



#boycott

presented by: Conversation



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disclaimer

The information discussed, and provided today, is for informational purposes only. Documents and discussion do not serve as legal advice.



Webinar Objective

- **The main objective of this webinar is to educate the public on high-stakes assessments and their right to refuse these tests.**



Webinar Features

- Chat
- Ask Questions
- Polls
- Donate
- You will receive this Power Point via email after the webinar.



Why Boycott

Third graders crying on the playground the first day of school because they were held back because of their FCAT scores. They were crying and saying, "they all know; they all know!"



Before you boycott, you **MUST**

- Read the statute.
- Understand your district's Progression Plan.
- Find out what test your state or district uses.
- Reference your district's testing calendar.
- Go to board meetings and find out their position on high-stakes assessments.
- Find and join local Opt Out Group.
- Read everything you can on this issue.



What are *high-stakes* assessments

- Tests that have punitive damages attached to students, teachers and schools.
- They are summative assessments where the teacher is not privy to the results until long after the student has left her classroom.
- They are referred to as “high-stakes” because a lot is riding on these tests like moving on to the next grade and even graduation.



Formative vs. Summative Assessment

- **Formative assessments** are good and used to inform instruction.
 - For example, a formative assessment may tell a teacher that 30% of her kids do not understand a certain concept. She can then go back and reteach and retest to see if the kids improved. They are the essence of classroom instruction.



Formative vs. Summative (continued)

- **Summative assessments** are bad and are used to make decisions about students
 - For example, a student takes a summative assessment and fails. The teacher never sees the scores but is notified that this student will be retained based on that score. The scores are not used to inform instruction, they are only used to make irreversible decisions.



Why *high-stakes* tests are bad

- They are designed by various testing companies to fulfill mandates initiated by federal and state leaders to “measure” student performance.
- They are expensive and require schools to test up to 50% of the year.
- They have monopolized our resources like media centers, internet and computer labs.
- They hurt students. Bottom line.



What about the SAT & ACT exams?

These are voluntary exams. They are not part of a mandate that hurts students.



High-Stakes Assessments & Common Core

- These tests will be used to assess students' proficiency on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).
- The amount of tests has increase exponentially since CCSS implementation.
- The failure rate on high-stakes assessments has also increased exponentially since the onset of CCSS and the new tests.



Questions to ask Principals

- How many standardized tests does my child have to take this year?
- Where do these tests originate?
- What is the specific academic purpose for each one?
- How will these tests affect my child's academic future or standing?
- For each test, does the teacher see individual student results and have a chance to adjust individual instruction to help each student?
- Who sees the scores, where will they be recorded, and for what purpose?
- Do the scores become part of my child's record?
- Who in the district instructed you to give these tests?



Questions to ask Superintendents

- Identify by name and frequency each standardized test your district requires in each grade.
- Explain where these tests originate and, for each, explain its specific academic purpose and the year it started.



Questions to ask School Boards

- Explain your district's policy on opting out of/ refusing standardized tests and cite its legal foundation.
- How do you view the academic purposes for standardized testing
- Are you familiar with all the standardized tests your district requires, and their academic purposes?
- Are you willing to initiate a parent/teacher review of the use of testing in your district?



Why Boycott?

- To protect your children from being exploited by testing companies and politicians.
- To restore teachers' power, autonomy and creative freedom in their classrooms.
- To reinstate our schools' resources taken over by testing calendars and test prep.
- To stop the practice of numbering our children based on their test scores and defining their success by one measure.



What is *opting out* ?

opt-out

noun: **opt-out**; plural noun: **opt-outs**

*an instance of choosing **not** to participate in something.*

- Refusal to take the test on test day.
- Keeping a student home on test day and makeup test days.



Opt Out is *not*

- an easy way out for students.
- an attack on our children's teachers
- an attack on our children's schools
- a protest against using formative tests in our classrooms.
- a way to avoid teacher evaluation.



