

PRESENTATION

Student and Teacher Evaluation around the Americas

The theme of this new issue of IDEA's Intercambio magazine is "Standardized Exams: Resistances and Alternatives." This focus grew from the context of the advance of conservative politics in many parts of the Americas - whether in those countries where neoliberalism has remained ensconced for decades, or in those where progressive governments achieved power, but are now being rolled back through coups and pseudo-democratic processes manipulated by judicial power and hegemonic media corporations.

In this context educational evaluation - whether standardized student exams or tests of teacher productivity - is manipulated by hegemonic powers to justify policies of control, erosion of professional autonomy, structural adjustment, and to commodify and privatize public education.

In issue Number 9 of Intercambio we share articles which analyse the diverse forms of evaluation being applied in the Americas, as well as strategies of resistance by labour and social movements involved with public education.

A critique of standardized exams is reflected

in articles on the threat that high stakes testing poses to cultural diversity; and in the recommendation to focus not just on the results, but on the purposes and objectives behind such international tests as the PISA exams administered in some 70 countries for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

We also analyze in this issue, the evaluation of k-12 education in Brazil, standardized testing in Ecuador, as well as lessons from the "Stop SIMCE" movement in Chile (SIMCE is the country's standardized student testing system). Argentina's teachers' federation CTERA writes on the resistance organized teachers in the country are putting up in the face of a renewed push for standardized testing by the government of President Mauricio Macri.

Issue number 9 also looks at the application of standardized testing on teachers. We explore the Mexican experiences of testing and privatization tendencies within the system, the concept of evaluation as a business tool in the era of cognitive capitalism, and the tensions between evaluation and education quality.