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"When implementing a high stakes testing model, the real casualties are the students. I am currently pursuing my MAT to become a teacher, and my professors have made clear the best practices for teaching, all of which have to do with students building knowledge together and creating models of how the world works around them. There are no year-end tests that can test this goal effectively, so instead they test students on fact recall, which serves no one. Teachers are therefore forced to teach using methods that do not benefit students, but which instead prepare them for the tests. I am a resident teacher, and watch high school students cry nearly daily from the stress of testing, while they become ever more ingrained to the testing system. It's saddening to watch them become excellent test takers, but poor thinkers.

There is space in schools to raise standards and demand students learn more without implementing high stakes testing that forces teachers to prepare students for simple fact-recall at the end of a school year. If a student can remember a specific fact taught in September of that school year it's a wonderful thing, but it is not indicative of whether or not that student has successfully met the best possible learning goals for that class. Instead of giving Questar millions of dollars to test our students with computers, use that money to hire more New Yorkers to assess students on task or performance based assessments that will truly tell teachers whether their students are learning and ready to take on hard tasks in society."