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#2696

May 15, 2008

Independent Regulatory Review Commission
333 Market Street, 14th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

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Dear Members of the Commission:

At their April 21, 2008, meeting, the Board of School Directors of Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit Nine unanimously approved the attached Resolution in opposition to the proposed graduation competency assessments

Sincerely yours,

Jacalyn A. Cooney
Board Secretary

Enclosure

**RESOLUTION OPPOSING PROPOSED HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION COMPETENCY
ASSESSMENTS BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
SENECA HIGHLANDS INTERMEDIATE UNIT NINE**

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education has approved a proposal to revise the current high school graduation requirements under the Chapter 4 regulations to require students to pass a series of standardized high stakes Graduation Competency Assessments in order to receive a diploma beginning in 2014; these exams will be the same for all students, whether they are taking college prep or vocational courses, and

WHEREAS, Chapter 4 currently allows districts to use either the PSSA or rigorous local assessments for their students to demonstrate proficiency of the state academic standards; and although the GCA proposal permits schools to use a local assessment option, it establishes additional limitations and incurred district costs, and

WHEREAS, the proposal requires school districts to absorb new costs related to the validation of the local assessments that may be used in lieu of the proposed state Graduation Competency Assessments including the revising of curriculum, professional development, validation, preparation, administration, remediation and other costs incurred in the development of local assessments., and

WHEREAS, we differentiate our instruction to meet the needs of our students, therefore the assessments used to measure student progress need also reflect this differentiation so that all students can achieve the concepts and skills that are pre-requisite for success, and


WHEREAS, the current emphasis in education, business, industry, and military is the involvement of people in ongoing professional development in order to provide the knowledge and skills needed to work together in a collegial and collaborative manner.

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education and local School Boards should work in a collaborative manner to assure that all students in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania receive the best education possible.

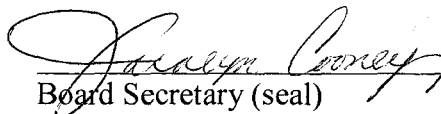
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the board of directors of the Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit **opposes the State Board of Education's proposal to enact Graduation Competency Assessments and encourages the State Board of Education to provide all local boards with professional development opportunities to fully understand this and future proposals and to make concerted efforts to gain and fully understand the concerns of local Boards prior to the enactment of legislation that has significant education impact at the local and state level.** This resolution will be shared with the State Board of Education, state legislators including local legislators and members of the Senate and House Education Committees, and the Independent Regulatory Review Commission.

Adopted this 21st day of April, 2008.

Signed,


Board President

Attest:


Board Secretary (seal)

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