

How can you help to stop merit pay?

Vote against merit pay in your school and join the growing number of schools rejecting incentive pay

Join the Justice Not Just Tests working group (see www.nycore.org for meeting times and locations or email info@nycore.org)

Demand that the UFT dissolve the merit pay program and redirect their efforts to reforms that will make a real difference in the quality of education: reducing class size.

Join NYCoRE's list serv:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NYCoREUpdates/>

Who's paying for merit pay?

The business community has been manufacturing their own educational agenda and buying educational policy. According to the NYCDOE, The Broad Foundation and Robertson Foundation each committed \$5 million to the merit pay initiative in NYC schools. According to Chancellor Klein, the private source of funds was, "crucial in paying for experiments that might have involved huge political battles if they had been paid out of public funds" (The Economist, 11/12/07).

For more information and some quick facts:

55% of the UFT members in your school must vote-in and renew merit pay each year

34 of 239 NYC public schools voted against implementing merit pay

Merit pay is planned to be offered to another 200 schools next year

Go to:

<http://justicenotjusttests.wikispaces.com/Merit+Pay+Articles>
for a short history and news related to merit pay in NYC

MERIT PAY IS NOT THE ANSWER



NYC School Performance Bonus Pay is not the answer to "fixing" our schools.

By accepting **merit pay**...

- We support the idea that teachers **don't work hard** enough and that teachers are the root of the problem behind students' academic failures
- We accept that the most reliable and important measure of a school's success are students' **test scores**
- We encourage **test prep** and discourage a quality education
- We create a **competitive** and **divisive** school environment
- We **disempower** teachers by giving administrators a large say in who gets a bonus

What is merit pay?

Merit pay is the practice of awarding a cash bonus to teachers based on their school's performance on standardized tests.



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Why merit pay is inherently flawed

Our integrity is under attack - Professional expertise of teachers is ignored and undermined

By setting annual benchmarks for school improvement, the DOE undermines the legitimate authority school teachers have in determining their own goals for their school environment, student progress and student performance that are both realistic and specific to the school's unique profile.

The system discourages teachers from applying their specific understanding of the whole child in giving individualized attention each student deserves.

Merit pay implies that teachers aren't working hard enough

By accepting the merit pay scheme, teachers are accepting the idea that we are the root cause of our students academic failure.

By accepting merit pay we are allowing politicians to ignore the other issues that effect our students lives (housing, health care, unemployment, violence, drugs etc) and are putting the blame directly on teachers.

Who decides what's best for your students?

The DOE, not the teachers themselves, sets the benchmarks for improving the school.

"Student Performance" and "Student Progress" are the testing agencies' interpretations of students' test results as compared to those of our "peer groups".

Merit pay implies that test scores define children's progress

When 85% of our school report card grade is calculated using standardized test scores on ELA and Math, the consequence is teachers viewing students in terms of their test performance in these two subjects, to the exclusion of their performance and progress in other, equally important areas for growth.

Student data measured on our current ELA and Math standardized tests are no match for the breadth, depth and validity of teachers' expertise in their own students' individual strengths and weaknesses both inside and outside of school.

Standardized test are norm referenced, meaning there has to be a large number of failing grades in order to fill out the bell curve. Therefore, those students who historically score lower on the tests are always going to be punished, and with merit pay, so will their teachers.

Does this business model work for your students?

This pay system is based on a top-down hierarchical model that many businesses have abandoned in favor of bottom-up, collaborative team-based decision-making.

Profit making, competition and the bottom line are what drive corporate america. They are what drives businesses away from considering the good of society over the good of their share holders. Merit pay brings that model into the classroom by asking teachers to consider their own wallets over good teaching.