



# Pop Quiz for Parents:

Is your child on track to graduate?

Does your child have effective teachers?

Is your child being prepared for success in college and career?

Are your hard-earned tax dollars being wasted on ineffective programs that do little to help your child learn?

Does your child receive the same resources as other kids around the state?



**The Education Trust—West**

Closing the gaps in opportunity and achievement, pro-K through college.

### About The Education Trust—West

The Education Trust—West is the West Coast partner of the national policy organization, the Education Trust. We believe that all children can achieve at high levels when they are taught to high levels, and our mission is to ensure that all students in California, particularly low-income students and students of color, receive the same opportunities for high academic achievement as other students across the state. To achieve that goal, The Education Trust—West works alongside policymakers, parents, education professionals, and business and community leaders to transform California's schools and colleges into institutions that genuinely serve all students. To learn more about our work, visit [www.edtrustwest.org](http://www.edtrustwest.org).

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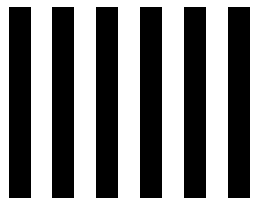
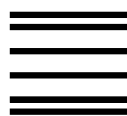
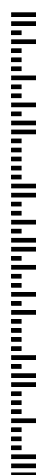
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**ANSWER: The truth is, nobody knows.**

As a parent, you are the best champion for your child's education. But as you struggle to make sense of California's public school system, the critical information you need is out of your reach.

Why? Because there are too many gaps and unanswered questions in the way California collects information about your child and the education he or she is getting – which means California simply cannot tell you what makes schools work well or how to make them better.

In order to be the best advocate for your child, you need access to vital information that is just not available to you right now. And to get it, California's leaders must build a comprehensive education information system that tracks and shares critical information about schools statewide so parents can know the truth.

It's the best way to ensure our children are getting what they need and that we improve how public schools work for all of California's kids.

We would never send a man to the moon in a space capsule if we didn't first have a full grasp of how – and if – it works. How can we in good conscience send our children to school each day without a better understanding and measure of how to most effectively prepare them for the future. That, at least, is not rocket science.

"State Needs to Know What Works in School," Russlynn Ali & David Plank, Sacramento Bee, August 13, 2007

### The Top Things You Need to Know About Your Child's School, But No One Can Tell You

#### Is your child being prepared for success?

*Are they getting and staying in the right classes to prepare them for college and career?*

*Do students at your child's school go on to college and, if so, do they graduate with a degree?*

#### Is your child on track to graduate?

*Do students at your child's school graduate on time?*

*Do they graduate from high school prepared for success in college and the workforce?*

*What's the most effective way to keep your child in school and on track to succeed?*

#### Is your child getting the support he or she needs?

*Does your child have effective teachers?*

*Which classes does your child struggle in most?*

*Is your child getting the best instruction and support to meet his/her needs?*

#### Is your child receiving his/her fair share?

*How much of your hard-earned tax dollars are being wasted on ineffective programs and practices that do little to improve learning for your child?*

*Is the state allocating a fair amount of money and resources to ensure that the students who need more get more?*

### Parents Need to Know

If you answered "no" or "I don't know" to any of these questions, you are not alone. Across California, parents are joining together and demanding the answers we need to improve our children's education.

Knowing the truth is crucial if we are going to ensure our children get the quality education they deserve – and have a chance at the future we want for them. And it's not that expensive. The cost of creating an effective information system that gives you the answers you need is a mere fraction of the state's education budget.

**It's time to build an information system that can tell us what we need to know about our children's schools and how they can serve our children better.**

### Get the Answers

Policymakers are having conversations about building that information system right now. And parents' and students' voices need to be heard. Here are some simple ways you can participate:

- Sign the postcard to California policymakers to demand answers about your child's education.
- Call us for more information or visit our website at [www.ParentsWantAnswers.org](http://www.ParentsWantAnswers.org).
- Tell your local representatives you want to know what is happening in your child's school.
- Talk to the teachers and administrators at your child's school about what they're doing to ensure you and they get access to the information they need to help your child succeed.



**Please fill out this postcard and send it back to us today.**

**We'll deliver them to California's policymakers to show them that parents want answers about their children's education.**

Dear California Policymaker:

As a parent, I need to know if my child is getting the support in school that (s)he needs to succeed. California must build a comprehensive statewide information system now so that teachers, parents and students know what's working in our schools and what we need to do to make schools work better.

Sincerely,

SIGNATURE

PRINT NAME

ADDRESS

E-MAIL

I am a parent with at least one child in a California K-12 school.

MY CHILD(REN) CURRENTLY ATTEND THESE SCHOOL(S).