

# Education

DURING 1999, I visited a number of schools on Chicago's south side. Several of these schools included pupils at risk of underachieving in many areas of their lives. Teachers and principals were working hard to give those pupils opportunities to succeed. Breakfast was served at a number of schools. Individual programmes were conducted at 7am in some schools. A system of educational standards, promoted through state-administered testing, was a cornerstone of the system.

Upon leaving one school, my host remarked that the principal was going to be dismissed at the end of the term. Apparently, this principal had not met performance-indicated academic targets. My host asked if such a scenario was possible in New Zealand. I said I doubted it. I would now rethink my response.

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