

THE ASSEMBLY  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY



The Honorable Arne Duncan  
Secretary of Education  
Department of Education Building  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

We are writing concerning your recent remarks regarding federal intervention in our schools due to the high volume of people opting their children out of Common Core testing. This “intervention” of sanctions and withholding crucial aid to our schools is simply unconscionable.

Parents are allowed by law to opt their children out of these high-stakes tests, and New Yorkers are doing this in record numbers. To punish them for their legal right to choose for their children to not take these ill-conceived, inappropriate tests is unfair and just should not happen.

Our children’s future shouldn’t be held hostage by threats of fines and withdrawn aid. Parents and educators shouldn’t have to send their children to school or make important choices regarding their future while having to worry about whether or not this decision will lead to the federal government punishing their schools.

The voices of New Yorkers are loud and clear and they are saying that these tests must go. Rather than punish our schools for good people exercising their right to have their children refuse the Common Core testing, perhaps it’s time to listen to the tens of thousands of parents and teachers and re-evaluate the need for these tests to exist at all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dean Murray".

**DEAN MURRAY**  
Member of Assembly  
3<sup>rd</sup> District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Ra".

**EDWARD P. RA**  
Member of Assembly  
19<sup>th</sup> District