

East Williston Teachers' Association



A Guide for Refusing the NYS Common Core ELA and Math Assessments

Grades 3-8

The documents and information contained in this packet have been prepared exclusively for the members of the East Williston Teachers' Association for their personal use.

I Refuse Resolution

Unanimously supported by EWTA Executive Assembly 3/26/2015

WHEREAS, the purpose of education is to educate a populace of critical thinkers who are capable of shaping a just and equitable society in order to lead good and purpose-filled lives, not solely prepare that populace for college and career; and

WHEREAS, instructional and curricular decisions should be in the hands of classroom professionals who understand the context and interests of their students; and

WHEREAS, the education of children should be grounded in developmentally appropriate practice; and

WHEREAS, high quality education requires adequate resources to provide a rich and varied course of instruction, individual and small group attention, and wrap-around services for students; and

WHEREAS, the state assessments are not transparent in that—teachers and parents are not allowed to view the tests and item analysis will likely not be made available; and

WHEREAS, the assessment practices that accompany Common Core State Standards – including the political manipulation of test scores – are used as justification to label and close schools, fail students, and evaluate educators; therefore be it

RESOLVED that East Williston Teachers' Association opposes standardized high stakes testing that is currently pushed by the Federal and State governments, because this testing is not being used to further instruction for children, to help children, or to support the educational needs of children; and be it further

RESOLVED, that East Williston Teachers' Association advocates for an engaged and socially relevant curriculum that is student-based and supported by research; and be it further

RESOLVED, that East Williston Teachers' Association will embark on internal discussions to educate and seek feedback from members regarding standardized high stakes testing and its impact on students; and be it further

RESOLVED, that East Williston Teachers' Association will lobby the NYS Board of Regents to eliminate the use of high stakes testing; and be it further

RESOLVED, that East Williston Teachers' Association will ask that all of its members have their own children refuse to take the Grade 3-8 assessments: and be it further

RESOLVED, that East Williston Teachers' Association will organize other members and affiliates to increase opposition to high stakes testing; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution will be sent to the NY State Board of Regents, the Governor of NYS, and all members of the NYS legislative branch

Navigating the New York State Education Landscape Know the Facts, Spread the Word

✎ This spring, students who do not OPT OUT will take the same flawed state assessments created by Pearson. Students will sit for 9 hours of testing & some special education students will be subjected to 18 hours of testing.

✎ Your district will NOT lose money if you have high OPT OUT numbers. Beware of empty threats. No school district has ever lost a single dollar due to OPT OUT.

✎ By law, 50% of Teacher Evaluations are STILL based on test scores. During the "moratorium" districts must use a different, often times additional test for teacher evaluations & test prep will continue.

✎ During the so called "moratorium", teachers can STILL be fired and denied tenure based on student test scores, just different tests.

✎ Student data privacy is STILL at risk. The NYS Dept of Education recently accepted a grant from the Gates Foundation to "launch, execute, & utilize implementation data collection at the state level".

✎ The CC standards, curriculum, and modules are still firmly in place. Promised action on CC changes are yet to be seen or even started.

✎ Impoverished school districts in Receivership will STILL be labeled failing and subject to take over by private entities based on state test scores.

✎ OPT OUT has been the ONLY action to garner the attention of policy and lawmakers. Opt Out must continue if we want REAL change.

#whyirefuse2016



#thegreatoptout2016

Visit www.nysape.org for more information

NYS Refusal Letter

Student: _____

School: _____

Teacher: _____

Grade: _____

Dear _____,

We are writing today to formally inform the district of our decision to refuse to allow our child _____, to participate in:

_____ the New York State grade 3-8 ELA assessment

_____ the New York State grade 3-8 math assessment

_____ any stand alone New York State field testing (grades 3-12)

_____ the grade 4 New York State science assessment

_____ the grade 8 New York State science assessment

Our refusal should in no way reflect on the teachers, administration, or school board. This was not an easy decision for us, but we feel that we have no other choice. We simply see these tests as harmful, expensive, and a waste of time and valuable resources.

We refuse to allow any data to be used for purposes other than the individual teacher's own formative or cumulative assessment. We are opposed to assessments whose data is used to determine school ranking, teacher effectiveness, or any other purpose other than for the individual classroom teacher's own use to improve his or her instruction.

We are aware that NYS Education Commissioner MaryEllen Elia will direct you to talk us out of this decision in an effort to push forward the corporate takeover of public education. We decline any such meeting or phone call. Do not contact us for that reason. To protect yourself, keep this letter as proof to Commissioner Elia that we have declined. Instead, we invite you to attend an educational seminar detailing the expert research and reasons that have led parents to refuse participation in this harmful testing program.

Sincerely,

*an option for local assessments that parents and teachers agree are diagnostically useful, yet used for APPR purposes, could be to participate in the assessment while withholding the student's score from the overall evaluation score.

Why Excessive Testing is Problematic

- Excessive testing takes away approximately 25% of our children's academic school year.
- Excessive testing forces teachers to "teach to the test" instead of nurturing higher order thinking skills.
- Excessive testing teaches children that there is only one right answer in academics and in life.
- Excessive testing costs millions of dollars of taxpayer money to produce and thousands of dollars of our school district's money to implement.
- Excessive testing takes the joy out of school/learning for children and teaches them to resent school.
- Excessive testing encourages our best teachers to seek other careers where their expertise is valued.
- Excessive testing is developmentally destructive for specific age groups.
- Excessive testing is creating corruption among students where students are purposely scoring poorly to negatively affect teachers they dislike.
- Excessive testing is creating corruption among schools where schools are cheating on test scoring to get better evaluations.
- Excessive testing uses our children as tools to evaluate school districts, schools, and teachers. For the child, the test counts for nothing.
- Excessive testing gives teachers incentives to care more about their teacher evaluation than children.
- Excessive testing teaches students to be careless with tests. Students report randomly filling in answers because they no longer see the value in test-taking since it has become so excessive.

Additional Resources:

<http://www.nysape.org/resources.html>

<https://changethestakes.wordpress.com/>