

# Less Testing = More Time For Teaching and Learning



**Testing takes time from learning. Restore the approach known as “grade-span” testing—once in elementary, once in middle, and once in high school—to give educators more time to teach and connect one-on-one with students, especially those most in need of extra help.**

## TOO MUCH TESTING

- ▶ No Child Left Behind **more than doubled** the number of high-stakes tests in reading and math—in these subjects alone, K-12 students now take 14 federally-mandated tests, compared to 6 before enactment of the law.
- ▶ **More than a month** of instructional time can be lost to test preparation and administration in a single year. (Source: [Testing More, Teaching Less](#), American Federation of Teachers, 2013)
- ▶ Mounting opposition among **parents and communities** has led to rollbacks in testing requirements in more than a dozen states. (Source: [Testing Reform Victories: The First Wave](#), Fairtest, 2014)
- ▶ **77 percent** said increased testing has either hurt or made no difference in improving schools in the [2013 PDK/Gallup poll](#) of public attitudes toward public education; **68 percent** opposed using student test results in teacher evaluations in the [2014 PDK/Gallup poll](#).

## TESTS ARE MISUSED

- ▶ What students are being taught and what is being tested are often **not aligned**, especially since states are still developing curricula to match new, higher standards.
- ▶ “[P]olicymakers and educators **do not yet know** how to use test-based incentives to consistently generate positive effects on achievement and to improve education,” the National Research Council concluded after analyzing decades of data. (Source: [Incentives and Test-based Accountability in Education](#), 2011)
- ▶ Standardized-testing regimes are costing the states **\$1.7 billion annually** (Source: [Strength in Numbers: State Spending on K-12 Assessments Systems](#), Brookings Institution, 2012)—money that would be better spent on proven strategies like high-quality early childhood education, after-school programs, good nutrition, health care, and community support services.

## EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

- ▶ The federal government must uphold its responsibility to ensure **equal educational opportunity**—the original focus of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
- ▶ A child’s chances for success should not depend on **living in the right zip code**.
- ▶ **Less federally-mandated testing** would free up time and resources, diminish “teaching to the test,” and allow educators to focus on what is most important: instilling a love of learning in their students.