

IRRC

Original: 2285

From: Jim Powers [jpower8@attglobal.net]

Sent: Wednesday, August 21, 2002 9:44 AM

To: IRRC@irrc.state.pa.us

Subject: Updated Regulations from the PA Dept. of Education

2002/08/21 AM 9:56

RE: [REDACTED]

Dear IRRC,

I understand that the State Department of Education has "fast-tracked" a change to the Chapter 4 regulations concerning the attachment of seals on student diplomas and notes on student transcripts.

Because of this "fast-track", no public comment period is available.

In lieu of this, please accept this e-mail registering my objection to this "compromise" submitted by the State Board of Education.

The State Board of Education, faced with the unanimous House passage of HB 2059, has submitted a "compromise" on their plan to attach seals on children's diplomas and notes on student transcripts. These seals and notes would reflect the score of the state assessment, the PSSA.

This submitted change to the regulations is no compromise. While yes, the State Board did remove the seal on the diploma mandate, the Board absolutely refuses to remove the student transcript mandate.

Let us inject a little bit of honesty into this debate. While officials are now steadfastly denying that there is any plan to grant automatic state college admission based on PSSA scores, that was not the case earlier this year. Despite these recent denials to the contrary, there are STILL members of the State Board of Education and the State System of Higher Education that want to grant automatic admission to state colleges based on the PSSA scores. That is why the PDE absolutely refuses to remove the requirement to post PSSA scores on student transcripts.

This fact has been confirmed by several news organizations. In addition to confirmation by a reporter for the Patriot News, here is just another brief sample from the Pittsburgh Tribune Review:

☒ Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

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## Juniors able to seal distinction on diplomas

By **Jonathan Potts**  
TRIBUNE-REVIEW  
Friday, January 4, 2002

..... "Ken Marshall, a spokesman for the State System of Higher Education, said system

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officials may consider granting students who earn a diploma seal automatic admission to any of the 14 state institutions."....

In a follow up interview in May, this same reporter asked Ken Marshall about using the PSSA scores on transcripts for automatic college admission. Ken Marshall denied that there were any plans to use PSSA scores for college admission.

If this change is not opposed by the House and Senate Education Committees, or the IRRC, then the PDE will still have the mechanism in place to implement an automatic state college admission policy once this "compromise" has been approved. (Or approved by simply not acted upon these changes within the 20-day window.)

We have witnessed the flip flop by the State Board of Education's Council of Basic Education, which voted on May 16<sup>th</sup> to remove the requirement that PSSA scores be recorded on student transcripts. After being read the riot act by those unnamed, within 24 hours, the State Board of Education rejected this recommendation made by its own Council of Basic Education, and voted 12-2 to reinstate the PSSA score requirement on student transcripts.

I urge the IRRC to oppose this change in the regulations as proposed by the State Board of Education. Please make the PDE accountable to the public it serves.

Sincerely,

Jim Powers  
302 Kozy Corner Road  
Valencia, PA 16059  
724-898-3605  
cell 724-816-0105

Original: 2285

**From:** Susan Madeja [mailto:madeja@zbzoom.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 14, 2002 10:27 AM  
**To:** webmaster@state.pa.us  
**Subject:** please deliver

I have attempted to e-mail the following letter to the IRRC, but it keeps coming back undeliverable. Could you either forward it for me or send me the correct address. I have been sending it to [IRRC@irrc.state.pa.us](mailto:IRRC@irrc.state.pa.us), the address listed on the website.

**Message:**

I understand that the PA Board of Education is transmitting the newly revised (May 2002 Mtg.) Chapter 4 education regulations pertaining to State Seals and PSSA Scores on Transcripts to the House and Senate Education Committees and the IRRC this Thursday, August 15th.

Please prevent these regulations from being enacted. The public and the legislature has been clear that they do not want the seals on our students diplomas, nor on their transcripts. Only local school districts have the authority to develop graduation requirements. Furthermore, only local districts and parents should have the right to determine what is placed on the transcripts.

The PSSA test is a highly questionable assessment. Not only is it seriously flawed, but also no student should be permanently labeled with the results of a one-time assessment.

Please block this action.

Sincerely,  
Susan Madeja  
765 Callery Rd.  
Evans City, PA 16033  
724-538-4536

8/14/2002

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**Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators**

2579 Interstate Drive ~ Harrisburg, PA 17110-9602  
(717) 540-4448 (717) 540-4405 fax [www.pasa-net.org](http://www.pasa-net.org)

September 9, 2002

Mr. John R. McGinley, Jr., Chairman  
Independent Regulatory Review Commission  
14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Harrisburg 2  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Dear Mr. McGinley:

The Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators supports the amendment to 22 PA. Code Section 4.24, which now is before you.

The amendment does three things. It eliminates the current requirement that school districts place seals on the diplomas they issue. It requires the state to provide certificates to school districts for districts to distribute to students who score well in any discipline tested as part of the PSSA in the eleventh or twelve grade. It also requires school districts to place eleventh and twelfth grade PSSA scores on each student's transcript.

We understand that this requirement has at least two purposes. First, it provides state recognition to students who do well. This may be an additional incentive for students to take the test seriously.

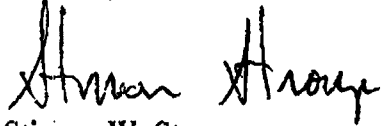
Second, the amendment provides those who use student transcripts -- either for post-secondary admission decisions or employment decisions -- with additional information about a student's performance. Unlike graduation seals, the student's score is reported, not just that the student scored above or, by implication, below a given cut score.

Further, placing the score on the transcript gives the score context, allowing anyone who reviews the transcript to get a more accurate picture of the student's academic accomplishments. The results of the state assessment can be seen along side of the student's course selections, the grades earned in those courses, and, in many districts, the student's attendance record, as well as his or her participation in school activities

and performance on district administered tests. The transcript as a whole is a more complete record of what a student has done and can do than the diploma.

For these reasons, the amendment to 22 PA Code Section 4.24 is an improvement over present law, and we support it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stinson W. Stroup". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some capitalization.

Stinson W. Stroup  
Executive Director

2579 Interstate Drive,  
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9602  
(717) 540-4448 FAX (717) 540-4405

**Pennsylvania Association  
of School Administrators**

# Fax

**To:** Independent Regulatory Review Commission – Mr. John R. McGinley, Jr., Chairman

**From:** Stinson W. Stroup, Exec. Dir., PASA

**Pages:** 3

**Fax:** 783-2864

**Date:** September 9, 2002

**Re:** Comments on Regulation #6-278.

**Please find with this fax comments submitted by PASA regarding  
Regulation #6-278.**

SEP 10 07:00  
FAX