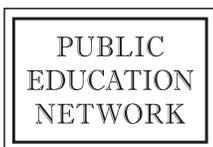


Open to the Public

Speaking Out on "No Child Left Behind"

A Report from 2004 Public Hearings

TEXAS



Public involvement. Public education. Public benefit.

Sponsored by Intercultural Development Research Association
and Public Education Network



Public Education Network

Public Education Network (PEN) is a national organization of local education funds (LEFs) and individuals working to improve public schools and build citizen support for quality public education in low-income communities across the nation. PEN believes an active, vocal constituency is the key to ensuring that every child, in every community, benefits from a quality public education. PEN and its members are building public demand and mobilizing resources for quality public education on behalf of 11.5 million children in more than 1600 school districts in 33 states and the District of Columbia. In 2004, PEN welcomed its first international member, which serves almost 300,000 children in the Philippines.

Our Vision

Every day, in every community, every child in America benefits from a quality public education.

Our Mission

To build public demand and mobilize resources for quality public education for all children through a national constituency of local education funds and individuals.



Hearing Held in San Antonio, Texas

September 28, 2004
3–8 PM
Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center Theater,
San Antonio, TX

Acknowledgements

Hearing Partners:

Intercultural Development Research Association
5835 Callaghan, Suite 350
San Antonio, TX 78228-1190
Phone: 210-444-1710
Fax: 210-444-1714
www.IDRA.org

María “Cuca” Robledo Montecel, executive
director, Intercultural Development Research
Association, San Antonio, TX

Community Relations Council of the Jewish
Federation of San Antonio
12500 NW Military Highway, Suite 200
San Antonio, TX 78231

Judy Lackritz, community relations director

Making Connections – San Antonio
An Initiative of the Annie E. Casey Foundation
2415 West Commerce Street
San Antonio, TX 78207

Victor Azios, project officer

Mexican American Legal Defense
and Educational Fund
140 E. Houston Street, Suite 300
San Antonio, TX 78205

Nina Perales, regional counsel

Texas Latino Education Coalition
<http://www.texans4fairfunding.org>

Texas LULAC State Executive Office
700 Lavaca Street, Suite 510
Austin, TX 78702

Angela Valenzuela, education coordinator

Texas State Conference of NAACP Branches
316 West 12th Street
Austin, TX 78701

Mr. Gary Bledsoe, president

Hearing Officers:

María “Cuca” Robledo Montecel, Intercultural
Development Research Association,
San Antonio, TX

María del Rosario (Rosie) Castro, coordinator,
Student Support Services, Palo Alto College,
San Antonio, TX

Arlinda Marie Arriaga, student, St. Mary’s
University, San Antonio, TX

William Miles, director of policy initiatives and
programs, Public Education Network,
Washington, DC

John Wilkerson, San Antonio Education
Partnership, San Antonio, TX

Witnesses:

Business Community:

Laura Sierra Frame, advertising,
PR and marketing, San Antonio, TX

Tomas F. Molina, real estate broker,
San Diego, Texas

Connie Rocha, local businesswoman,
San Antonio, TX

**Students:**

Ashley Avey, Garza High School, Austin, TX

Brenda Macias, Palo Alto College,
San Antonio, TX

Jose Nava, Hidalgo High School, Pharr, TX

Cristal Ponce, Eastwood Academy
High School, Houston, TX

Alejandra Maggie Teran, South Texas Business
Education and Technology Academy, Pharr, TX

Rocio Valdez, San Antonio, TX

Parents:

Elisa Morales, Midland, TX

Andrea Olvera, Pharr, TX

María Ponce, Houston, TX

Debbie Schultz, Houston, TX

Community Members:

Juan Aguilera, Mexican American School Board
Members Association, San Antonio, TX

Martha Alvarado, Edgewood Family Network,
San Antonio, TX

Luis Figueroa, Mexican American Legal Defense
and Educational Fund, San Antonio, TX

Corrine Sabo, San Antonio, TX

Iris Salinas, United Farm Workers, San Antonio, TX

Public Testimony:

