



**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **ALL Regents "Deeply Flawed" -- Simply Lowering Passing Grade "Immoral"--**

The problems with the Regents Math A exam are inherent in ALL Regents exams, according to five reports issued today by more than 50 expert panelists who actually took and evaluated four additional tests. And simply lowering the passing grade is flawed and unfair.

*"The idea that you would prevent kids from graduating based on a flawed instrument is immoral. Whether it's 55, 65 or 85, these tests are flawed. Focusing on the passing score is a political response not an educational response. Get rid of these tests - we have evidence they are deeply flawed." -- Ann Cook, co-founder of Time Out From Testing, a statewide coalition of parent, educator, business and community organizations calling on the legislature to ensure a time out from high-stakes tests.*

*"The science tests are not about science -- they are about reading comprehension, memorization, and performing pre-rehearsed tasks in an artificial environment. The product of this system -- the students I see at Columbia -- demonstrate a high degree of performance on sterile, regurgitative exercises coupled with an inability to think." -- David Helfand, Chair of the Department of Astronomy at Columbia, who sat on the panel that reviewed the Living Environment Regents exam.*

*"A student's score on The Regents Test in English indicates nothing whatsoever about that student's ability to do well in a Columbia English course. Indeed, the more sensitive and well-read the test-taker, the greater his or her potential to flunk this test! What this test does reward is test-taking 'readiness,' i.e. the will to play a game that has nothing to do with literature or with literary learning." -- Robert O'Meally, Zora Neale Hurston Professor of Literature at Columbia, who sat on the panel reviewing the English Language Arts exam.*

Anticipating today's release of the State Education Commissioner's review of the 2003 Math A exam, education experts have made public reports from five independent Regents exam review panels, which raise serious objections to the mandatory Regents exams in four additional

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disciplines. The panels sharply criticize the quality of the tests and point out that teaching to them will inhibit quality learning.

While the official State Education Department report focuses solely on the Math A exam, independent Regents exam review panels conducted comprehensive reviews of the Regents exams in four additional disciplines: English Language Arts (ELA), Global Studies and Geography, U.S. History and Living Environment. The panels consisted of distinguished educators, college admissions officers, state legislative staff, and journalists.

Bonnie Anderson, Broeklundian Professor of History at Brooklyn College, and a member of the faculty at the CUNY Graduate Center, was a member of the panel evaluating the Global and American History Regents exam, which concluded that *“The multiple-choice portion of the Global exam was a peculiar mix of the trivial, the self-evident, and the historically inaccurate.”*

The more than 50 panelists also criticized the tests as a measure of student preparedness for college, saying there is very little predictive validity between doing well on these tests and doing well in college.

Additionally, the panels determined that high stakes exit requirements create a crisis-laden educational environment and unfairly jeopardizes students’ futures.

Jennifer L. Morgan, Assistant Professor of History and Women’s Studies, Rutgers, was a member of a panel that reviewed the Global Studies and Geography exam and concluded that *“the Global Studies Regents is just another reading comprehension test, rather than an examination of students’ historical knowledge or ability to handle historical concepts.”*

The full reports are available at [www.douglasgould.com/timeoutfromtesting](http://www.douglasgould.com/timeoutfromtesting)

**Interviews with any of the experts quoted above can be arranged by contacting Jennifer McDonnell, 917-734-0813 or Ivette Zamora, 914-833-7093.**

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