

Communities Across Wisconsin are Rejecting Random Student Drug Testing: Ineffective and Intrusive

Communities throughout Wisconsin are rejecting the policy of random student drug testing, including the Beloit School District, Janesville School District, Madison School District, Oconomowoc School District, Sheboygan School District, and Wausau School District.

Beloit School District rejected student drug testing:

- “In 1995, the Beloit schools held a public forum on...whether or not to conduct student-athlete drug testing. After an extended dialogue, participants decided that it would be more beneficial to support prevention education rather than spend additional resources on an aggressive enforcement program of drug testing. According to district staff, this was a watershed moment for community support of prevention in the schools,”¹ —Kay Nightingale, AODA Coordinator

Janesville abandoned their random student drug testing policy:

- After five years the Parker and Craig high schools of the Janesville School District abandoned their random drug testing program because it failed to reduce drug use among students despite its \$20,000 annual price tag.²
- “[The program was] a big waste of time and money... In a time when you’re cutting programs and personnel and looking at reducing important services to students, we wanted to look at education or alternatives to drug testing,” —Mike Rundle, Janesville School Board Member, Wisconsin.³
- “[Students] would drink during the weekend but on Monday it was already out of their system,” —Carrie Kulinski, Janesville Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs of Abuse Coordinator, on the failure of student drug testing to detect alcohol.⁴

Madison School District rejects random student drug testing:

- Madison School District public information officer Ken Syke said the district has never used testing and the board has no plans to discuss it.⁵

Oconomowoc rejected random student drug testing:

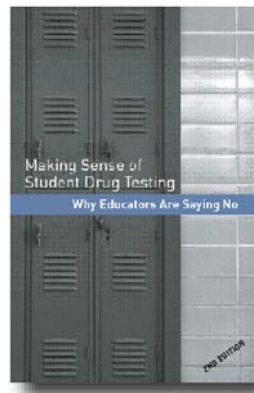
- “We need to encourage students to participate in extracurriculars, not put up barriers,”—Dayle Johnson, former School Board president, Oconomowoc.⁶
- “The concerns of parents [in opposing student drug testing] have ranged from the budgetary issues to losing our focus on education to creating a threatening environment,” —Laura Rowe, president of Band Aids, a parent association of the high school band program in Oconomowoc.⁷
- “We’ve looked at the data, and there’s nothing concrete that says if you take kids out of the classroom and test them that drug use will plummet,” —Mark Herro, Oconomowoc School Board President.⁸
- “When I first heard drug testing, I got a knot in my stomach. The lack of data supporting it combined with my intuition is why I’m voting the way I am,” —Donna Scholl, Oconomowoc School Board on why she voted not to implement drug testing.⁹
- “I have problems with the legal issues it would bring if they tested positive.”—Susan Kay, Oconomowoc School Board Member.¹⁰

DRUG POLICY ALLIANCE

Reason. Compassion. Justice.

Wausau rejected random student drug testing:

- John Waldron, Director of Pupil Services and head of Wasau School District Task Force, stressed two main reasons why the district decided against testing: first, they felt that testing focuses on a group of students already less likely to use drugs, and second, testing does not detect the students' drug of choice and primary substance abuse problem, alcohol.¹¹
- "I stay away from drugs, but the whole thought of someone testing me because I am an athlete keeps my mind focused away from what I am supposed to be doing and more on worrying about the drug test...I think the idea of random drug testing in school is intrusive, and is an abuse of our rights....This is just one more controlling aspect that has been taken too far. Perhaps the athletes should be testing the school board."—Ryan Wendorf, a student athlete at Wausau West High School.¹²
- "Schools are learning institutions, not prisons... As a student at Memorial High, I don't think that drug testing students at school is necessary. Evidence shows that a very low percentage of students being tested come up positive for drug use of any kind," —Heather Holbrook, Eleventh grade student, Eau Claire, WI.¹³



Making Sense of Student Drug Testing: Why Educators Are Saying No

The experts agree, and the evidence is in. Spending extra millions on testing students' urine will only destroy relationships between youth and adults without reducing drug use among young people.

This booklet, revised for 2006, demonstrates the key flaws in random student drug testing and outlines promising alternatives to the invasive and expensive practice. For a downloadable PDF, or to order hardcopies, please visit: www.drugtestingfails.org.

Sheboygan rejected random student drug testing:

- "I am very angry about this... In my opinion, this is doing something to say we are doing something," —Steven Pauls, North High School student, Sheboygan, WI.¹⁴
- "I don't want to send my daughter to North any more. She would be very afraid to pull down her pants and pee in front of an adult she doesn't know." —Liz Campion, parent, after learning of a proposal for random student drug testing in Sheboygan.¹⁵

¹ Kay Nightingale, AODA Coordinator, School District of Beloit. "Case Study 2". Available online: <http://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/pdf/csbeloit.pdf>.

² Laurel Walker, "Drug tests in schools may not be so useful," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, April 22, 2004.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Amanda Kramer, "Janesville Considers Drug Tests," *Wisconsin State Journal*, March 20, 2005.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Amy Rinard, "Coach, Former Board Chief Weigh in on Drug Tests; Extracurricular Activity Targeted," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, May 7, 2003.

⁷ Kay Nolan, "District drops random drug testing plan; Proposal for Oconomowoc schools lacks parents' support," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, October 22, 2003.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Keith Uhlig, "District Task Force Seeks Alternatives to Drug Tests," *Wausau Daily Herald*, April 19, 2005.

¹² Ryan Wendorf, "Drug Testing Unfair to Kids," *Wausau Daily Herald*, March 8, 2005.

¹³ Heather Holbrook, "Random Drug Tests Wrong," *Eau Claire Leader-Telegram*, January 17, 2003.

¹⁴ Martha Shad, "Opinions Split on Proposed Drug Plan," *Sheboygan Press*, August 6, 2003.

¹⁵ Ibid.