

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



Strong opinions from visiting US educator

A visiting education expert from Arizona State University will voice strong anti-testing opinions in UTAS public lectures in Burnie and a panel discussion in Launceston.

Professor David Berliner, an educational psychologist and emeritus professor, will sound a warning for Australia about what he regards as the scourge of US education for the past decade: 'high-stakes testing'.

This is testing which has serious consequences: failing children moved to different schools, teachers fired, teachers given bonuses.

"It's caused nothing but cheating and gaming of the system to get scores up, he said.

"The US testing system has not worked, it hasn't reduced the gap between upper and lower income groups, it hasn't reduced racism."

Prof. Berliner will voice similarly strident opinions about the recent well-publicised education report from the Grattan Institute: *Catching up: learning from the best school systems in East Asia* by Ben Jensen.

"If you think you can compare your Australian kids with children in Shanghai you're crazy," he said.

"They have different child rearing practices, different families. Do we want to change the way we rear our kids? The fact is that Australian kids are playing sport when Shanghai kids are studying.

"The Shanghai equivalent of the town stopping for the Launceston Cup is police surrounding schools so kids can do their tests in quiet."

- **Burnie lectures:** Wednesday 14 March, 5pm; Thursday 15 March, 5.30pm, Cradle Coast campus;
- **Launceston panel discussion:** *Education: What's good? What's bad? Where Next?* A Q&A with five panellists from the northern education and business communities, 5pm, Lecture Theatre 5, Newnham campus.
- **RSVP necessary** for all sessions, ph. 6226 2521, email UTAS.events@utas.edu.au

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