Tom Cummins

Ramona Casas

Amy Averett

Rachel Martinez

Theresa Mayfield

Diana Koppelman

Tanya Alverson

Tim Eubanks

Joan A. Coy

Rose Araujo Murray

Nick Calzoncit

Andrea Greimel

Ethel Minor (who also spoke for Mr. Gary Bledsoe,
State President of NAACP and others)

Christina Talarczyk

Diana Ibañez

Felipe L. Barajas

Shelley Potter

Elisa Diaz

Leno Diaz

Support for the NCLB hearings was provided by:

The Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation

The George Gund Foundation

Open Society Institute

Report Writer:

Anne Lewis, education policy writer

Designer:

Kelly Griffith, kelly@rightbraincreative.net



No Child Left Behind In Texas

As the proving ground for the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act's strategies, Texas would be expected to know more, understand more, and see more of the results anticipated by the law. A public hearing on NCLB co-sponsored by Public Education Network and Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA), in partnership with Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of San Antonio, Making Connections—San Antonio (An Initiative of the Annie E. Casey Foundation), Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Texas Latino Education Coalition, Texas League of United Latin American Citizens, and Texas State Conference of NAACP Branches, held in San Antonio in September 2004, made it obvious that Texas appears to be no further along on meeting the goals of this massive federal legislation than states without its experience. Parents, students, and community members who testified believed in NCLB's mission. They also believed, however, that its mandates often are doing more harm than good. Schools cannot meet the mandates of NCLB as long as they are underfunded, especially those schools expected to improve the most.



The hearing was facilitated by Aurelio M. Montemayor of IDRA and the panel of hearing officers included Arlinda Arriaga, LULAC National Youth President; Rosie Castro, Community Activist; William Miles, Public Education Network; María Robledo Montecel, Intercultural Development Research Association; and John Wilkerson, San Antonio Education Partnership. They listened to three dozen witnesses from rural and urban areas; from business and community leadership; from parents, many speaking in Spanish; and from high school students. These were voices not often heard on major education policy issues, but, ultimately, they are the ones most affected by the policies. While each group had its own perspective on NCLB, some general themes ran through their testimony:

- Schools cannot meet the mandates of NCLB as long as they are underfunded, especially those schools expected to make significant improvement.
- Test-based accountability is skewing the curriculum and instruction for students toward an over-emphasis on test preparation and is especially burdensome for English-language learners.
- Despite assurances of full communication of progress being made and of parent involvement provided in the law, parents still do not have adequate information or access to school decisions.
- Labeling of schools as needing improvement creates a stigma and makes it more difficult to build community support. Transfer options also take away from community cohesion.
- Standards for teachers have been lowered because of the law's option to allow teachers to avoid pedagogical preparation.

“It sounded very good. We were very excited, and we wanted it to happen, but for some reason, it’s not. And so if we’re going to say that we’re not going to leave any child behind, I think that we need to keep our word on it, or hold those accountable who aren’t keeping their responsibility in this.”

–Martha Alvarado, parent,
Edgewood Family Network



The “Why” of the PEN Hearings

Shortly after NCLB was passed in 2001, Public Education Network (PEN) began an intensive examination of the law to determine the rights and privileges it accords to parents and community members. Approximately 10,000 print copies of the resulting publication, *Using NCLB to Improve Student Achievement: An Action Guide for Community and Parent Leaders*, have been requested by organizations throughout the country, with over 40,000 copies downloaded from the PEN website. In addition, a series of NCLB action briefs, developed by PEN in partnership with the National Coalition for Parent Involvement In Education, have been downloaded more than 25,000 times.

With this demand for information on NCLB as background, PEN held a series of state hearings to give the public a structured way to enter the debate on the pros and cons of NCLB and the effects, both positive and negative, the law is having on students, parents, and communities. Nine hearings took place in eight states over a five-month period. Each state hearing was conducted in partnership with local organizations and presided over by a panel of state and national hearing officers.

