

Make your Voice Heard

It's testing season in Houston, a time when day-long exercises in silent bubble-filling determine our children's futures. The stakes are high for teachers and schools as well, with threatened jobs cuts and school closures based primarily on testing outcomes. With the new STAAR test, estimates are that testing and test prep encompass at least 30% of instructional time. We want to see less testing and more teaching. In an effort to strengthen the voices of those most affected by the culture of standardized testing – students, parents and teachers – we invite you to respond to our survey on high-stakes testing and to share them with everyone you know. Be heard!

http://bit.ly/cvpe-survey_students

http://bit.ly/cvpe-survey_parents

http://bit.ly/cvpe-survey_teachers



CVPE Quick Facts about Educational Reform

1. STAAR will mean that high school students will test 45-60 days out of 180 school days per year.
2. Pearson Testing will be paid 1/2 billion dollars over the next five years to manage the STAAR tests, money that could be better spent on actual classroom instruction.
3. "Our achievement gap is an opportunity gap. Our education problem is a poverty problem. Test scores don't scream 'bad teaching!' They scream about our nation's systematic neglect of children who live in the wrong zip codes!" (John Kuhn, superintendent of Perrin-Whitt ISD)

Community Voices for Public Education



Website: www.houstoncvpe.org

Community Voices
FOR Public Education!

Community Voices for Public Education (CVPE) is a local group of parents, students, teachers, and community members working together to strengthen Houston's public school system so that all children have access to a high quality public education.



Website: www.houstoncvpe.org
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Community Voices for Public Education

CVPE Mission

We are parents, students, teachers, and community members who believe in the power and promise of public education.

CVPE promotes community-led school reform, in which the voices of students, parents, and teachers are valued.

CVPE Goals

- To reduce high stakes testing and restore real teaching and learning.
- To promote a **democratic and progressive educational reform agenda** focused on a rich curriculum, reduced class size, wraparound services and resources for students, teachers and community.
- To promote public neighborhood schools as a **critical component of a democratic society**.
- To ensure **adequate and equitable funding for schools** so that all schools can provide a full and rich curriculum as well as vital services. School reform must address the negative consequences of living in poverty that affect 22% of American children today.
- To influence educational policy in Houston and beyond through the media, public education, community engagement, advocacy, and the electoral process.

CVPE Platform for 2014

We call on the HISD Board of Trustees to

1. **Support quality neighborhood schools, especially in high poverty neighborhoods.** HISD does harm to the city and to its children by recommending school closures.
2. **Develop a transparent decision-making process.** Include communities as part of the process of revitalizing neighborhood schools before decisions on closing or "restructuring" them are made.
3. **Focus on learning, not testing.** Our students, teachers, and schools are not scores.
4. **Replace the current teacher appraisal model** with one based on multiple measures of teaching practice and student learning. Standardized test scores should be limited to no more than 20% of a teacher's evaluation.



5. **Oppose test-based compensation.** Ensure teacher pay, both base and step, is competitive with surrounding districts.
6. **Set targets for teacher and principal retention.** Support strong leadership and quality instruction in schools while recognizing that high teacher and principal turnover destabilizes schools.
7. **Limit class size.** Reduce class size waivers by at least 50% for 2014-2015.
8. **Ensure that every school has essential personnel to address student needs,** including: nurses, counselors, social workers, and librarians.

CVPE-Sponsored Events



CVPE meetings are held the first Saturday of each month alternating between general and leadership meetings.

Location: Resurrection MCC Church at 2025 W 11th & TC Jester

Time: 3:30 - 5 pm

General meetings

♦ April 5, June 7, Aug 2, Oct 4, Dec 6

Leadership meetings:

♦ May 3, July 12 (2nd Sat), Sept 6, Nov 1

HISD Board meeting: 2nd Thursday of each month: Speak to the Board or come with CVPE wearing your CVPE t-shirt or navy blue.



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