

## The Issues Explained: No Child Left Behind gets failing mark

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) sets high standards of achievement for K-12 schools, holding each accountable for reporting yearly results of disadvantaged and regular students' standardized test scores. Ultimately, federal funds are lost if a school fails to meet performance objectives and required academic achievement levels. NCLB is misguided because it gives additional funds to schools that meet standards, enhancing their programs, while it takes money away from schools that don't meet them, reducing the resources of low scoring schools. In a time when literacy levels among youth are declining and high school drop-out rates are alarmingly high, NCLB seems a sure way to make matters worse.

One problem with the Act is it turns otherwise thriving schools into failing ones because overall test scores of disadvantaged students tend to decrease. Depleted funding causes schools to trim budgets and limit staff, resulting in lower-functioning schools. Philip Teverow from New York who has three children in the New York Public School system says that due to the No Child Left Behind Act, "children are flocking from failing schools to thriving ones but the thriving schools get no more teaching or physical capacity to handle the added influx." Children are not getting the personal attention they need.

What happens when schools refuse to enroll disadvantaged students because they would lower their overall scores, causing funds to be reduced? Central Bucks East, in Doylestown, Penn. is a blue ribbon, accredited high school, one of the 50 most rigorous in the nation. It was labeled as a failing school under the Act because the NCLB requires schools to include disadvantaged students' test scores in with other students in standard classes. Since this makes the school's scores on state tests look low, C.B. East lost its funding. The disabled students are required under the Act to score just as high as students in standard classes!

Another problem with the act is that every state's tests are different and some have been proven to be easier than others. In 26 states, NCLB forces low-scoring schools to implement a large curve to meet federal standards. The U.S. Department of Education says the statistical

method makes school judgments more fair. Just how fair is it when an accredited, rigorous school comprised of students with varying abilities doesn't use a curve, and gets labeled by the government as a "failing" school?

**M a u r y**  
Elementary School in Virginia has been labeled as a failing school by the government. About 80 percent of its students live in poverty. Principal Kristine Ruscello says math, english and history scores went up significantly since last year. Yet, under the NCLB Act, it's like "the children have made no progress" and the school still will lose federal funding.

Additionally, NCLB allows military recruiters access to students' names, addresses and phone numbers in 22,000 schools nationwide. Public schools are obligated to comply or risk funding, while schools with military service objections are exempted. Isn't reporting personal information clearly defined as a civil rights violation?

NCLB must be abolished. We should help the worst performing schools, holding them accountable for results by requiring an overhaul in curricula and staff improvements. Furthermore, special education students' scores should be evaluated separately to more accurately measure individual achievement. When special education students score low, their school should receive funding assistance. When students in the regular curriculum score low, their school should not be penalized by fund reduction but given funding for improvement.

All Americans are entitled to an equal opportunity education. The NCLB should be repealed before it destroys true educational progress and promotes countless classrooms of students, including the academically challenged, left so far behind they will never catch up.



Nicholas Ballasy

### A Student's View:

## Club sports attract student athletes

Imagine a current Rider student. Before he made Rider the place to continue his education, he had some tough choices to make. As a senior in high school, he was an All-City baseball player who was recruited by many Division II and III schools for baseball. When he looked at Rider, he knew his chance of playing baseball at a Division I program was somewhat slim. Because of this, he had to choose either baseball or academics.

Logically, Rider was the best place for him because of the great business school and the academic scholarship he was offered. By deciding to come here, he gave up the chance of playing baseball at the collegiate level.

This student was me. But I soon came to realize that I was not the only one who had to make this choice.

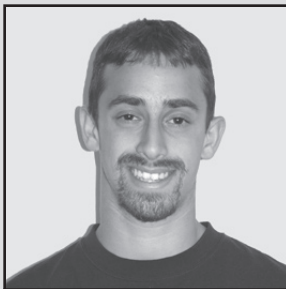
The newly established club baseball team here at Rider will allow all those who made the same choice I made to play baseball at an intercollegiate level. The club will be playing against other such teams as Rutgers, University of Pennsylvania, Princeton, etc. for a total of a 20-game spring schedule.

In my opinion, this is not only good for

Rider students who have a passion for the game, but also for the University itself. In the future, this club could attract students who have to make the choice I made back in 2002. Now, future students in a predicament similar to my own may make their decision based on the fact that we now have a club baseball team. In addition, having a club baseball team will spread the word 'Rider.' We, as a team, will have both the responsibility and honor to represent Rider University in a new way.

This new baseball club can only be positive for both the University itself and the students of Rider. We are anxious to start playing and are looking forward to starting our season on March 25 at Princeton. If you would like further information about the Rider University Baseball Club please go to:

<http://www.leaguelineup.com/rubc>.



Ari Bluestein

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY ...

### FEB. 4, 1789

George Washington is elected as the first president of the United States.

### FEB. 6, 1933

The 20th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is put into effect.

### FEB. 7, 1973

The U.S. Senate votes to form an investigative committee to look into the Watergate break-in.

### FEB. 8, 1828

Jules Verne is born.

### FEB. 9, 1870

The National Weather Service is established.

## 'AQUINAS'

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the remake of "Tomorrowdog."

I go to Aquinas College, a small Catholic oriented school. Yet again, I face a school with no football team, so we all end up worshipping the baseball players.

Everyone is very nice here and I have met a wonderful group that made me feel quite at home. All my classes are great; my communication classes are enjoyable, but deliciously challenging, while my music classes have surprisingly caught me off guard with their exigent courses. The professors are very kind and down to earth, but I have realized they are also very busy since it was hard to get a hold of many of them if I needed assistance—unlike Rider, in which I was able to catch each and every professor I had no matter what the circumstance, even when they were busy.

Keep in mind Daly's while I talk about the food here. At Aquinas the dining hall is called Weges. The salad bar is practically non existent; there is only one bowl that they refill once in a while and is usually empty by the time I get there. The salad dressing options are Ranch, Thousand Island and perhaps vinegar and oil. I'm no food critic, but when I see students cooking my meals, I become quite hesitant before I scoop up that burrito roll...or is it a hotdog? I cannot help but reminisce about the hired chefs and those adorable Italian

women who cooked at Rider as I scrape the uneaten, raw-looking pasta from my plate when I leave the cafeteria here. I also cannot forget those who swiped my cards in the cafeteria before I ate; they always were so nice, smiling all the time and giving me that happy vibe before I went to stuff my face.

So you see, I do not blame myself for missing Rider. Sure, being far away from home is exciting and has its moments, but when I get down to the nitty gritty, Rider had a great deal overall. As students there, you have professors who teach because they love it and a great eating environment because they provide only the best. You can meet so many people with the campus' variety of organizations that is lacking here.

I do not want to completely bash my college considering I do have a lot of respect for it, especially since Aquinas helped me grow. I did learn to manage time on my own, learn a new area and truly grow independently away from which I was familiar.

I will never forget my sophomore year in Michigan no matter what anybody thinks. However, I feel it is time to go home. I looked at Rider everyday and did not see how great it was.

So as you sit there, reading this before class or while you're in your dorm, truly look around and be thankful for where you are. All in all, you belong to an excellent University. Hopefully next year, I will see you there.

Sara Scotto  
Former Rider student