

RETHINKING HIGH STAKES TESTING

**NIAGARA REGION PTA
APRIL 10, 2014**

RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS, parents continue to support their local school and are increasingly questioning the direction of education reform (1, 2, 3);

WHEREAS, New York State Assessments Grades 3-8 and their high stakes accountability policies do not improve school performance and narrow the curriculum (4, 5, 6);

WHEREAS, the policy associated with New York State Assessments Grades 3-8 renders assessment data invalid and unreliable for judging student learning (7, 8, 9);

WHEREAS, New York State Assessments Grades 3-8 continue to exacerbate the funding crisis in public education (10, 11, 12);

RESOLVED, that the NYS PTA call on the Board of Regents of the State University of New York to enact a delay on using high-stakes testing for grades 3 through 8, until a comprehensive review is conducted by an independent third party.

RESOLVED, that the NYS PTA call on the Governor of the State of New York, the State Legislature, and the Board of Regents of the State University of New York, to return assessment design and interpretation to educational professionals in Local Education Agencies (LEAs). With the support of the State Education Department, these professionals would be charged with improving the role of assessments in helping students meet state standards using locally developed curricula; and

RESOLVED, that the NYS PTA call on the Governor of the State of New York to restore funding to all New York State public schools, by eliminating the Gap Elimination Adjustment(GEA) and returning funding to public schools.

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

Scientific research demonstrates that high-stakes standardized tests have too much measurement error to be accurate judges of schools and students. Research demonstrates the negative effect of high stakes testing on students and teachers, narrowing the curriculum and lowering the quality of education. These tests do not take into account the underfunding of schools, the socio-economic conditions of communities, families, and students. High stakes testing policy cannot be

permitted to stifle student and educator creativity or impede parents' demand to educate the whole child.

Stakeholders must come to the table to rethink New York State assessment policy, and create one that reliably measures educational progress, increases the quality of education, and reallocates financial resources back to local schools.

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