[YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS]

[DATE]

[RECIPIENT NAME AND ADDRESS]

Dear [RECIPIENT],

We are writing to you as passionate educators who care greatly for our students' development and success. In light of the growing movement for Black lives, direct actions need to be taken to ensure our students' well-being and education. We demand that for-profit standardized testing be abolished or revised as it exists today.

Standardized testing has been weaponized against our students for far too long. The use of standardized testing continues to harm our most marginalized students. Students of color, low-income students, and students who are classified as English Language Learners or Special Education, tend to score significantly lower than their middle-class white peers. Due to their lower scores, these students are tested more and spend less time on non-test related subjects, which limit their access to a multicultural, anti-racist curriculum and student-centered instruction. Additionally, standardized tests are ultimately flawed in design and are centered around a white Euro-centric knowledge base. They often do not measure what students know, but rather reflect their out of school experiences. Students have shown that student performance can be measured based on their zip code with a high degree of accuracy.

The culmination of educational policy over the past two decades, starting with President Bush's No Child Left Behind and continued by President Obama's Race to the Top, has led standardized testing to be the ultimate determining factor in everything from school funding, teacher evaluation and retention, to school closures. This impacts our schools that have a majority population of Black and brown students. Studies have shown that equally, low performing schools are more likely to close if the majority population is Black and brown. Test scores are also used to threaten teachers and administrators with termination unfairly.

In addition to aiding in the closure of schools, standardized testing is a big business. The National Board of Education on Testing and Public Policy at Boston College places the testing market's value as between $400 million and $700 million. In addition to the companies that produce the tests, the test prep industry is also highly profitable. In 2015, parents spent $13.1 billion on test preparation, tutoring, and counseling. Lower-income families cannot invest in test prep, tutors, or counseling at the same level, which is inherently inequitable.

On average, our students test as many as eight times a year, beginning in kindergarten. Countries all over the world do not test nearly as much and continually outscore the United States. Through standardized testing, we have decimated the teaching profession through burnout and weaponized evaluation. We have segregated our Black and brown students back to the 1950s. The educational policies of the past two decades have failed our Black and brown students. It is time for real educational reform.

We demand that the structure of standardized testing, as it exists today, be abolished or revised. These demands are relevant to all public school districts within our country, and we, as local educators, hope that you will be the governing body that takes the lead in instituting these changes.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]