

Could You Pass New York's Common Core Algebra Test?

Concerned that students were coming to college ill-prepared, the New York Board of Regents [made the state's algebra test harder](#), and aligned it with the Common Core.

The percentage of students who passed dropped from 72 percent to 63 percent.

At the same time, the minimum passing score is expected to increase in the near future.

Faced with a larger number of students who will need to retake exams (some repeatedly) if they hope to graduate, the Board of Regents is "now rethinking" the higher standards, and considering lowering the bar once again.

Today, the *New York Times* has provided an interactive sample of 5 questions from this year's exam. Here are two of them below:

- 1 Rowan has \$50 in a savings jar and is putting in \$5 every week. Jonah has \$10 in his own jar and is putting in \$15 every week. Each of them plots his progress on a graph with time on the horizontal axis and amount in the jar on the vertical axis. Which statement about their graphs is true?

Jonah's graph always lies above Rowan's.

Jonah's graph has a steeper slope than Rowan's.

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- 3 Last week, a candle store received \$355.60 for selling 20 candles. Small candles sell for \$10.98 and large candles sell for \$27.98. How many large candles did the store sell?

6

8

10

12

You can find the other three questions [here](#), and the entire exam and answer key [here](#).

Should students who plan to go to college be able to pass this test? Is it worth devoting extra time and resources to helping students meet its standards, rather than passing the burden on to colleges in the form of remedial courses? Or, do you think that too much emphasis is being placed on one math test or, for that matter, [math in general](#)?