

Dear Interim Commissioner Shannon Tahoe,

April 22, 2020, will be a monumental day in students' lives: It is the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, in a year that has seen unparalleled youth-led activism demanding action on the climate emergency. It is also the second day of the New York state-wide grades 3-8 standardized math test.

As elected and community leaders, we call on you to reschedule the state test and instead support a state-wide climate teach-in on Earth Day 50.

The future of every student across the state hangs in the balance. Large parts of the world are literally on fire because of a changed climate. Ecosystems are collapsing. Coastal cities are seeing unprecedented flooding. The UN has warned we have approximately eight and a half years to cut global greenhouse gas emissions in half, or face an increasingly uninhabitable earth. By scheduling a standardized test for this date, you are telling young people that their future doesn't matter.

Thousands of middle and high school students are already planning on striking on this Earth Day, recognizing the importance of this moment. But not all students have access to climate strikes: It requires parent support and exposure to both climate science and models of civic engagement, something that many privileged students have, but that the majority of our students lack. All students should be able to participate in this movement that will determine the shape of their futures.

Requiring hundreds of thousands of elementary and middle school students to spend their Earth day silently completing scantron sheets while the Earth is in crisis is anathema to the purpose of education. We feel that, instead of ignoring this tremendous opportunity to support student activists fighting for their own survival, New York school districts should make climate science, engagement, and solutions accessible to all students by holding Earth Day 50 teach-ins for those who are unable to participate in the student climate-strike.

Please reschedule the math test, support student strikers, and provide resources for schools to hold climate-teach ins in honor of Earth Day 50.

CC: Chancellor Richard Carranza, Chancellor Betty Rosa, Senator Mayer, Assembly Member Benedetto

Signed:

<i>Senator Robert Jackson</i>	<i>Teachers for the Future</i>
<i>Senator Brian Benjamin</i>	<i>Sunrise Movement NYC</i>
<i>Senator Roxanne Persaud</i>	<i>People's Climate Movement New York</i>
<i>Senator Liz Krueger</i>	<i>350 Brooklyn</i>
<i>Senator Julia Salazar</i>	<i>Fridays For Future NYC</i>
<i>Senator Zellnor Myrie</i>	<i>Extinction Rebellion Youth</i>
<i>Senator Rachel May</i>	<i>Zero Hour</i>
<i>Senator Alessandra Biaggi</i>	<i>TREEage</i>
<i>Senator Pete Harckham</i>	<i>NYYCS</i>
<i>Senator Jessica Ramos</i>	<i>Queens Climate Project</i>
<i>Assemblymember Inez Dickens</i>	<i>NYC Opt Out</i>
<i>Assemblymember Robert Carroll</i>	<i>Class Size Matters</i>
<i>Assemblymember Walter Mosley</i>	<i>MORE Caucus</i>
<i>Assemblymember Felix Ortiz</i>	<i>Indivisible Nation BK</i>
<i>Assemblymember Richard Gottfried</i>	<i>Empire State Indivisible</i>
<i>Assemblymember Daniel O'Donnell</i>	<i>One Queens Indivisible</i>
<i>Assemblymember Aravella Simotas</i>	<i>Indivisible Harlem</i>
<i>Assemblymember Joanne Simon</i>	<i>Jackson Heights People for Public Schools</i>
<i>Assemblymember Nathalia Fernandez</i>	<i>New York City DSA</i>
<i>Assemblymember Jeffrion Aubry</i>	
<i>Assemblymember Taylor Darling</i>	
<i>Assemblymember Barbara Lifton</i>	
<i>Assemblymember Marcus</i>	
<i>Council Member Brad Lander</i>	
<i>Council Member Costa Constantinides</i>	
<i>Council Member Mark Treyger</i>	
<i>Leonie Haimson</i>	
<i>Carol Burris</i>	
<i>Jamaal Bowman</i>	
<i>Diane Ravitch</i>	
<i>Jabari Brisport</i>	