

Manifesto against PISA and the Standardization Framework of Education in the World

In view of the sixth results release of the International Program for Student Assessment (PISA), the undersigned declare our absolute rejection of the test, its national versions, and the homogenizing framework of educational systems.

PISA is a standardized test applied every three years to 15 year old students. Its first application was in the year 2000, date from which more than 70 countries have been incorporated. In order to participate, each country must have a specialized technical team and pay for its application. Currently, the OECD, which applies the PISA test, has contracted Pearson, a transnational education corporation, for the development of its 2018 version.

On the other hand, the results of PISA have become an important indicator of the country's economic competitiveness.

Since its first application, we have observed several anomalies:

1. Politico-educational: the Ministries of Education have limited control of this assessment, in a scenario of intensification of standardized process and measurements. Progressively, international organizations such as the OECD have imposed changes in educational policies in the world, aligning educational processes to a limited conception of progress. This standardization includes the creation or adaptation of national testing to a global pattern that works through the pressure of the rankings. Moreover, the standardization has driven to a strong inflow of private companies that have marginalized the ministries of education, teachers unions and schools from the conduction of educational projects. Additionally, the teacher education and professional development have been aligned with standardized assessments. In short, this logic reduces the processes of teaching and learning that point to an integral and holistic development, rooted in a critical historical-social consciousness.
2. Technical: PISA promotes rankings of countries based on the results. This practice seeks to neutralize the enormous cultural differences, world views and characteristics of each national context. This factor implies that this test does not meet minimal criteria of validity and reliability.
3. Pedagogical: the regime of high stakes standardized test and the triggered processes that have brought a radical transformation of the school work. Narrowing curriculum has driven to the elimination of subjects like arts, music, philosophy and history. School time has been restructured to accommodate the training to be successful in these tests. It should be noted that these measurements are not subject to social or pedagogical

discretion. These measurements do not take into account social context and values or diverse pedagogical practices.

4. Social and Psychological: PISA and its national variants discriminate, press, stigmatize regions, countries and population in their comparisons. Control and pressure to get good scores ultimately rests in the communities of teachers and students, installing a stressful regime that destroys the school climate and emotional stability of our schools. The measurement has deepened practices of exclusion and segregation in our schools, robbing their sense of the right to education.

For these reasons, we demand the annulment of the contracts signed by the various governments with the OECD. We also demand the termination of the standardized tests with high consequences at the national level.

We also want to express our commitment for a public education as a social right, to be inspired in all its practices by the social, historical and cultural diversity of our peoples. We denounce the repressive actions that several states and authorities have unleashed against social, magisterial and student movements that have demonstrated against the various forms of neoliberal standardization.

We defend the need to have schools that are protagonists of the transformation of education for social justice. Evaluation systems should be rooted in communities, must observe complexity, and should promote an education respectful of human and social rights. Only in this way do we shape full citizens.

Sign this Manifesto:

Initiative for Democratic Education in the Americas (IDEA Network).

Trinational Coalition in Defense of Public Education (Mexico, United States, Canada).