

## **Resolution #22**

### **More Teaching, Less Testing – End Over-Testing in Schools**

#### **WHEREAS:**

All children deserve a rich, meaningful public education that prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and challenges that await them as contributing members of a democratic society and a global economy; and

#### **WHEREAS:**

Educators are called to their profession by a singular purpose: an unwavering, unequivocal commitment to their students' learning, well-being, and potential – educators do their jobs because they want to prepare students for future success; and

Whereas the deeper learning they strive for has too often become only an aspiration—not accompanied by the supports needed to make implementation a reality—and eclipsed by the misuse and overuse of standardized assessments required by policymakers fixated on accountability above all else; and

#### **WHEREAS:**

The coupling of state standards and assessments to measure and report student and school performance under the No Child Left Behind Act narrowed curricula across the country; and

#### **WHEREAS:**

The current test-and-punish accountability system has squeezed out vital parts of the curriculum that are not subjected to accountability testing, sacrificed student learning time to testing and test preparation, and forced teachers—particularly those teaching our most vulnerable students—to focus their attention on students achieving just below the passing score; and

**WHEREAS:**

Despite a laudatory goal of shining the light on student needs, this emphasis on tests and accountability took us in another direction, away from valuing the essential skills of persistence, critical thinking and collaboration; and

**WHEREAS:**

Even under the heavy weight of federal and state testing requirements, schools at all levels have implemented best practices in education – such as interdisciplinary, inquiry and project-based learning and Career and Technical Education programs across a wide range of subjects and skills – that support the whole child; there is a better way!; and

**WHEREAS:**

In the words of Congressman Jamaal Bowman – D-NY, “We need a revolution in our public schools that unlocks the brilliance of all our kids and cultivates a generation equipped to take on 21st century challenges.”

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

That the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists call on state and federal policymakers to affirm our commitment to a public education system that reflects the diversity of children’s experiences and abilities, allows students to demonstrate what they know and are able to do throughout a child’s academic career, and ensure educational excellence and equity for every student; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That CBTU will support legislation, such as Congressman Jamaal Bowman’s D-NY “More Teaching Less Testing Act”, that promotes ways to improve assessment and accountability and allows states more flexibility to administer and design assessment systems that support high quality teaching and learning including the elimination of the current federally mandated testing schedule

for summative assessments in math, reading & language arts, and science, and instead establish options such as grade-span testing, representative sampling, and combination testing; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That CBTU will continue to work with its members and their state and national affiliates to mobilize members and support legislators who stand for an education system that fosters joy, collaboration, critical thinking, problem solving and creativity in every classroom; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That CBTU will support policies that prohibit the use of state and federally mandated assessments as the sole or dominant factor for retention policies, program placement, high school graduation decisions, teacher evaluations, or school rating systems; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:**

That CBTU remains committed to ending the overemphasis on high-stakes testing that has harmed children's learning experiences for far too long.

**Submitted by: CBTU Executive Council**