PEN hopes these forums will broaden the public debate about NCLB and will give policymakers information on how their work encourages or discourages quality education for children. The findings from PEN's NCLB hearings will be transmitted to decisionmakers at the national, state, and local levels to help them determine which aspects of NCLB the public supports, what are the primary concerns, and what mid-course corrections are needed to achieve the most beneficial results for all students.



The Texas Context

A series of court cases to remedy inequities in bilingual education, then in school finance—backed by business leadership calling for reforms—set Texas on a public school improvement agenda that eventually provided the model for *No Child Left Behind*. It uses annual tests, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge (TAKS) in reading and math to determine promotion, remediation, and school standings. These reforms began building in 1993, but the results have been much weaker than anticipated.

As of 2004, about 300 schools in 189 districts failed to make adequate yearly progress for the second straight year on the annual TAKS. According to the Intercultural Development Research Association, the gap between white students and minority students in the state remains totally unacceptable. Almost one in four African-American and Latino students cannot read or compute on grade level, compared to one in 10 white students. The dropout rate for minority students is more than 45 percent.



At the time of the hearing, state officials were faced once again with a mandate from the courts to remedy the underfunding of schools attended by poor and largely minority students. Unless they do so, warned District Judge John Dietz, before mid-century Texas will have a population “larger, poorer, less educated, and more needy than today.”

The PEN-IDRA hearing on NCLB recorded the impatience of the public toward the lack of progress under reforms expected to bring about fundamental improvements in student performance. Some of those who testified were quite knowledgeable about the law; others only knew that little, if any, change was happening in their schools and for their children because of NCLB and the state's reforms in general. A few viewed the state's reforms and NCLB as purely “political.” While the testimony covered many issues, most focused on the three components of the law that PEN considers the most salient: accountability, teacher quality, and building community.



What We Learned About Accountability

The witnesses totally supported accountability. For business leaders, it is in their best interest to have a well-educated population. Tomas Molina, a real estate businessman from sparsely populated San Diego, described a multiplier effect for businesses in rural south Texas. The higher educated the populace, he said, the higher the income level, but when “we have the number of dropouts from schools that we have, there also is a drop off in their incomes and in the business that we are able to generate.”

Similarly, the owner of a private childcare/pre-school education program decried the lack of accountability in the schools. Connie Rocha, who served on the San Antonio school board for 13 years, said that of the 25 fifth and sixth graders in her after-school care program, “sixteen cannot read. We get reports that this *No Child Left Behind* is highly successful, but in some areas it is not doing so well....The idea that you will not go on if you can't read by third grade is not true. It is happening.”

However, the details of the accountability system concerned witnesses. For example, Juan Aguilera, a parent and former school board member, said: “Nobody in their right mind would be against accountability, but you start asking ‘What kind of accountability do we have and who is going to be suffering from it?’” In his opinion, the emphasis on test results and the lack of adequate funding make children pay a price—and a permanent one. When children do not succeed under test-based accountability, “that will have a lasting impact on their overall development,” he said.

Many at the hearing underscored a continuing controversy in Texas communities about the emphasis put on test scores. The criticisms came from all sectors.



Maria Robledo Montecel, IDRA executive director, emphasized that there is a need to separate accountability from high-stakes testing, "In order to hold schools accountable, just like we hold all other public institutions, we do not have to, at the same time, punish children for not learning what they have not been taught."

Said Laura Sierra Frame, a San Antonio businesswoman involved in marketing and advertising, who has observed the lack of essential skills of young interns in her office:

"One of the things that really concerns me about *No Child Left Behind* is the emphasis on spending so much time on teaching testing and preparing for testing instead of allowing students to do more critical analysis and reasoning, to delve more into other subjects and explore them. Coming from the creative field, the critical areas for success of people are being able to think on your feet, being able to respond to situations, and being able to really analyze situations and make a decision based on all of the information that you've been able to gather, not necessarily being able to choose one of four responses.... Being able to pass a test isn't necessarily sufficient to qualify a student as prepared for success in the real business world."

