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From: Dona and Jim Redmond [DonaAndJim@comcast.net]
Sent: Thursday, May 22, 2008 10:59 AM
To: j buckheit@state.pa.us; IRRRC; jrhoades@pasen.gov; musto@pasenate.com; jstairs@pahousegop.com; jroebuck@pahouse.net; dmilne@pahousegop.com; eerickson@pasen.gov; andydinniman@pasenate.com; crubleyle@pahousegop.com
Subject: FW: Proposal for Graduation Competency Assessments

To the PA State Legislative Representatives,

I am forwarding my comments to you regarding Graduation Competency Assessments, to be included with public comment on the proposed legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dona B. Redmond

RECEIVED
 2008 MAY 22 AM 11:17
 INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
 REVIEW COMMISSION

From: Dona and Jim Redmond [mailto:DonaAndJim@comcast.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 28, 2008 10:02 AM
To: 'crubleyle@pahousegop.com'
Subject: Proposal for Graduation Competency Assessments

Dear Representative Rubley,

I am writing you to oppose the recommendation for Graduation Competency Assessments, to start with the class of 2014.

I am a resident of Tredyffrin, and my children have been in the Tredyffrin/Easttown public schools since Kindergarten. My youngest is in the 6th grade, and would therefore be affected by the proposed legislation.

I am opposed to the use of GCA's for a number of reasons. Children in T/E are given standardized tests starting in **Second grade**. Teachers and Counselors are constantly on the watch for children who are struggling academically, and use the results of standardized tests AS WELL AS teacher input to identify them. Support and pull-out programs are in place throughout K-12 to assist these children, with particular emphasis on reading, writing, and math. For the 85% of Conestoga High School students who have shown proficiency on the PSSA's, GCA's would be a giant waste of time and money. The 85% have already proven themselves. Why not funnel the money proposed for the testing of the already competent, and use it to support classes and pull-outs ALREADY IN PLACE for the academically struggling?

Let us not forget that Conestoga (as well as many other PA high schools) boast college attendance OVER 95%. I find it absurd to think that the children who are currently not proficient on the PSSA's manage to "trick" college admission counselors into acceptance. Clearly, these students are ready to succeed; they may have needed to use other testing means to display their unique skills and talents.

I would also like to point out that there are currently students in 6th grade taking a course under consideration for testing - Algebra 1. There are a number of students (my son included) who will take this in 7th grade. These students will have completed all the math topics proposed for testing between the end of 8th or 9th grade. It does not make sense to have these children tested years from the time that they completed the course. Once again, I consider it a huge waste of their time and taxpayer's money. These children ARE succeeding and are proving it.

The T/E School District does not graduate incompetent students. This legislation benefits only the test providers. It does nothing to improve the classrooms for the academically struggling. Please do what you can to put a stop to this testing fiasco, and put the money into the classrooms.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

5/22/2008

Dona B. Redmond