

# High stakes testing: a platform statement from the Committee to Elect **Barbara Madeloni**

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**We** call for an end to high stakes testing as a graduation requirement, as a measure of teacher effectiveness, as a measure of student success, or of schools and their value.

Human relationships are at the center of education. Education workers have rich knowledge of the nuances, complexities and uncertainties of our work. Teachers, students, parents and administrators make decisions every day about how to attend to the whole child, how to both support and challenge students, and how to address the myriad personal and social needs that must be met in order for our young people to be ready to engage learning with enthusiasm and curiosity. This work cannot be reduced to a data point or test score. Test scores are not a means of communicating with parents, students or the broader public about our work.

Further, the focus on test scores distracts us from the work of ending economic and racial injustice. Test scores do not reflect the work of the classroom as much as the conditions of students' lives. Testing draws money away from the people power that fuels meaningful education and deposits it in the hands of testing and curriculum companies.

We should be putting resources into fighting the poverty that denies our students and their families basic needs and comforts. We should be demanding more equitable funding for our schools so that zip codes do not determine the quality of resources in our classrooms. And we should be talking with teachers, parents, students-everyone in our communities-about what teaching and learning in a democracy looks like, about how to combat inequality, and how to grow communities in which questioning, creativity, imagination, and empathy are deeply a part of who we are.

Rather than testing, we should put our time and money into:

- 1)** *Building schools where teachers and other education workers have time during the day to plan, to meet with parents and students, and to share and grow knowledge about their practice.*
  - 2)** *Engaging parents and students more directly in discussions about our work including our goals and the challenges of meeting these goals.*
  - 3)** *Supporting libraries, smaller class sizes, the arts and physical education.*
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