

Last year 220,000 children opted out of state tests, making headlines and prompting politicians to change their rhetoric on testing.

Opt Out in 2016 to ensure *real* policy changes.

HEADLINE: *Moratorium Temporarily Suspends the Use of State Tests in Teacher Evaluation*

THE FINE PRINT: State officials, after admitting that the state tests are flawed and need to be overhauled, announced that they will temporarily suspend using the state test scores to evaluate teachers. Students are still expected to take the state tests during this “moratorium” but starting in 2016-2017 will be given an *additional* standardized test for the purpose of evaluating teachers.¹

This transition period will run until the spring of 2019, at which point the state is required to roll out new tests to be used to formulate a teacher’s annual rating. (State standards may be revised over the same time period.) During this transition, teachers can still be fired and denied tenure based on student test scores. And struggling schools may still be penalized for showing low-growth on state test scores. Once this moratorium ends, scores on the (new) state tests will once again constitute 50% of teacher evaluations, as is required by the Education Transformation Act of 2015.²

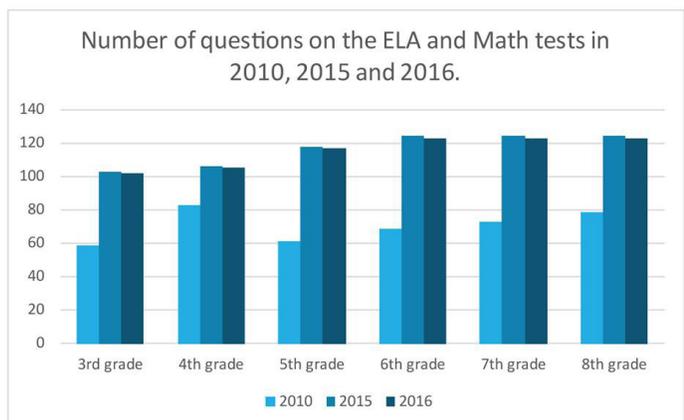
HEADLINE: *NYSED Replaces Pearson with Questar*

THE FINE PRINT: The Spring 2016 tests are the same state assessments used in the past and created by Pearson. Questar is merely printing and shipping them this year. Any new test questions developed by Questar will need to be field-tested in 2017, meaning that they couldn’t begin to appear on tests any sooner than 2018.³

HEADLINE: *The Tests are Now Untimed and Shorter*

THE FINE PRINT: The number of test questions has been reduced slightly and the tests are now untimed. But the tests are still very long and, as they have in past, will continue to disrupt learning for at least a full month at NYC schools (two weeks of testing, plus the requirement that every school send teachers to grade the tests for two weeks, plus prep).

In 2010, the 5th grade exams had a total of 61 questions. The 5th grade exams in the spring of 2016 will have 117 questions (an increase of 92 percent).



¹ www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-recommendations-common-core-task-force

² m.timesunion.com/local/article/Regents-plan-new-timeline-for-revising-Common-Core-6847525.php, www.engageny.org/resource/appr-3012-d, www.newsday.com/long-island/education/common-core-opt-out-movement-plans-to-forge-ahead-for-spring-2016-testing-1.11265805

³ Ibid.