

FairTest

National Center for Fair & Open Testing

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TEST REFORMERS REACT TO NEW NATIONAL POLL ON "NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND"

Today's national survey results showing that a strong majority of Americans believe "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) has harmed schools or failed to improve them demonstrates that "Politicians are far out of step from their constituents when it comes to judging local educational quality by narrow 'one-size-fits-all' standardized exams," according to Dr. Monty Neill, Executive Director of the National Center for Fair & Open Testing (FairTest).

The annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup (PDK/Gallup) poll released this morning found that nearly seven in ten of all adults who said they were familiar with NCLB believe the federal testing mandate is not helping schools. More than two-thirds of all respondents said a single test could not fairly assess whether a school needs improvement. Eight out of ten agreed that simply testing students in reading and math was too narrow.

"Clearly a majority of the public supports a comprehensive overhaul of federal testing requirements along the lines recommended by FairTest and the more than 85 education, civil rights and other organizations who have signed the Joint Statement calling for NCLB reform," said Dr. Neill. "The new federal law must reject NCLB's 'test-and-punish' approach and, instead, support teachers and parents working to improve educational quality."

In the sponsor's news release announcing the new survey results, William Bushaw, executive director of PDK International, concluded, "The views expressed in this year's PDK/Gallup poll should serve as a wake-up call to our nation's policy makers as they begin the process of reauthorizing NCLB in 2007. The public rejects the punitive approach found in NCLB, favors a broad curriculum, prefers more appropriate measures of school performance than a single high-stakes test, and supports efforts targeted at helping our most vulnerable students."

▪ *The 38th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools* is available at <http://www.pdkintl.org/kappan/kpollpdf.htm>.

▪ The Joint Organizational Statement on NCLB with a list of signers is online at <http://www.fairtest.org>.