

## What are the consequences of the Department of Education's emphasis on tests over teaching?

Choose one:

- (A) Diminished roles for teachers and parents
- (B) Dumbed-down curriculum<sup>2</sup>
- (C) Increased dropouts and lower graduation rates<sup>3</sup>
- (D) Schools fail and then can be privatized<sup>4</sup>
- (E) Tightening mayoral control over public schools
- (F) Enormous revenues for test prep companies<sup>5</sup>
- (G) High-paying jobs for lawyers, MBA's, policy analysts, and financial consultants<sup>6</sup>
- (H) All of the above

(See panel 5 for footnotes)

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## Footnotes:

- 1 NYCDOE High School Formula evaluation:  
SE: *School Environment*  
SP1: *Student Performance*  
SP2: *Student Progress*  
EC: *Extra Credit*  
CH: *City Horizon*  
PH: *Peer Horizon*  
Elementary and Middle School formulae are more complicated.
- 2 Richard S. Elmore, Professor of Educational Leadership, Harvard University, has documented how a focus on test prep actually deprives lower-performing students of an education.  
Harvard Education Letter, Nov/Dec 2006
- 3 Education Week, "Exit Exams Found To Depress H.S. Graduation Rates," June 21, 2006
- 4 Chancellor Joel Klein recently appointed Chris Cerf, the former president of Edison Schools Inc., a private for-profit company with a history of taking over public schools, as a deputy chancellor — "perhaps the boldest move yet in the Bloomberg administration's effort to increase the role of the private sector in managing city public schools." In another move towards privatization, the DOE granted *Alvarez & Marsal*, a consulting firm, a no-bid \$15.8 contract to revamp the DOE's financial plan.  
New York Times, December 22, 2006
- 5 Bloomberg News (November 2006) reported that in 2005, the test prep industry received \$1.7 billion, even more than the \$1.1 billion received by the test industry.
- 6 New York Daily News, August 27, 2006

Students can be held to high standards and challenged to do their best without being subjected to excessive testing.

We need  
a time out from excessive testing!

### Contact:

<http://www.timeoutfromtesting.org/>  
917-679-8343

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## SCHOOL'S IN SESSION

Do You  
Know  
What Your  
Children  
Are Doing?

<http://www.timeoutfromtesting.org/>

**My children SHOULD be:**

- (A)** Reading wonderful books and writing thoughtful papers
- (B)** Solving real life math problems and conducting science experiments
- (C)** Developing their talents in the creative arts
- (D)** Discussing important issues and becoming engaged citizens
- (E)** Turning into lifelong learners

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**My children SHOULDN'T be:**

- (A)** Taking so many tests that real learning is undermined
- (B)** Viewing themselves as passive learners
- (C)** Taking so many practice tests ("interim assessments") that art, music, social studies, and science are neglected
- (D)** Prepping for tests instead of engaging in challenging learning experiences
- (E)** Turning into test scores

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**To find out useful information about your children and their schools, what should you do?**

Choose one:

- (A)** Talk to your children
- (B)** Talk to their teachers
- (C)** Look at your children's assignments and work
- (D)** Use the Department of Education's formula<sup>1</sup>:

$$\text{School Grade (on scale A - F)} = \underbrace{\frac{a}{100} \left( \frac{\frac{1}{3}CH + \frac{2}{3}PH}{3} \right) \left( \frac{3}{20} \right)}_{SE} + \underbrace{\frac{5b}{100} \left( \frac{\frac{1}{3}CH + \frac{2}{3}PH}{15} \right) \left( \frac{3}{10} \right)}_{SP^1} + \underbrace{\frac{4c}{100} \left( \frac{\frac{1}{3}CH + \frac{2}{3}PH}{12} \right) + \frac{10d}{100} \left( \frac{\frac{1}{3}CH + \frac{2}{3}PH}{30} \right) \left( \frac{11}{20} \right)}_{SP^2} + \underbrace{\phantom{\frac{4c}{100} \left( \frac{\frac{1}{3}CH + \frac{2}{3}PH}{12} \right) + \frac{10d}{100} \left( \frac{\frac{1}{3}CH + \frac{2}{3}PH}{30} \right) \left( \frac{11}{20} \right)}}_{EC} \phantom{+} \\ (0.000, 0.015, 0.030, \dots, 0.150)$$

The Department of Education insists **(D)** is the correct choice.

Which choices make sense to you?

<sup>1</sup> Actual formula used to rate high schools. For an explanation, see panel 5

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