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From: stephenjones@rcn.com**Sent:** Tuesday, May 27, 2008 10:59 AM**To:** j buckheit@state.pa.us; irrc@irrc.state.pa.us; jroades@pasen.gov; musto@pasenate.com;
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cruble@pahousegop.com; eerickson@pasen.gov; andydinniman@pasenate.com**Subject:** Opposition to the Graduation Competency Assessments

Hi:

I am writing to express my opposition to the Graduation Competency Assessments.

I am opposed because I believe that it will increase the drop out rate. Students who are unable to pass the test will not be persistent because they feel that they will never pass. They will also tell their friends to give up or just drop out during 9th grade. The drop out rate is already high in many counties and cities around the state.

The test will also create an artificial sense that students are doing better because only those who are tested will be included in certain reports.

The GCA test will not account for the differing learning styles and financial investments that are made in schools across the state. Some schools receive thousands of dollars less than others. The teachers do not have the resources or class sizes that foster academic excellence.

I am opposed because GCAs will not be provided in a format that meets the needs of diverse learners. I am opposed because the school systems already test students in math, reading and science through the state PSSA exams. 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,

Dr. Stephen Jones

Dr. Stephen Jones
Springfield (Delaware County) resident

Dr. Stephen Jones
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