Tanya Alverson, a graduate student in bilingual studies who has been in a cross-section of classrooms found the accountability pressure unhealthy:

"Currently *No Child Left Behind* fosters exactly the opposite of what it wants to accomplish (for minority students)...TAKS compromises the integrity of teachers because they are under pressure to care more about what they have to fulfill to keep a job rather than concentrate on students.... This one assessment is going to decide the future of this kid and where he or she will go....How can we possibly expect this one test to properly evaluate a child? We have such a diverse population, and there must be other means, other ways of assessing them, of helping them grow, of helping them become the people they need to be in our society."

Similarly, Iris Salinas, a member of the United Farm Workers and a community activist from the Rio Grande Valley, condemned the use of one test for all students, "regardless of language, of whether a child was brought up in an English-speaking or a Spanish-speaking home. This is unfair and is culturally biased. This act adversely affects Mexican-American students and students of color." In a broad condemnation of current types of standardized testing, Corrine Sabo, a community advocate, called for a better system:



"Standardized tests do not provide accountability. Tests that measure as little and as poorly as multiple choice tests cannot provide genuine accountability. Instead of being accountable, the parents, community, teachers, students and the school become accountable only to a completely unregulated testing industry. The U.S. is the only economically advanced nation to rely heavily on multiple choice tests. Other nations use performance-based assessment where students are evaluated on the basis of real work like essays, projects, and activities....There are methods of school accountability, which, used together, provide a high level of accountability. One is localized assessments governed by broad state competencies....Two, use school quality reviews. Another is required annual school reports...from a list the state would develop of indicators that every school in every district must report to their respective communities."

Students often are the most candid about policies affecting their everyday school experiences, and the student witnesses in San Antonio proved to be brutally honest. They testified that they felt like "robots" in test preparation sessions and that some of their peers were being left behind because of the results of a single test. One student said her principal apologized for taking time for testing, but also begged the students to show up, promising half a day off for taking TAKS. Rocio Valdez, a graduate student, was especially concerned about the negative effect of traditional testing on recent immigrant students, who take the same tests as others even though they are new to the culture and the language. That was not her only criticism, however:

"The (assessment) strategy for implementing the mandate contradicts research and common sense. If there is one thing in regards to assessment that we know it is that no decision should ever be made regarding a child's future based on a single test...Developmental differences are not considered. Young children are subjected to the stress and fear that these exams bring about. To some of them it is a terrifying experience, and it almost seems like psychological abuse to force kids into this kind of pressure."



The accountability provisions under NCLB also may have unintended consequences. One requirement is a high standard of students graduating on time from high school, but for a student attending an alternative high school in east Austin, this section of the law threatens what is almost a life-saving experience that she and many students have found at Garza High School. They come from schools “that were not helping us achieve our common goal to graduate,” said Ashley Avey, and many move in and out of the school as they struggle to continue, a factor that would make the school fail the graduation standard. She eloquently explained:

“For most, graduating doesn't seem like too daunting of a task, but for those of us who are homeless, gay, lesbian, bisexual, or of transgender, a teen parent, parent-to-be, who have emotional or mental illness, who have one or more parents in prison, one or more parents deceased, who are dealing with or have parents dealing with an addiction or disease, for those of us who do not have English as a first language, or for those of us of lower socio-economic standing, graduating from high school seems to be impossible.... Adequate yearly progress will ruin alternative high schools and send the students back into a four-year box of reading, writing and arithmetic. Education shouldn't be about prioritizing schools and making money, and education shouldn't be about political platforms.”

The deployment of time and resources to meet the reading and math requirements of NCLB is taking away from other needs, Andrea Greimel testified. Gifted education and arts education are being eliminated, and NCLB “is running rough-shod over

dual language programs.” They are being replaced by early-exit transitional programs, “which we all know are the worst thing that we can do for our language minority kids,” she said. The executive director of the Edgewood Family Network in the Edgewood school district of San Antonio, a mother of two sons in the school system, found the promises of NCLB to be hollow. Martha Alvarado was particularly critical of the testing of special education students:

“Testing is a waste of time. I was very disappointed when I found out that my son's needs were not going to be met on what he needed to learn, but that he needed to learn the tricks to pass the test.... So why do we test them? If teachers truly focus on teaching the children what they need to learn in basic education, they would pass any test with flying colors. They wouldn't have to learn the tricks.”

