

From Bella Rosenberg <bellarosenberg@verizon.net>

Sent Wednesday, June 18, 2008 10:12 am

To irotberg@gwu.edu



Subject

Dear Iris,

You may not remember me, but I wanted to contact you to send kudos on your recent Education Week Commentary, "Quick Fixes, Test Scores, and the Global Economy." While I do think there's some value to international achievement comparisons, the decontextualized way they are reported obscures more than it illuminates. They remind me of the NAEP apples-to-oranges comparisons of *average* public and private school comparison – as if they were the same kids! Your piece also reminded me of the great work of the late Richard Yaeger, who broke down a lot of these international comparisons by poverty, single family status and related important demographic factors.

In light of the release of the Economic Policy Institute task force statement (www.boldapproach.org), which makes your same point about the impossibility of substantially raising achievement and reducing gaps without attacking the root causes of disadvantage, I was also pleased about the timing of your article. But as you know, this is an uphill battle. I don't think I'll ever get over how the role of class/poverty in achievement has been completely removed from the table – mostly by the very folks/groups who purport to represent the interests of poor children. My only hope is that the collapse of NCLB might turn this around, but it certainly won't do so by itself.

Anyway, sorry to ramble. I just wanted to send my compliments and best wishes.

Bella