

RESOLUTION ON HIGH-STAKES TESTING

This resolution is modeled on the resolution passed by more than 360 [Texas school boards](#) as of April 23, 2012. It was written by Advancement Project; Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund; FairTest; Forum for Education and Democracy; MecklenburgACTS; Deborah Meier; NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.; National Education Association; New York Performance Standards Consortium; Tracy Novick; Parents Across America; Parents United for Responsible Education-Chicago; Diane Ravitch; Race to Nowhere; Time Out From Testing; and United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries. We encourage organizations and individuals to publicly endorse it (see below). Organizations should modify it as needed for their local circumstances while also endorsing this national version.

WHEREAS, our nation's future well-being relies on a high-quality public education system that prepares all students for college, careers, citizenship and lifelong learning, and strengthens the nation's social and economic well-being (1); and

WHEREAS, our nation's school systems have been spending growing amounts of time, money and energy on high-stakes standardized testing, in which student performance on standardized tests is used to make major decisions affecting individual students, educators and schools (2); and

WHEREAS, the overreliance on high-stakes standardized testing in state and federal accountability systems is undermining educational quality and equity in U.S. public schools by hampering educators' efforts to focus on the broad range of learning experiences that promote the innovation, creativity, problem solving, collaboration, communication, critical thinking and deep subject-matter knowledge that will allow students to thrive in a democracy and an increasingly global society and economy (3); and

WHEREAS, it is widely recognized that standardized testing is an inadequate and often unreliable measure of both student learning and educator effectiveness (4); and

WHEREAS, the over-emphasis on standardized testing has caused considerable collateral damage in too many schools, including narrowing the curriculum, teaching to the test, reducing love of learning, pushing students out of school, driving excellent teachers out of the profession, and undermining school climate (5); and

WHEREAS, high-stakes standardized testing has negative effects for students from all backgrounds, and especially for low-income students, English language learners, children of color, and those with disabilities (6); and

WHEREAS, the culture and structure of the systems in which students learn must change in order to foster engaging school experiences that promote joy in learning, depth of thought and breadth of knowledge for students (7); therefore be it

RESOLVED that [your organization name] calls on the governor, state legislature and state education boards and administrators to reexamine public school accountability systems in this state, and to develop a system based on multiple forms of assessment which does not require extensive standardized testing, more accurately reflects the broad range of student learning, and is used to support students and improve schools; and

RESOLVED, that [your organization name] calls on the U.S. Congress and Administration to overhaul the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (currently known as the "No Child Left Behind Act"), reduce the testing mandates, promote multiple forms of evidence of student learning and school quality in accountability, and not mandate any fixed role for the use of student test scores in evaluating educators.

► To endorse this resolution, go to <http://timeoutfromtesting.org/nationalresolution>.

SOURCES FOR RESOLUTION ON HIGH-STAKES TESTING

(1) Darling-Hammond, L. 2010. *The Flat World and Education: How America's Commitment to Equity Will Determine Our Future* (New York: Teachers College Press); Zhao, Y. 2011. "Entrepreneurship and Creativity: Where Do They Come From and How Not to Destroy Them," <http://zhaolearning.com/2011/02/26/entrepreneurship-and-creativity-where-do-they-come-from-and-how-not-to-destroy-them>.

(2) Bloom, N. 2012. "We Need Problem Solvers, Not Test Takers," <http://colabradio.mit.edu/we-need-problem-solvers-not-test-takers/>; Ravitch, D. 2010. *The Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice Are Undermining Education* (New York: Basic Books), 107-111.

(3) Cody, A. 2011. "Complex Thinking Is Not Tested and Won't be Taught," http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/living-in-dialogue/2011/07/complex_thinking_is_not_tested.html; Guisbond, L., Neill, M. and Schaeffer, R. 2012. *NCLB's Lost Decade for Educational Progress: What Can We Learn from this Policy Failure?* (Boston: FairTest), <http://www.fairtest.org/NCLB-lost-decade-report-home>; Hinde, E.R. 2008. "Civic Education in the NCLB Era: The Contested Mission of Elementary and Middle Schools," *Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*, Volume 2, Number 1, 77-78; Hout, M. and Elliott, S.W. Editors. 2011. *Incentives and Test-Based Accountability in Education* (Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press), 30, http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12521.

(4) Baker, E. et al. 2009. "Problems with the Use of Student Test Scores to Evaluate Teachers," Economic Policy Institute Briefing Paper, http://epi.3cdn.net/b9667271ee6c154195_t9m6iij8k.pdf; Bauer, F. 2012. "A Conservative Critique of High-Stakes Standardized Testing," http://www.huffingtonpost.com/fred-bauer/a-conservative-critique-o_b_1214995.html; Board on Testing and Assessment, National Research Council. 2009. "Letter Report to the U.S. Department of Education on the Race to the Top Fund," 8, <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/12780.html>; Corcoran, S.P. 2010. "Can Teachers Be Evaluated by Their Students' Test Scores? Should They Be?" Annenberg Institute for School Reform, <http://www.annenberginstitute.org/pdf/valueAddedReport.pdf>; Koretz, D. 2008. *Measuring Up: What Educational Testing Really Tells Us* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press), esp. 43-45; 11-42; 260-66.

(5) Koretz, *Measuring Up*, 235-59; Nichols, S., and Berliner, D. 2007. *Collateral Damage: How High-Stakes Testing Corrupts America's Schools* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Education Press); Pink, D. "The Surprising Science of Motivation," <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rrkrvAUbU9Y>; Parents Across America, "Tying Teacher Salaries to Test Scores Doesn't Work," <http://parentsacrossamerica.org/performancepay/>; Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*, 107-111; Zhao, Y. 2011. "Entrepreneurship and Creativity."

(6) Guisbond et al., *NCLB's Lost Decade*, 2-4; Kohn, A. 2011. "How School Reform Damages Poor Children," http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/post/how-school-reform-damages-poor-children--kohn/2011/04/26/AFTTCbtE_blog.html; Reardon, S. 2011. "The Widening Academic Achievement Gap between the Rich and the Poor: New Evidence and Possible Explanations." In Richard Murnane & Greg Duncan. Editors. *Whither Opportunity? Rising Inequality and the Uncertain Life Chances of Low-Income Children* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation).

(7) Neill, M. 2010. "A Better Way to Evaluate Students and Schools," http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/post/a-better-way-to-evaluate-students-and-schools-2010/12/20/ABzjWuF_blog.html. Zhao, Y. 2011. "Entrepreneurship and Creativity."