

Amrein A., Berliner D, (2003). The Effects of High- Stakes Testing on Students Motivation and Learning. *Educational Leadership*, (32-38).

Being an educator in New York City, in this day and age, means knowing that you must implement test preparation into your curriculum. Although it's become second nature in many classrooms to focus on areas that are included in high stakes tests, it always begs the question if limiting the content then limits the education the students receive.

Testing is an important part of education; a method of gauging students abilities and weaknesses. But in a state of mandated high stakes testing the benefits begin to decrease. The article "The Effects of High-Stakes Testing on Students Motivation and Learning" by Audrey Amrein and David Berliner explores the pros and cons of the system. After much research comparing statistics between states that have high stakes testing and states that do not, they come to the conclusion "that such tests actually decrease student motivation and increase the proportion of students that leave school early." Schools with high school graduation exams have increased in dropout rates in large amounts.

Assuming that implementing high stakes testing would motivate students and in turn raise their achievement was a mistake. Legislators should accept defeat and do away with the system before the whole nation's education system severely plummets. As the article says, many schools begin cutting out programs such as art, music, and physical education, in order to accommodate the time pressures of test preparation. This places today's students at a large disadvantage since they are then limited in their own abilities to learn, rather than given the chance to explore their strengths and likes. They are being deprived of a well rounded education, and are being set up

for failure. If the federal legislators want to improve our education system, they must look in the classrooms to see the effect of their choices on the students, instead of simply calculating numbers.

It is evident that high stakes testing compromises students' motivation and learning, ultimately jeopardizing the value of the education they receive "driving more students and teachers out of our schools, and becoming less educated, less learned people." It is time for a change to regain control of our classrooms and our children's education and future.