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From: Lynda Spencer [comwu@hotmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, May 28, 2008 7:51 AM
To: j buckheit@state.pa.us; IRRC; jrhoades@pasen.gov; musto@pasenate.com; jstairs@pahousegop.com; jroebuck@pahouse.net; dmilne@pahousegop.com; crubley@pahousegop.com; eerickson@pasen.gov; andydinniman@pasenate.com
Subject: GCAs

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

RECEIVED
2008 MAY 28 AM 9:18
INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

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

I am writing to express my opposition to the GCAs. I am writing as a concerned mother, a tax payer, a learning support aide and former student who did not do well on standardized tests. My first concern is as a mother. My one son is in the high math earning average scores in the 80's and 90's but when tested by the PSSA's shows a below competency score. Testing causes him great anxiety. It would be an egregious error to deprive him of his diploma based on this one test that is a very incomplete measure of a child's ability. As a learning support aide I am I am opposed because GCAs will not be provided in a format that meets the needs of diverse learners. One only needs to visit schools to observe the undo burden over testing has on teachers and students taking away from valuable learning time and resources. I am opposed because we already test our students in math, reading and science through the state PSSA exams. As a tax payer I am opposed to double testing of our students. The time and money could be used more responsibility especially schools is low income areas. 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. As a former student I am concerned that you may increase the DROP OUT RATE if students are discourage about their ability to graduate based on a limited test. I feel no thought has been given to the consequences of this action or a comprehensive plan to support and protect our children been thought through. I know many of our schools need help but is this truly the answer. This appears be heading down a destructive path. I can not communicate how deeply I feel about this idea.

Most sincerely,

Lynda Spencer

Tredyffrin/Easttown resident

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5/28/2008