

Rotten to the Core: Principal Tries to Punish Parents for Opting Out of Common Core Testing

Attorneys with Pacific Justice Institute are warning a principal in Southern California to drop her attempted retaliation against families who opted out of testing under the controversial Common Core State Standards. California allows parents to exempt their children from statewide assessments, known in the state as CAASP. Due to a wide range of concerns about Common Core and the new tests aligned with it, a high percentage of parents claimed their statutory right to opt out. For instance, as many as 75 percent of high school juniors at Calabasas High School in western Los Angeles County opted out of the CAASP tests this year.

Opting out of the top-down tests has not sat well with some administrators, who are seeking to retaliation. In an e-mail to parents sent on Tuesday afternoon, Principal C.J. Foss of Calabasas High School wrote, "Senior activities, parking, and off-campus passes require students to have participated in the CAASP testing (seniors only)." The principal's attempt to punish incoming seniors with loss of parking and other privileges for exercising their rights is infuriating parents, who reached out to the Pacific Justice Institute. On Wednesday, PJI Senior Counsel Michael J. Pepper fired off a letter to Principal Foss demanding that the illegal retaliation be rescinded immediately. Brad Dacus, president of PJI, commented, "A principal absolutely cannot punish students because their parents exercised their legal rights. We have now seen a number of educrats pretend as though these opt-out rights do not exist, but this is a new low. We are taking aggressive action to ensure this brazen attempt to deny parents' rights is stopped in its tracks."