

References and Resources

The “five fatal flaws” of the Tougher Standards movement are adapted from Alfie Kohn’s book [THE SCHOOLS OUR CHILDREN DESERVE](#), from which a shorter book called [THE CASE AGAINST STANDARDIZED TESTING](#) has been spun off. You may also be interested in a list of his [essays about standards and testing](#).

Other resources:

Books about testing by various writers:

- Daniel Koretz, [The Testing Charade: Pretending to Make Schools Better](#) (University of Chicago Press, 2017)
- Deborah Meier and Matthew Knoester, [Beyond Testing: Seven Assessments of Students and Schools More Effective Than Standardized Tests](#) (Teachers College Press, 2017)
- Jack Schneider, [Beyond Test Scores: A Better Way to Measure School Quality](#) (Harvard University Press, 2017)
- Jesse Hagopian, ed., [More Than a Score: The New Uprising Against High-Stakes Testing](#) (Haymarket Books, 2014)
- Phillip Harris et al., [The Myths of Standardized Tests](#) (Rowman & Littlefield, 2011)
- Sharon L. Nichols & David C. Berliner, [Collateral Damage: How High-Stakes Testing Corrupts America’s Schools](#) (Harvard Education Press, 2007)
- Sherman Dorn, [Accountability Frankenstein: Understanding & Taming the Monster](#) (Information Age, 2007)
- M. Gail Jones et al., [The Unintended Consequences of High-Stakes Testing](#) (Rowman & Littlefield, 2003)
- Linda McNeil, [Contradictions of School Reform: Educational Costs of Standardized Testing](#) (Routledge, 2000)
- Marita Moll, ed., [Passing the Test: The False Promises of Standardized Testing](#) (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2004)
- Kathy Swope and Barbara Miner, eds., [Failing Our Kids: Why the Testing Craze Won’t Fix Our Schools](#) (Rethinking Schools, 2000)
- Gary Orfield and Mindy L. Kornhaber, ed., [Raising Standards or Raising Barriers?: Inequality and High-Stakes Testing in Public Education](#) (Century Foundation Press, 2001)
- W. James Popham, [Testing! Testing!: What Every Parent Should Know About School Tests](#) (Allyn and Bacon, 2000)
- Peter Sacks, [Standardized Minds](#) (Perseus, 1999)
- Gerald Bracey, [Put to the Test: An Educator’s and Consumer’s Guide to Standardized Testing](#) (Phi Delta Kappa, 1998).

Two books on standards: [WILL STANDARDS SAVE PUBLIC EDUCATION?](#), a short essay by Deborah Meier followed by comments from other thinkers (Beacon Press); and [ONE SIZE FITS FEW: The Folly of Educational Standards](#), by Susan Ohanian (Heinemann). A collection of essays about the destructive effects of (and dubious intentions behind) NCLB: [MANY CHILDREN LEFT BEHIND](#) (Beacon Press), with contributions by Meier and Kohn as well as Ted Sizer, Linda Darling-Hammond, George Wood, Stan Karp, and Monty Neill of FairTest.

Also on NCLB: [WHEN SCHOOL REFORM GOES WRONG](#) by Nel Noddings (Teachers College Press); and [ENGLISH LEARNERS LEFT BEHIND: Standardized Testing as Language Policy](#) by Kate Menken

(Multilingual Matters).

Also see NoChildLeft.com and this excellent summary of the law and its effects. A book about Nebraska's recently aborted attempt to build assessment from the classroom up, thereby challenging the top-down premise not only of NCLB but of the whole "accountability" movement of which it's a part: Chris W. Gallagher, [Reclaiming Assessment: A Better Alternative to the Accountability Agenda](#) (Heinemann, 2007) A [collection of essays](#) offering a skeptical look at the Common Core standards, particularly in English Language Arts; as well as an account of the [corporate groups behind the initiative](#) and articles by scholar [Yong Zhao](#) and principal [Carol Burris](#). Information from and about FairTest, the leading national organization offering a critical perspective on standardized testing. Its website, www.fairtest.org, includes an evaluation of every state's testing policy and links to a listserv called the Assessment Reform Network. A related group, the Coalition for Authentic Reform in Education (CARE), which opposes the new testing program in Massachusetts, has drafted an [alternative assessment proposal](#) — a very useful document for anyone who wonders (or is asked), "If not standardized tests, then what?" For a more recent answer to that question, see Ken Jones's article "A Balanced School Accountability Model: An Alternative to High-Stakes Testing" in the April 2004 issue of Phi Delta Kappan. A remarkable collection of examples of, and essays about, the destructive effects of standardized testing and related policies at www.susanohanian.org. A list of state and national websites devoted to challenging the tests can be found about halfway down the page devoted to [practical strategies](#). Note in particular a new (2011) group called "United Opt Out National," with a [website](#) and [Facebook page](#), devoted to organizing people to refuse to take the tests. Audio- and videotapes of presentations by Alfie Kohn on these topics: click [here](#) for more information. Research demonstrating that when teachers are held accountable for raising standards and test scores, they tend to become so controlling in their teaching style that the quality of students' performance actually declines:

Flink et al., *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 59, 1990: 916-24.

Deci et al., *Journal of Educational Psychology*, vol. 74, 1982: 852-59.

Pelletier et al., *Journal of Educational Psychology*, vol. 94, 2002: 186-96. Copyright © 2007-2015 by Alfie Kohn. This article may be downloaded, reproduced, and distributed without permission as long as each copy includes this notice along with the author's name. Permission must be obtained in order to reprint this article in a published work or in order to offer it for sale in any form. Please write to the address indicated on the [Contact Us](#) page. www.alfiekohn.org — © Alfie Kohn