

Today's Lead: New Test Scores

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Mayor Michael Bloomberg's legacy on education is facing new scrutiny as the state prepares to release new test scores later today that are expected to be significantly lower than in previous years.

Over the weekend, the city acknowledged there would be a dramatic decline in this year's test scores due to new Common Core standard — with Schools Chancellor Dennis Walcott [predicting a 30 percent drop](#).

Bloomberg has pinned his reputation, in part, on his success at being the education mayor.

Democratic candidates hoping to be the next mayor have taken the release of the new test scores as an opportunity to criticize Bloomberg.

"The current administration has forced teachers to implement new standards without giving them the curriculum they need to do it successfully," said Bill Thompson, a former Board of Education president who has been endorsed by the United Federation of Teachers.

Bill de Blasio, the public advocate, called the expected test results a "major wake-up call." Comptroller John Liu [said on Twitter that the scores would show](#) that Bloomberg has been "cooking the books" for the last decade.

"The days of the mayor dislocating his shoulder patting himself on the back should be over," Anthony Weiner told reporters at an education event yesterday.

Christine Quinn, the City Council speaker and presumed Democratic frontrunner, was more measured approach in her comments. “Obviously when you’re going to raise standards, that’s going to have an effect on test scores,” she said.

DOE Chief Academic Officer Shael Polakow-Suransky [told GothamSchools](#) that the 2011 and 2012 tests could not be compared directly. “They’re not just slightly different tests, they’re dramatically different tests,” he said.

The Common Core State Standards Initiative is supposed to foster increased thinking and analysis, which the new exams test. This is opposed to past tests where critics claim memorization was the skill students needed to master the exams.

[The New York Times says](#)the city has spent three years developing the new curriculum. City students first took tests based on the new curriculum in April. Some teachers and students responded negatively to their first encounter with the new tests, the teachers claiming they were unprepared and students saying the texts were difficult.

Image of Bloomberg and Walcott courtesy of the mayor's office.

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