Many witnesses endorsed the reporting of data by sub-groups such as poverty, minority status and special education, but a consequence of such scrutiny of a school's test results can lead to what one hearing officer termed “creative accounting,” as in the inaccurate data reported on test scores and graduation rates in Houston. Some flexibility is needed when reporting by sub-groups, testified Luis Figueroa, legislative staff attorney with the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, but some education officials take advantage of that opportunity, particularly when it comes to graduation rates. The Texas system, he said, “is

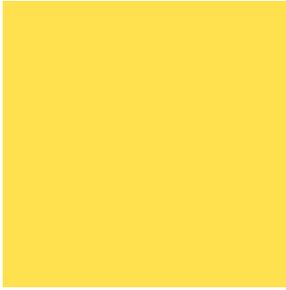


oftentimes manipulated in ways that can hide the real problems.” Students are shifted into programs, for example, where their actual achievement is obscured. There must be an accurate way of measuring the requirements under NCLB, he said “that isn’t reflecting the manipulation of a particular school or a particular district or a particular state, but can still address the problem.”

For Iris Salinas of the Rio Grande Valley, the opportunity to have good data should be a welcome asset for school improvement. If the data are going to be disaggregated by sub-groups, “then let’s do something with the data,” she said. “Let’s not just say: ‘Oh, okay, these Latino kids over here are not doing well, and they’re not going to get any funding unless they improve their scores.’” Instead of “punishing” the low-performing schools and districts, they should get the resources they need, she insisted.

Salinas’ comment actually focused on an area of accountability not meant for students or schools but mentioned frequently by witnesses. It is holding state and federal officials accountable for providing the resources to meet the requirements of NCLB. Full funding of NCLB was an inarguable demand of witnesses. Luis Figueroa of MALDEF called on the Bush Administration and Congress to fully fund the law’s provisions, especially four critically underfunded programs that particularly benefit Latino students (dropout prevention, migrant education, state grants for language acquisition, and parent assistance). The biggest issue faced by those trying to meet the NCLB mandates, said Juan Aguilera, is the unfunded mandates: “If we really want to make this program work, the funds have to be made available. And those funds have to

be...not necessarily contingent upon the wealth of the parent or where that parent lives.” The demand for higher academic standards without providing the resources to meet those standards, commented Tim Eubanks, a community organizer for Austin Voices for Education and Youth, could result “in a cycle of failing schools in urban, low-income neighborhoods.” Ironically, he said, greater numbers of children in these neighborhoods could be left behind.



What We Heard About Teacher Quality

The NCLB definition of a “highly qualified teacher” is one who holds a bachelor’s degree in the subject matter he/she is assigned, and has proper certification from the state. In addition, states establish processes for determining that teachers know the content they are teaching. All teachers of core subjects are to meet the definition by the end of the 2005-06 school year, as were all newly hired teachers in Title I schools as of the 2002-03 year. Parents must be informed that they have a right to teacher quality information in their school, and in Title I schools, parents must be notified if their child has been taught for more than four weeks by an unqualified teacher. According to the Texas Education Agency, the percentage of highly qualified teachers in the state is 95.56 percent (2003-2004 Statewide Highly Qualified Teachers Compliance Report).

Three issues emerged from the testimony at the Texas statewide hearing. One, parents and communities were neither well-informed about this provision of the law nor about their district/school compliance. Two, the state actually lowered teaching standards in order to show high percentages of highly qualified teachers. Third, the NCLB definition of a highly qualified teacher does not address what students and many adults believe is the basic teacher quality problem—certified teachers who are “underperforming” in their classrooms.

