

SAMPLE LETTERS RE: OPTING OUT OF STANDARDIZED TESTING

*EXCERPT FROM THE END THE RACE COMPANION BOOK

The Following letters are from the Coalition for Better Education, a Colorado based group that encourages parents/guardians to opt their children out of standardized testing. The website is www.thebbe.org.

Sample Letter #1

School: _____

Principal: _____

Dear _____,

Please be advised that my child, _____, will not be participating in the _____ testing during the current school year. I understand that the law provides the parent or guardian the right of choice regarding this standardized testing. In my opinion, such testing is not in the best interests of our children since it promotes competition instead of cooperation, and blunts, not stimulates, our children's curiosity. I understand, too, that the school will provide appropriate learning activities during testing times. I request that no record of _____ testing be part of my child's permanent file.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

cc District Superintendent, Classroom Teacher

Sample Letter #2*

Opt-Out of Testing Notice

School District Name: _____

I do not wish my child to participate in standardized achievement testing for promotion or school/state report cards. I believe such testing to be unjust, counter-productive, and harmful to the education and development of my child. Timed one-chance tests subject my child to possible humiliation and failure without regard to variables in context or circumstance affecting performance on the day of testing.

No Child Left Behind:

1. Is not scientifically-based.
2. Is test-driven education and it is not meeting the individual needs of students.
3. Violates the U.S. Constitution.
4. Supports complicity of corporate interests rather than democracy based on public concerns.
5. Fosters coercion over cooperation with regards to federal funding for public education.
6. Does not follow the U.S. government's own data on learning. Ultimately, the state is required to provide my child with an education in a least restrictive environment. My child should proceed to learn and develop at his or her own pace with peers under the guidance of education professionals. The state oversteps its bounds and does a disservice to the public when it ignores professionals in local schools, arbitrarily making educational decisions based solely upon standardized tests.

Date _____ Parent/guardian _____

Grade _____ Student _____

Teacher _____ School _____

Opt-Out

* Created by Susan Ohanian (www.susanohanian.org).

WWW.RACETONOWHERE.COM

Sample Letter #3*

Opt-Out of Testing Notice

I do not wish my child, _____, to participate in standardized achievement testing for promotion or school/state report cards. I believe such testing to be unjust, counter-productive, and harmful to the education and development of my child. This stand is based upon my conscientious objection to the State using an arbitrary measure to make high-stakes decisions about my child with disregard to the input of this school district's educational professionals.

It is unjust to promote or retain my child based upon a one-time assessment when more authentic, reliable, and less harmful methods are available. Such methods include, but are not limited to, anecdotal teacher feedback, assignment grades, exhibitions, portfolios, grade point averages, and the average of multiple traditional assessments.

As a parent/guardian I consider the education and development of my child a chief responsibility and priority. Timed, one-chance tests subject my child to possible humiliation and failure without regard to variables in context or circumstances affecting performance on the day of testing.

My child has a right to an education that is free of arbitrary constraints predicated on a one-size-fits-all testing program – especially when trained educational professionals are present and able to make decisions. Public school teachers, counselors, and administrators, as agents of the State, should have the final authority on whether to promote or retain my child.

Ultimately, the state is required to provide my child an education in a least restrictive environment. My child should proceed to learn and develop at his or her own pace with peers under the guidance of education professionals. The State oversteps its bounds and does a disservice to the public when it ignores professionals in local schools, arbitrarily making educational decisions based solely upon standardized tests.

Date _____ Parent/guardian _____

Grade _____ Student _____

Teacher _____ School _____

Opt-Out

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