

From: dhowry@comcast.net
Sent: Tuesday, May 20, 2008 9:23 AM
To: j buckheit@state.pa.us; IRRC; jr hoades@pasen.gov; musto@pasenate.com;
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Subject: PA graduation tests

State Board of Education
333 Market St.
Harrisburg, PA 17126

Dear Mr. Buckheit, and State Board of Education Members,

I am writing to express my opposition to the GCAs.

I am opposed to...

Increased Stress on our students as ten new GCA (Graduate Competency Assessment) exams are added to an already heavy high-stakes testing load including PSSAs, PSATs, SATs, AP exams, mid-term and final exams.

Increased class time focused on preparing for the GCAs rather than on course content.

Loss of Local Control over alternative ways to measure student proficiency.

Failure to Address Alternative Learning Styles.

Cost: The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette estimates that the cost of implementation could exceed \$100 million

I am opposed because GCAs will not be provided in a format that meets the needs of diverse learners.

I am opposed because we already test our students in math, reading and science through the state PSSA exams.

I am opposed to double testing of our students.

I am opposed because students in our district are already reaching proficiency in reading, math, and science either through the PSSA exams or through a comprehensive, local assessment.

I am opposed because GCAs do not test our students on relevant 21st century skills, and valuable class time will have to be diverted to prepare students to take these additional tests.

Most sincerely,

Dolores Howry
Tredyffrin/Easttown resident

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REVIEW COMMISSION