

Freeport Teachers Association

30 South Ocean Avenue Suite 305

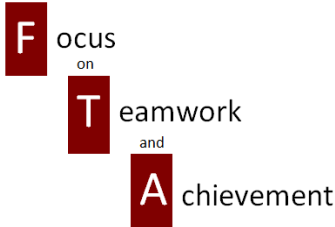
Freeport, New York 11520

(516) 442-0373

(516) 442-0374 (fax)

freeportta@optonline.net

www.freeportteachers.org



Proudly educating the students of Freeport

An open letter

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From an article on [Chalkbeat.org](http://ny.chalkbeat.org).

http://ny.chalkbeat.org/2016/03/21/rosa-new-head-of-new-york-education-policy-as-a-parent-i-would-opt-out/#.VwG2G__mrlU

On Monday, March 21st, the [newly elected head](#) of New York state's education policymaking body said if she were a parent, she would likely opt her child out of the state tests — and would not say if she hopes the boycotts shrink in number this year. Instead, Betty Rosa spoke about the need to retool the tests to rebuild trust with parents, and said that families have the right to choose what is best for their children.

"If I was a parent and I was not on the Board of Regents, I would opt out at this time," Rosa told reporters Monday, shortly after she was elected chancellor of the Board of Regents.

At a forum I attended in Rockville Centre at the Southside MS.

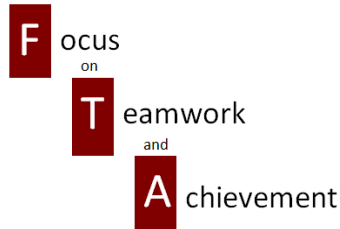
Dr. William Johnson, Superintendent of the Rockville Center Schools stated "*You have to be crazy to let your kids take these tests*", at a forum hosted by Assemblyman Brian Curran on January 28, 2016 at Southside MS in Rockville Centre.

On Tuesday, the State of NY is administering another round of assessments in ELA and Math for grades 3 to 8 students. The tests are so bad that the state fired Pearson, the company that was making the tests and hired Quest Star to make new tests. HOWEVER, THE TESTS BEING USED THIS YEAR WERE MADE BY PEARSON. If you believe the tests have been significantly changed, you don't understand how tests such as these use statistical measures that won't allow for significant changes. The fact that students have more time makes no difference if the students are presented with material that is two or three grade levels above their current reading level.

The notion that your kids should take the test to prepare for future tests makes no sense given how inappropriately constructed and developed are these current tests. The fact that changes are being implemented is only because the opt out numbers created by parents such as yourself that choose not to subject their child or children to the nightmares that these tests became. Continuing to opt out your child(ren) is the only way to continue to push for the creation of tests that makes sense for your children.

(Continues below)

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My children were very successful in school and probably would have fared okay on these tests, but I would have opted out my children for three reasons. First, from what I hear from my colleagues in grade 3-8 schools, the tests are beyond badly constructed, and are entirely age inappropriate. Second, as of yet, we have no way to use the test results from our individual children to improve their education. Third, the tests are still used to evaluate schools, and therefore the pressure is still being applied to teachers to push kids to do well on these tests – incredible given that most kids can't show their true abilities on these tests. TEST PREP STILL REIGNS SUPREME INSTEAD OF RICH, ENGAGING CURRICULUM!!

Schools are still rated. Schools that do particularly poor (not surprisingly schools made up of disadvantaged students in low wealth districts) are being placed into receivership which means union rights of teachers are stripped away, and teachers can be released without due process among the rights lost by the teachers and the unions representing them. School boards can be replaced and local control can and is taken away by the state in these districts.

If you have not chosen to opt out your child or children, I would ask that you reconsider your decision as a means to an end – the development of a sane system of assessment for your children, the people who educate them, and the school systems you may work in and/or support with your tax dollars and time.

You can find anything you need at www.nysape.org.

Stronger together,

Stu Napear
President of the Freeport Teachers Association

Affiliations:
New York State United Teachers
American Federation of Teachers
National Education Association
AFL-CIO