Our History

In the Fall of 2001, T4SJ established its first study group devoted to high-stakes testing.

This group put on two workshops in 2002: one for the students at New College (April) and one for the participants of the T4SJ Annual Conference (February).

Members of the study group participated in a teach-in in May 2002 to support a school board resolution that established a Community Task Force on Alternative Assessment.

Three of the original members of the study group went on to found the small school, June Jordan School for Equity.

In the Fall of 2003, the second study group was formed. It put on a workshop at the T4SJ Annual Conference.

In the Spring of 2004, the group decided to transform itself into the Community Action Group (CAG). CAG created a flyer to support the school board candidacies of Eric Mar, Mark Sanchez, Jane Kim and James Calloway.

Currently, CAG is working on informational flyers around the problems with testing and how to replace tests with authentic assessment. We hope to contribute to the growing movement for real educational justice for all children.

Our Problem

MANDATED ANTI-INTELLECTUAL TEACHING IS BEING CRAMMED DOWN OUR STUDENTS’ THROATS

Over-priced and incompetent state consultants and central district staff have usurped teacher decision-making while, at the same time, teachers are being held solely responsible for the “achievement gap.”

Students in “low performing” schools learn LESS not more. STAR schools are required to implement a scripted, “box” curriculum (e.g., Highpoint, Houghton-Mifflin, Harcourt) while teachers in “high performing” schools continue to teach a challenging curriculum (although general de-funding of public education is even undermining that).

Increasing DROPOUTS and PUSHOUTS in our district! A historically bad problem is getting worse.

Over-emphasis on math and reading is leading to the decline or even elimination of social science, science, arts and physical education.

Parent involvement has been reduced to that of being homework police.

IMPORTANT DECISIONS ABOUT A CHILD SHOULD NOT BE MADE BY TEST SCORES ALONE

Our Vision

Multiple and embedded assessments and fully-funded professional development that help teachers teach better:

• giving timely feedback so teachers can improve their instruction throughout the year
• using developmentally appropriate language so assessments more accurately gauge student learning
• promoting students’ creativity, exploration, critical thinking and problem-solving instead of limiting instruction to de-skilling and dumbing-down test-prep curricula

Assessments that define “high standards,” “accountability,” and “equity” as:

• rich, varied and culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy for all students
• positive and constructive dialogue among students, parents/guardians and staff
• respectful and fair social climate
• safe and healthy schools in which students are held responsible for what they do but are also provided with effective supportive services
Please Join Us!

Working Group meets every 3-4 weeks

Participants decide for themselves what role they want to play in the group

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RESOURCES

California Coalition for Authentic Reform in Education
www.calcare.org

National Center for Fair and Open Testing
www.fairtest.org

Stephen Krashen
www.skkrashen.com

Susan Suohanian
www.susohanian.org

Joint Committee on Testing Practices
www.apa.org/science/jctpweb.html

Performance Assessment
www.performanceassessment.org

The Learning Record
www.fairtest.org/learning_record.html

NCTE (Language Arts)
www.ncte.org/store/books/assessment

Project 2061 (science)
www.project2061.org

Interactive Mathematics Program
www.mathimp.org

1964 Freedom School Curriculum
www.educationanddemocracy.org

Forum for Education and Democracy
www.forumforeducation.org

Civil Rights Movement Veterans
http://crmvet.org

Applied Research Center
www.arc.org/erase/FTCapp_d.html