

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