

# Community Vo/ces of Public Education!

Community Voices for Public Education

<http://www.houstoncvpe.org>

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## **Community Voices for Public Education Supports Parents Who Opt Out, Hosting Creative Instruction for Grade 3-8 Students Opting Out of the STAAR Tests**

**WHAT:** On April 21, 2015 the national movement to opt students out of high stakes standardized tests takes root in Houston. Parents of at least 50 children in HISD, Aldine and Katy in at least fifteen schools (so far) plan to opt out (keep their children home or send them to a day of creative learning) rather than subject them to tests that are developmentally inappropriate (ie, almost all Special Education student having to take the “on-level” STAAR for the first time this year), pedagogically unsound and immoral.

Children who opt out by attending the days of creative learning will spend each testing day engaged in meaningful instruction provided by three certified teacher members of Community Voices for Public Education.

**WHEN:** April 20, **21**, and 22, 7:45 AM - 3:15 PM

**WHERE:** Live Oak Friends Meeting House (the “little house”) at 1318 W 26th

**WHO:** Sponsored by Houston Community Voices for Public Education

**WHY:** Around the country there is a growing movement to boycott or “opt out” of high-stakes standardized tests. Parents and educators are concerned about the relentless hours devoted to testing and test-prep instruction, the narrowing of curriculum (less time devoted to science, social studies, music, art, and physical education), the cost of testing, tests that are not developmentally appropriate, and tests that are not reliable being used to make high-stakes decisions about students, teachers, and schools. While meaningful assessment (low stakes diagnostic testing) is an essential component of a world class education, the high stakes nature of the STAAR tests does incredible harm to our children and our future.

Unlike other states, in Texas if students attend school during STAAR testing, they must take the tests even if their parents submit a “refuse to test” letter. Parents who opt their children out of testing must take off from work to care for their children. CVPE will provide students with meaningful instruction on testing days while parents are at work.

**INTERVIEWS:** Houston parents and teachers are available to discuss why they are opting out this week and next. Houston CVPE teachers are also available to discuss Enrichment Days.

**MEDIA VISUALS:** Students will be engaged in learning during the day(s) they opt out. Suggested date for media visuals is April 21 at 7:45 am when parents drop off students, 10:00 am or 3:15 when parents pick up their children.