



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on June 4, 2018

Parents Oppose Former Obama Education Czar's Radical School Boycott for Gun Control

A week after the former Obama Education Secretary Arne Duncan called for a boycott of schools in September to force politicians to pass additional gun-control laws, Rasmussen Reports quizzed 1,000 American adults about what they thought of his idea: "A proposal has been made for parents across America to keep their children out of school for a few days next fall to pressure Congress into passing more gun control laws."



[Rasmussen reported](#) that a majority opposed Duncan's proposal that popped up following the Santa Fe, Texas shooting.

The radical proposal didn't come from Duncan, but from another Obama refugee, Peter Cunningham, who tweeted, "Maybe it's time for America's 50 million school parents to simply pull their kids out of school until we have better gun laws." Replied Duncan:

This is brilliant, and tragically necessary. What if no children went to school until gun laws changed to keep them safe?

My family is all in if we can do this at scale. Parents, will you please join us?

Commentators immediately heralded the blatant hypocrisy about Duncan's "family" being "all in" over the idea, especially as his children attend the "exclusive, private University of Chicago Laboratory Schools in tony Hyde Park," according to the *Jewish World Review*. A brochure from the schools notes that the grounds are "patrolled by the University of Chicago Police Department and private security."

But never mind. Duncan was busy defending his radical suggestion, which came no doubt directly from Saul Alinsky's *Rules for Radicals*. He told CNN:

I know it would be very difficult. It's counter to everything I've talked about all my life of trying to get kids to school and to stay in school, but I just think as a nation we're at a breaking point and we just cannot continue to allow our children and our adults to die due to senseless gun violence.

Duncan continued, "what I'm talking about is an idea — for all the difficulty, for all the impracticality about it — I think would shock the nation, would create the kind of tension that we've lacked, and we need to create tension to compel lawmakers to change."

When asked about its practicality by *The Atlantic's* Adam Harris, Duncan made his case:

We put this out a few days ago, and it was definitely intended to be thought-provoking. And you think about, you know, not all schools, but many schools, come back to school after Labor Day, that first week of September. That would give us a little time to see whether it makes sense. But there is clearly, as of now, very significant interest.

And, you know, teachers have walked out for higher pay, kids have walked out on the gun-violence



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issue, and my question is: What have we as parents done? We're not protecting our kids. And, again, that's the most fundamental thing. You want your kids to be safe. That's instinctual. And the fact that we're not doing that—we're not willing to think radically enough to do it—I can't stomach that.

So, the thought was, let's see if it develops, let's see if it continues to pick up momentum. But if you could do something in September, you'd see whether politicians move or not. If they move, fantastic. If they don't move, then you're looking at the November elections. Then you act....

When we were part of the [Obama] administration, we played by all the rules after [the] Sandy Hook [massacre]. We did a study, we did a report, we worked with Congress, and guess what we accomplished?

Nothing.

So, playing by the rules hasn't worked. We need to change the game.

This is indicative of the motivation of radicals such as Duncan, but not surprising considering his past history. A graduate of Harvard College with a degree in sociology, Duncan cut his educatory teeth as the deputy chief of staff of the Chicago Public Schools from 1998-2001. He was promoted to CPS's chief executive officer, where he was free to implement as many radical ideas as he could. Predictably, under his leadership the Chicago State Board of Education showed that the Chicago district failed to make "adequate yearly progress" in mathematics and reading each year from 2004 to 2008.

Following that failure, he left CPS to take on the position of secretary of education under then-president Barack Obama. During his seven-year tenure Duncan labored to force states to implement the Common Core curriculum and spent \$4.35 billion of taxpayer monies for the administration's "Race to the Top" program, touted at the time as his signature program to improve student performance. Duncan's efforts so greatly displeased both the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) that both organizations called for his resignation.

He finally stepped down when the National Center for Education Statistics reported that on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) — a test administered biennially to assess the reading and math proficiencies of fourth- and eighth-grade students — scores were down almost entirely across the board. Wrote *National Review* of the educational catastrophe wrought by Duncan's radical policies: "Viewed against more than two decades of prior scores, these results can only be described as a train wreck."

That report was released in October of 2015, the same month that Duncan announced he was resigning his position.

What will happen when school begins in the fall is pure speculation. But it is highly unlikely that parents with school-age children will heed the radical call of Duncan and keep their youngsters at home in order to pressure politicians to pass more gun laws. After all, the Santa Fe shooter violated all manner of existing laws and didn't even use a hated "assault rifle" in his attack. But this didn't stop Duncan from promulgating his radical idea anyway, hoping that somehow, some way, it might gain traction. That's the mindset of radicals such as Duncan: If something doesn't work, try something else, and keep trying until your objective is won.

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