

## IRRC

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**From:** Smith, James M.  
**Sent:** Friday, December 16, 2005 11:54 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** FW: PSEA's position statement re: Ch. 4



Ch 4 position stmt  
to House Ed...

Please file as comment on #2499.

-----Original Message-----

From: Karl, Carol [PA] [mailto:ckarl@psea.org]  
Sent: Friday, December 16, 2005 11:49 AM  
To: Smith, James M.  
Subject: PSEA's position statement re: Ch. 4

As we discussed.

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# PSEA LEGISLATIVE POSITION

PENNSYLVANIA STATE  
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION



James R. Weaver, President • James Testerman, Vice President • Grace Bekaert, Treasurer

Leadership for Public Education

Pennsylvania State Education Association • 400 North Third Street, PO Box 1724, Harrisburg, PA 17105-1724

## House Education Committee

### **PSEA Opposes Proposed Revisions to 22 Pa.Code Ch. 4**

The Pennsylvania State Education Association opposes certain revisions to Chapter 4 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code that have been sent to the House Education Committee by the State Board of Education. PSEA asks this Committee to ask the State Board to remove proposed subsections (2), (3) and (4) of Section 4.52.

These proposed sections would eviscerate the local assessment systems that have been developed and used by local school districts to determine whether their students are proficient on the Pennsylvania academic standards. That is, the proposed language would establish in regulation a presumption that the statewide one-shot PSSA test is **THE** single accurate measure of whether a student is proficient. It would authorize the Department of Education to compel districts to adjust their local assessments so that their results more closely match the PSSA results. If districts are compelled to do so, the potential for unfair harm to students is severe:

- The proposed changes would lead to denying students high school diplomas who have proven through local assessments that they have mastered the material laid out in Pennsylvania's academic standards.
- The changes would turn the PSSA from its original intended use as an assessment tool into a high stakes exam that could seriously harm the futures of students who have proven themselves through their academic work and performance.
- Scoring a few points above or below a line that has been deemed to be "proficient" on a standardized test could mean the life-altering difference between whether a young person goes out into the world as a high school graduate or a high school failure.
- A recent study by the Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) concluded that 59 percent of students who were considered to have "failed" their PSSAs were enrolled by the studied universities in college level math and English courses. Under the proposed changes, these students may have been denied graduation from high school.

Concern about the harm these Ch. 4 changes would inflict on students is widespread. Five professional education organizations signed a Joint Statement opposing these changes: the Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA), the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA), the Pennsylvania Association of Vocational Administrators (PAVA), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA). This Joint Letter, which provides a thorough and detailed analysis, was sent to you under cover of a letter from PSBA dated November 23, 2005. It is also available at [www.PSEA.org/article.cfm?SID=855](http://www.PSEA.org/article.cfm?SID=855).

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