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Congress of Teachers
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Dear Parents and Guardians,

Over the last few years, parents of our students have become increasingly aware of the high stakes consequences associated with the ELA and Mathematics tests for 3rd - 8th grade children. A growing movement has taken place across New York State, especially within our own Patchogue-Medford community. Last year, a number of Patchogue-Medford parents opted to “refuse” the tests.

While it would be inappropriate for an individual teacher to advise a parent on “opting out” of the state tests, we hope that you can use this informational letter to help make your own decision regarding your child’s educational experience. Please refer to the links on the bottom of this letter for more information about your right to “refuse” the tests.

The Patchogue-Medford Congress of Teachers, as well as its state affiliate NYSUT, fully support parents’ rights to choose what is best for their children and a parent’s right to “refuse” the state standardized tests if the parent believes state testing is inappropriate and/or may be harmful to his or her child. Additionally, students should not be subjected to any type of “sit and stare” policy that requires them to sit in a test room for up to 10 hours over the course of the testing period. We think this practice is abusive and we oppose it. Thankfully, the Patchogue-Medford School District does not adhere to the “sit and stare” policy.

While the New York State Education Department’s overreliance on state tests creates unfortunate consequences for our students, teachers and schools, please know that we value your children more than a test score.

Respectfully yours,

Beth A. Warnken
President

<http://www.nysut.org/resources/special-resources-sites/all-kids-need/take-action>

www.nysape.org

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Long-Island-Parents-and-Teachers-Against-Standardized-Testing-APPR/211021932327048>