The lack of information about the percentages of highly qualified teachers in Texas begins at the top. The Texas Education Agency says it is waiting for further clarification of the definition before it provides data (even though most other states have complied and reported the data to the U.S. Department of Education). Therefore, it is not surprising that the testimony at the Texas state hearing lacked an emphasis on the statute’s teacher quality provisions.



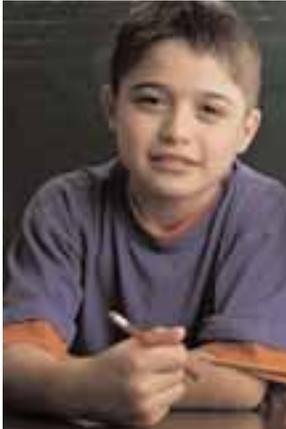
However, people were aware of some of the effects of NCLB on teachers. A retired teacher and principal from San Antonio charged that NCLB was a “dishonest” way of improving education, placing blame on underpaid teachers while education officials use tactics, such as charters, to shirk their responsibilities. One Austin student, who described intense pressure on teachers to spend classroom time on test preparation, said she was “sorry” for the teachers because “they don’t want to teach that way. That’s not teaching.”

It was representatives of teachers’ unions who pointed out that in 2004, the State Board for Educators Certification “dummied down” teacher quality by approving a new option of certification that does not require teachers to have some knowledge of classroom pedagogy. Texas, said Shelley Potter, co-president of the San Antonio Alliance of Teachers and Support Personnel, is “sidestepping the NCLB highly qualified standard for teachers.”

Students were the most direct about questioning what policymakers believe is teacher quality. Almost all of them endorsed provisions to staff all classrooms with qualified teachers, and those in Title I schools especially welcomed the promise of having all qualified teachers. The students, however, commented on the differences in the skills and attitudes of already certified teachers. Alejandra Teran, who attends a magnet school in the Rio Grande Valley, knows from conversations with friends and relatives attending regular schools that their experiences with teachers are very disappointing:

“I like to talk about what I learned in school. And they’re just like, ‘Oh, I did not learn anything at all!’ And I asked them: ‘What kind of teachers are you getting? What are you really learning from them?’ And basically they’re just focused on TAKS. (My friends) feel they are just getting like substitutes everyday.”

Teran testified that the different environment is partially due to the higher salaries teachers in her school receive. The problem of being able to attract good teachers, as NCLB requires, without increasing salary incentives is a major issue for sparsely populated rural areas, as in Tomas Molina’s Duval County. “We can’t come up with the funding needed,” he said, suggesting that classroom teachers in Title I schools receive tax credits or tax exemptions.



What We Learned About Building Community

One of the major premises of NCLB is that if parents are given sufficient information about the performance of their schools, they will know enough to become involved, make demands for high standards, and be able to make informed choices. NCLB mentions parents and parent involvement innumerable times, and there is an assumption that empowered parents can change schools. When schools continue to fail to improve, NCLB provides parents with choices, first, to transfer to a higher performing school; and second, to select supplementary educational services, primarily after-school tutoring, for their children.

The PEN/IDRA hearing made it obvious that parents (and students) are not getting the information they need; that schools have not become more open to parents, especially Hispanic families; and that NCLB may be making it more difficult to build a sense of community and common purpose in public schools.

Many of the students who testified knew little about NCLB, and all said students generally had neither knowledge of it nor of the purpose of all the testing. Jose Nava of Hidalgo High School, who is taking college-level courses at a nearby community college, said that he was ignorant of NCLB, and all his parents knew was that he had to pass tests. "I'm worried," he said, "that parents are not getting enough information," and even though parent meetings are bilingual, "my parents, who don't speak English, get lost in the process."



The extraordinary complexity of NCLB and expanded parental rights somehow have not inspired education officials to design communication strategies that reach parents better than any previous efforts. Even the best kinds of communication often fail to engage parents, said Debbie Schultz of the Parents for Public Schools in Houston. She recommended multi-media approaches, but beyond that, she believed more comprehensive and accurate information should be available to parents. Well-designed, long-term trend reports that identify problems, action steps, and results that are not statistically manipulated would be useful, she said.

