

Organizing Against Tests

To the Editor:

As parents, we must often find within ourselves the energy to go an extra mile for our children. This school year in Readington Township's school district, a new progression of norm-referenced standardized testing was introduced. The Terra Nova test and two other tests are being given to children as young as first grade. This new testing is in addition to the state-mandated standardized tests, which include the NJASK, GEPA and HSPA tests. One other thing has happened in Readington Township: A group of parents has come together to go the extra mile for our children.

Our group, some of whom have signed below, believe that norm-referenced standardized testing is inaccurate, that it is pointlessly stressful on students and teachers, that it leads to a horse-race of score comparison, and that it pushes aside more trustworthy forms of assessment such as individualized evaluations of students by teachers and rigorous student portfolio analysis.

We have started a Web site, readingtonparents.org, to detail these

and other issues with the new testing. We are seeking to stop the testing not mandated by the state or, at a minimum, to give parents a choice to "opt-out" of the testing.

School is not a team sport. These are real children with individual requirements. Some need more help than others, but, hopefully, when they are all adults they will have the knowledge, the skills, the strategies and the confidence they need to live their lives in happiness. As parents, we must walk this extra mile for our children. Please visit our Web site and come walk the walk with us.

JOHN PAINTER

Editor,

Readingtonparents.org

Readington Township

Other Readington Township residents endorsing this letter are:

Guy and Barbara Bennet

Carol and Walter Dorf

Betty Ann Fort

Kevin and Heather Ginsberg

Larry and Litty Olejar

Scott and Joanne Sekella

Diane Nelligan

Bonnie McPherson

Kerry D'Aniello