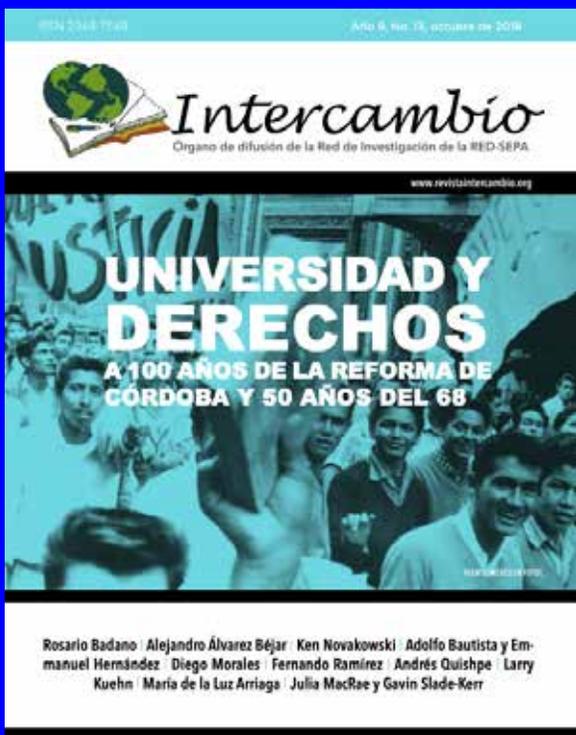
Plans developed by the Coordinating Committee are executed by IDEA staff Steve Stewart (Canada) and Maria Ramos (Mexico), as well as the committee and participating IDEA organizations

Contact
www.idea-network.ca

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The IDEA Network makes available to teachers, students and the academic community of our continent, the electronic portal of Intercambio magazine, where they will find articles and research on public education in the Americas and the teaching profession.

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TEACH

outside the box



Standardized testing hurts students and teachers and robs educational resources