Texas has a particular challenge in communicating the information required by NCLB because many schools do not speak the language of their students and parents. "Without our language, we have no culture," explained Andrea Olvera, mother of three children from Colonia Las Milpas in Pharr. "It gives us our identity, and it also gives us self-esteem." But even though educators at her children's school know she doesn't understand English well, they continue to speak to her in English. When they discuss her children's reports, "not only can't they talk about them in Spanish, they can't talk about them in English, and we end up very confused, and we can't help our kids." Martha Alvarado, who helped form the Edgewood Family Network because of poor communication between the schools and parents, commented that "schools don't know how to deal with parents. For some reason, they feel a threat." Parents would become involved if all-out efforts are made to help them be aware of their rights and opportunities, said Diana Ibañez, previous student and concerned parent:

"If you make the community aware of what's going on, especially with their children, I promise you that you will have people involved in *No Child Left Behind* because it's something that concerns all of us as a community."



Few parents had experience with either the transfer option or supplementary education services, but some who testified were wary of these policy initiatives and their potential impact on communities. NCLB's commitment to a quality education for all children may wind up having the opposite effect, according to Tim Eubanks of Austin Voices for Education and Youth. Allowing parents to pull their children out of underperforming schools at the school district's expense "may have the result of inadvertently segregating low-income students and students of color into underperforming schools."

*"Please enforce **No Child Left Behind**. When they are out of compliance, we want to know it, and we want something done about it right away.... Don't just warn, warn, warn. Let's put some teeth into it." –Debbie Schultz, Parents for Public Schools, Houston*

"Together, parents, communities and educators are smart enough to figure out ways in which we can hold public institutions accountable to the public, in which we can press for accountability that does not hurt kids, and in which we can make sure that we have fair funding for the common good."

–Dr. María Robledo Montecel,
IDRA Executive Director,
San Antonio



Public Education Network Online Survey Results

From August 10 through November 17, 2004, Public Education Network, through its GiveKidsGoodSchools.org advocacy website, conducted a survey on various aspects of *No Child Left Behind*. The online survey garnered 12,000 responses from people around the country who joined in this vibrant and vital national debate on public education.

PEN analyzed the data, which was disaggregated by state, to provide a snapshot of knowledge and attitudes about *No Child Left Behind*. The results for Texas are on the following pages.



Demographics (499 survey respondents)

Age

Under 18	0%
18-24	3%
25-34	16%
35-50	44%
50-65	33%
Over 65	4%

Race/Ethnicity

African-American	5%
Asian or Pacific Islander	.5%
Hispanic/Latino/Mexican	10%
Native American or Alaskan Native	1%
White	80%
Other	3.5%

Gender

Female	81%
Male	19%

Education

Less Than High School	1%
High School Grad or GED	4%
Some College	17%
Four-year College Degree or More	78%



Please identify yourself
(check all that apply)

Educator	57%
Elected Official	3%
Parent/Guardian of Current Public School Student	39%
Parent/Guardian of Former Public School Student	23%
Community Activist	17%
Concerned Community Member	49%
Business Person	10%

Did you vote in the last election?
(check all that apply)

School board election	74%
Mayor	63%
State legislator	83%
Governor	86%
US Congress	83%
US President	90%
None of the above	5%

Please identify the type of school(s) your child(ren) attend.
(check all that apply)

Public school	65%
Private school (non-religious)	4%
Parochial or religious school	5%
Home school	2%
Too young to attend school	5%
I do not have children	19%



How They Responded to the Survey Questions

Have you heard of the NCLB Act?

Yes	99%
No	1%

What do you know about NCLB?

Have heard of the law, but know little about its provisions	13%
Know about some provisions of the law	52%
Have an in-depth knowledge of the law	35%

Where have you received most of your information about NCLB? (check all that apply)

Parents	13%
Teachers	39%
Administrators	52%
Other school personnel	27%
Community organizations	15%
Local newspapers	40%
Local television	23%
Radio	14%
National media	39%

Do you believe NCLB is:

A good law and should be continued without change	9%
A law that needs changing	64%
A law that should be repealed	27%

Does NCLB require too much testing, too little, just right?