Steps to opt out

- Have conviction.
- Look at all the resources, and research to determine what tests you want to opt out of
- Determine what kind of opt out will work for you.
- Determine if you need to write an opt out letter.
- Be prepared for test day.
- Know that every opt out case is different.
- Request alternative assessments.



Paper vs. Computer Test Refusal

- Paper Test
 - Break the seal
 - Push the test away
- Computer test
 - Complete directions.
 - GO to the first question and let the time run out.



Districts May Accommodate You

Be prepared to break the seal or go to the first question on the computer and sit for the entire test time to refuse.

BUT...some districts have been accommodating students who have decided to opt out or refuse the test.



NR2 Code explained

Once a student breaks the seal on a paper test, or once (s)he breaks the seal virtually on a computer test, and refuses to answer any of the questions, the student will receive a score of NR2 or non-attemptedness.

Go to your state DOE and search NR2.

*Note: Some subject-based tests last only one day, and some last two days. If your child is opting out of a subject-based test that is scheduled to last *more than one day*, (s)he only needs to refuse it on the first day in order to get an NR2 for that particular test. Once a student receives an NR2 on a test, the school cannot try to retest the student on a make-up day.



Do *not* ask permission!

- Tell your school admin or district admin what you are doing, don't ask.
- This is your right; you do not ask permission to exercise your rights.
- These are your kids; you do not ask permission to do what is right for your kids.
- You simply do what you feel is right.



Why is no score better than a low score?

- A low score provides data to remediate or retain based on one test.
- No score allows a student to be assessed in a more authentic way thru the evaluation of their classroom work or choice of alternative assessment.



Alternative Assessment

3rd Grade

Teacher developed portfolio is preferred

Request a portfolio be started at the beginning of the school year.

10th Grade

Reading - Concordant scores on SAT (430) or ACT (19)

Algebra I EOC - concordant score on the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT)

Other

SAT 10

ITBS Iowa Test of Basic Skills



Requesting a Portfolio

- Do this at the beginning of the year
- Keep you own detailed record of your child's work.
- Communicate with your teachers and principal.



Read: Use of Portfolio for Good Cause Promotion

- Be sure to understand this legislation if you are choosing to request a portfolio for your child.
- Get the entire statute here:



Affect on college and advanced classes

- There may be consequences to your child's classes.
- Every district is different.
- Keep detailed notes of our child's progress through school.
- Identify colleges that are not as concerned about test scores as they are GPA and academic performance in school



end of course exams

What is difference between a state prepared and a district prepared end of course exam (EOC)?

What are these EOCs really about?



Refusal and Accountability

- This year school grades will not be affected by a district or school's testing percentage (95% rule).
- We are unsure how this will affect VAM scores.
- Most states and districts have no idea how to deal with a boycott. So they will give you misinformation.



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districts are more
confused than anyone!



Push Back

Resistance from schools is often complicated by the fact that there is a lot of misinformation out there about the processes of testing and opting out. Unfortunately, much of this misinformation will be used as an attempt to dissuade you from refusing the test.



Push Back (continued)

Some of the things you might hear from school & district personnel are:

- Your child cannot be promoted to the next grade.
- If your child does not have a test score, (s)he will not follow class placement and may end up in remedial classes.
- Your child may not graduate or receive a regular diploma.
- There is no alternative assessment to FCAT or FSA.
- Opting out will hurt our school's grade and/or funding.
- It will impact your teacher's pay and/or evaluation.



Get comfortable with being uncomfortable

- Movements and revolutions are not easy.
- We are up against giant corporations with lots of resources.
- They, along with ed policy makers will make this difficult on us.
- We have to expect that impactful change doesn't come easy or without sacrifice.
- We have to be prepared to break rules and bad policy.



important links

<http://conversationed.com/2014/08/18/boycott-resources/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/OptOutOrlando/>

<http://optoutorlando.wordpress.com>

<http://unitedoptout.com>