

# CHANGE the narrative

Share positive stories about public schools—your own and others—with your friends, neighbors, colleagues and on social media with the hashtag #CPSuccess. Engage others when discussing school quality with questions like: “What do you mean by [*good/bad/not there yet*] school? What specific things about the school make you think that?” If you’re part of school that’s high-ranked, don’t tout your level rating, explain its flaws. When administrators or politicians brag about scores, consider replies like “If this is what matters to you, then I’m worried about the quality of education my child is getting here.”\*

# WORK with your LSC

Your Local School Council and principal prepare a Continuous Improvement Work Plan every other year that sets goals for your school. Suggest that the work plan include and prioritize goals that aren’t directly related to test scores or the school’s level rating and that are assessed qualitatively (with words) rather than quantitatively (with numbers). Encourage the LSC to appropriate money in ways that support authentic, high-quality learning, rather than ratings chasing. Write and pass a resolution declaring that the school will de-emphasize its level rating in written materials to parents and students.

## SCHOOL RATINGS

# WHAT YOU CAN DO



# PUSH for an elected board

Chicago is the only district in IL with an unelected Board of Ed and the only district with its own test-score-based School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP). The SQRP is not required by any state or federal law, and the Board has the power to modify or end this damaging policy at any time. But since the Board is appointed by the Mayor and not accountable to constituents, influencing the Board to improve policy is difficult. Talk to your state legislators about how the lack of elected representation in our district hurts our schools.

# OPT OUT of testing

Test scores are the raw material that power the engine of privatizing public schools. By opting out of standardized testing, you can throw a wrench in the machine, and send a message that your child’s scores will no longer be used to hurt the public school system. Organized, multi-family, multi-school boycotts of high-stakes testing have the most impact. You can find more info and an adaptable opt out letter at <http://bit.ly/universaloptout>

[www.ilraiseyourhand.org](http://www.ilraiseyourhand.org)

\*The Schools Our Children Deserve. Alfie Kohn