



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

December 2, 2005

Mr. Harry C. Mathias, Jr.
Superintendent
Central Columbia School District
4777 Old Berwick Road
Bloomsburg, PA 17815-3515

Dear Mr. Mathias:

Thank you for your letter of November 29, 2005 on proposed 22 Pa. Code, Chapter 4, academic standards and assessments.

Your letter is considered as official public comment and is being shared with all members of the Board. Pursuant to the provisions of the Regulatory Review Act, copies of your comments are also being provided to the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) and the Chairpersons of the House and Senate Education Committees.

The regulatory Review Act provides that information on proposed and final regulations be mailed to public commentators at their request. If you would like to receive the final-form of these regulations when they are finalized, please make your request to me in writing at the address printed below.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jim Buckheit".

Jim Buckheit
Executive Director

cc: Members of the State Board
Senator Rhoades
Senator Musto
Representatives Stairs
Representatives Roebuck
IRRC

CENTRAL COLUMBIA SCHOOL DISTRICT



4777 OLD BERWICK ROAD
BLOOMSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17815-3515

November 29, 2005

Mr. Jim Buckheit, Executive Director
State Board of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

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District Administration
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570-784-2850
FAX 570-387-0192

High School Office

570-784-2833
FAX 570-784-3570

Athletic Office

FAX 570-784-0863

Middle School Office

570-784-6103
FAX 570-784-4935

Elementary School Office

570-784-6120
FAX 570-784-2582

Dear Mr. Buckheit:

This letter is being submitted as written comment on the proposed Chapter Four revisions.

I stand in support of the proposed Chapter Four with one exception. I need to express a strong concern about the language in 4.52(a)(3) which states, "The existence of significant numbers of students not achieving proficiency on the PSSA who are deemed proficient by a local assessment will raise an inference that the local assessment is not aligned with the PSSA or the PSSA's meaning of proficient."

I believe that this language is in opposition to significant research on student assessment. The concern with the PSSA is that it is a one-time (per year) snapshot of the student's achievement. The local assessment system, if properly developed and implemented, will provide a highly varied, highly comprehensive, on-going data collection system that will assist students, teachers, parents, administrators, and local Boards in helping students learn. The properly developed local assessment system will give students multiple opportunities through a variety of tasks to learn and be assessed on the academic standards. That a student who is proficient in this model but not proficient on the one-time PSSA in March of the junior year is deemed to have been in a failed system (because the PSSA is more "reliable" or "valid") is very poor logic and not educationally sound.

I absolutely agree that the local assessment system should be rigorous and aligned to the academic standards. However, the local assessment system should also be comprehensive with a wide variety of styles of assessment and assessment opportunities, and its validity and reliability should not be tied to the PSSA.

I urge you to revisit this language in 4.52(a)(3) of the revised Chapter Four.

Sincerely submitted,

Harry C. Mathias, Jr.
Superintendent

- c. Representative Jess Stairs, Chair, House Education Committee
- Senator James Rhoades, Majority Chair, Senate Education Committee
- Senator John Gordner
- Representative David Millard