Too much	71%
Too little	4%
Just right	9%
Don't know	17%

Do you believe that EVERY child in the country will score at grade level or above by the end of the 2013 school year, as required by NCLB?

Yes	2%
No	90%
Unsure	8%



Should states and school districts be required to report test scores on the basis of disability, income, English language proficiency, race/ethnicity?

Yes	53%
No	30%
Unsure	18%

Do you believe that a single test can tell if the entire student body needs academic improvement?

Yes	5%
No	93%
Unsure	2%

Do you believe that a single test can tell if the individual students are performing satisfactorily?

Yes	7%
No	90%
Unsure	3%

Do you believe that every child should have a qualified teacher?

Yes	97%
No	2%
Unsure	2%

Do you believe that, by 2005, every school will meet the NCLB requirement that all teachers must be qualified in the core subjects that they teach?

Yes	16%
No	71%
Unsure	12%

Have you received information from you school district about the qualifications of teachers in your schools?

Yes	44%
No	56%



How would you rate the teachers in your local schools?

No qualified teachers	0%
Some qualified teachers	14%
Many qualified teachers	55%
All qualified teachers	21%
I have no way of judging	10%

Have schools in your community been labeled as “needing improvement” or “failing” because of NCLB?

Yes	59%
No	24%
Unsure	17%

Are you getting enough information about the performance of the schools in your community?

Yes	59%
No	41%

Has NCLB made a difference in any of the following areas? (check all that apply)

Access to information about schools	31%
Student performance	20%
Parental involvement	10%
Teacher quality	16%
None of the above	57%



Have you been asked to become involved in any of the following educational activities related to NCLB? (check all that apply)

Developing state standards	7%
Developing the state test required by NCLB	3%
Developing the state and/or local report cards required by NCLB	4%
Developing the district Title I parent involvement policy	6%
Giving input into the district annual Title I program	9%
Making recommendations for what constitutes a “highly qualified teacher” under NCLB	5%
Participating in the improvement team for schools that were identified as needing improvement under NCLB	13%
None of the above	75%

NLCB gives parents and students attending low-performing schools a choice option (transferring to another public school within the school district).

Do you think this option will help students perform better academically?

Yes	26%
No	74%

NLCB gives parents and students attending low-performing schools a supplemental educational services option (providing tutoring beyond the regular school day to help students meet the standards).

Do you think this option will help students perform better academically?

Yes	75%
No	25%



For More Information . . .

Public Education Network

601 13th Street, NW
Suite 710 South
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202-628-7460
Fax: 202-628-1893
www.publiceducation.org

PEN's advocacy website,
GiveKidsGoodSchools.org:
www.givekidsgoodschools.org

Intercultural Development Research Association

5835 Callaghan, Suite 350
San Antonio, TX 78228-1190
Phone: 210-444-1710
Fax: 210-444-1714
www.IDRA.org

Education Commission of the States

700 Broadway, #1200
Denver, CO 80203-3460
Phone: 303-299-3600
Fax: 303-296-8332
<http://www.ecs.org>

Texas Education Agency

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/>

Texas Governor's Office

<http://www.governor.state.tx.us/>

Texas Legislature

<http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/>

Texas State Government and Services/Texas Online

<http://www.state.tx.us/>

National Conference of State Legislatures

<http://www.ncsl.org>

Denver Office:
7700 East First Place
Denver, CO 80230
Phone: 303-364-7700
Fax: 303-364-7800

Washington Office:
444 North Capitol Street, N.W.
Suite 515
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: 202-624-5400
Fax: 202-737-1069

Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)

One Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20001-1431
Phone: 202-336-7000
Fax: 202-408-8072
<http://www.ccsso.org/>

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202
Phone: 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327)
Fax: 202-401-0689
<http://www.ed.gov>