

SCARSDALE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT RESOLUTION ON HIGH-STAKES TESTING

WHEREAS, the Scarsdale Union Free School District joins Westchester-Putnam School Boards Association and its regional districts by participating in the public conversation on high-stakes testing and supporting local assessments; and

WHEREAS, our nation's and New York State's future well-being relies on a high-quality public education system that prepares all students for college, careers, citizenship and lifelong learning, and strengthens the nation's social and economic well-being; and

WHEREAS, our nation's school systems have been spending growing amounts of time, money and energy on high-stakes standardized testing, in which student performance on standardized tests is used to make major decisions affecting individual students, educators and schools; and

WHEREAS, the overreliance on high-stakes standardized testing in state and federal accountability systems is undermining educational quality and equity in U.S. public schools by hampering educators' efforts to focus on the broad range of learning experiences that promote the innovation, creativity, problem solving, collaboration, communication, critical thinking and deep subject-matter knowledge that will allow students to thrive in a democracy and an increasingly global society and economy; and

WHEREAS, it is widely recognized that standardized testing is an inadequate and often unreliable measure of both student learning and educator effectiveness; and

WHEREAS, the over-emphasis on standardized testing has caused considerable collateral damage in too many schools, including narrowing the curriculum, teaching to the test, reducing love of learning, pushing students out of school, driving excellent teachers out of the profession, and undermining school climate; and

WHEREAS, high-stakes standardized testing has negative effects for students from all backgrounds, and especially for low-income students, English language learners, children of color, and those with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the culture and structure of the systems in which students learn must change in order to foster engaging school experiences that promote joy in learning, depth of thought and breadth of knowledge for students; therefore be it

RESOLVED that Scarsdale Union Free school District calls on Governor Cuomo, Commissioner King, the State legislature, and the Board of Regents to reexamine public school accountability systems in this state, including the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR), and to develop a system based on multiple forms of assessment which does not require extensive standardized testing, more accurately reflects the broad range of student learning, and is used to support students and improve schools; and

RESOLVED, that Scarsdale Union Free school District calls on the U.S. Congress and Administration to reduce the testing mandates and promote multiple forms of evidence of student learning and school quality in accountability.

Adopted by Board of Education: January 22, 2013