

Dear Administrator/Principal:

My child, \_\_\_\_\_, is in grade \_\_\_\_\_ for the \_\_\_\_\_ school year at \_\_\_\_\_ School. I am writing to inform you of my decision to refuse for my child, \_\_\_\_\_, to participate in any MCAS, MCAS Alt, English as a second language and/or PARCC testing given during this current school year.

I believe high stakes tests are harmful to my child and diminish her/his opportunities to attend a public school where each student has been guaranteed the right to a free and appropriate education. Participating in these tests:

- Negatively affects my child's social-emotional well being,
- Kills curiosity and love for learning,
- Places developmentally inappropriate, undue and unhealthy stress on my child,
- Reduces capacity for attaining new knowledge,
- Replaces higher order thinking with "drill and kill" curriculum,
- Diminishes opportunities for socialization,
- Diverts funding to testing and publishing companies that could go to fund programs in my child's school, and
- Diverts time away from more meaningful authentic assessments such as teacher designed measurements, portfolio and project-based learning.

The U.S Constitution protects my rights to religious/spiritual freedom and federal law supersedes state law in regard to parental control over one's child.\* Under the law, you cannot deny my request. I have also been advised that religious, medical or psychological concerns meet the criteria for honoring my request.

I am aware that Massachusetts General Law (Chapter 76, Sections 2 and 4) establishes penalties for truancy as well as for inducing unlawful absence of a minor from school. Consequently, my child will come to school every day during the testing window and is willing to participate in other meaningful activities during testing times. My child will not be subjected to a "sit and stare" environment during the hours and days when other students are taking these high stakes state tests. This is psychological child abuse and will not be tolerated. I also inform you that my child will not be subjected to any academic penalty or face disciplinary action. I do realize that my child must pass all necessary grades 9 - 12 high stakes testing to receive a school issued diploma.

My school's teachers and administrators should understand that this action is in no way a reflection of my feelings towards them nor is it intended as an attack toward them or the work that they do every day. My issue is with high stakes standardized testing and the harm it does to children and our public schools.

This refusal should go into my child's file. Within ten school days of receipt of this letter, please inform me in writing that it has been received and properly filed. Thank you.

Respectfully yours,

Date: \_\_\_\_\_