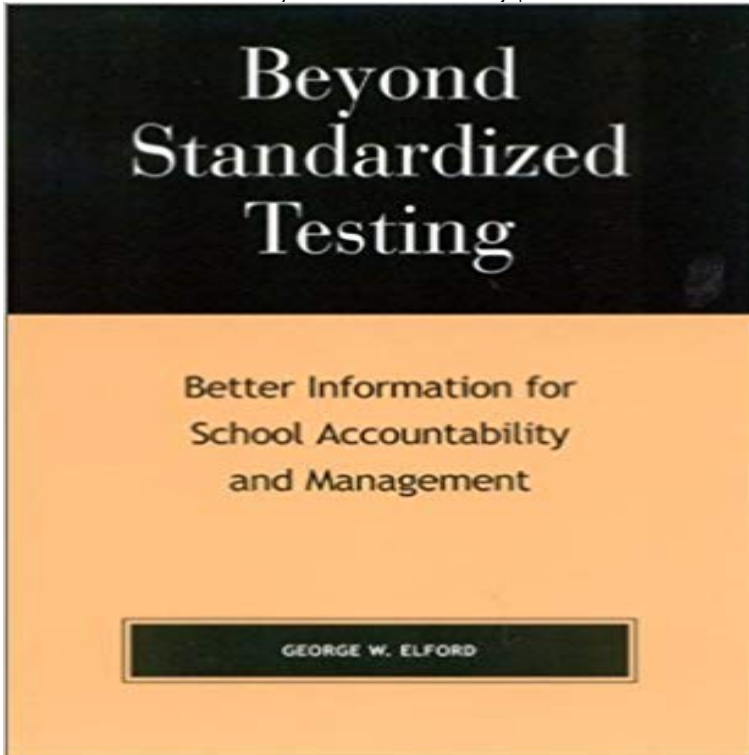


# Beyond Standardized Testing: Better Information for School Accountability and Management



Here's a fresh idea from an experienced testing professional that addresses the problem of the overuse of standardized testing. Elford argues that so-called test-based reform has given rise to the cram curriculum and turned schools into test-prep centers. Overlooked are the classroom teachers, who observe the actual work of students and are the primary and richest source of information on learning. The author lays out a better approach to accountability using standards, teacher judgments, and the tools of the information age. This is not an attack on standardized testing, which supplies the only interpretable information the public has been able to attain. Rather, it recommends comprehensive, computer-based systems that link every teacher and classroom into their school districts data warehouse. This system supports and utilizes the richest source of accountability information, the presently un-tapped knowledge in the minds of teachers. At the heart of the system are standardized teacher judgments related to content and performance standards and supported by standards-based scoring rubrics that are integrated into a computer-based instructional management information system. Among the advantages the system offers are: \*Students are graded on quality of their work, not how they compare with other students. \*The school or school district becomes the primary source of accountability information instead of the state. \*Provides better information for college admissions. \*Provides employers with a record to use that shows the link between school and work. The technology for such a system is ready and waiting. This book defines the urgent need for a computer-based instructional information system to which every teacher is linked and calls upon innovative school leaders to embrace the idea.

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