

TALKING POINTS
for
The New York State Assembly Education Committee Hearing
on the Impact of the Regents Exams
Oct. 15 • 250 Broadway

This Assembly Education Committee Hearing on the Regents Learning Standards and High School Graduation Rates will be critical to the preservation of the excellent education that students receive at schools which use performance assessment - schools that are members of the New York Performance Standards Consortium.

If you plan to testify in person or submit testimony in support of the Consortium schools and multiple assessments, here are critical facts to know:

- Students in New York State must pass 5 high stakes exams to obtain a high school diploma. No other state requires students to pass 5 high stakes tests.
- New York State now ranks 45th in the nation in the percentage of students who graduate from high school. Only Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Tennessee and South Carolina have worse graduation rates.
- Only 51 percent of all New York State students graduate in four years.
- The dropout rate for children of color is drastically higher than that of other groups in New York State. Most African American and Latino youngsters who begin high school in New York State do not graduate. (We will be presenting these numbers at a press conference the day before the hearings and they will be part of testimony at the hearings.)
- The high stakes test prep culture in New York State is forcing schools to move from the rich curriculum that students need, including art, music and electives, to one that focuses mainly on test-taking.
- It costs a tremendous amount of money to develop these standardized high stakes tests. This money could better be spent on lowering class size, improving facilities and providing programs in music, art and electives that students find interesting and motivating.
- The No Child left Behind law is frequently used as an excuse for the high stakes tests in New York State. However, this legislation does **NOT** require that students at any grade level take and pass high stakes tests.
- The dropout rate for Special Needs and English Language learners has risen dramatically with the implementation of the five high stakes Regents exams.

The hearings will be held on October 15
250 Broadway (across from City Hall) • Room 2234
PLEASE ARRIVE BY 8:30 A.M.