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From: Rice, Tameka [trice@papartnerships.org] 2008 MAY 29 AM 9:34

Sent: Tuesday, May 27, 2008 10:33 AM

Subject: Local Control of Education NOT at Stake INDEPENDENT REGULATORY REVIEW COMMISSION

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Local Control of Education NOT at Stake

Poll results from Susquehanna Polling and Research show that only one quarter of those polled recently said they opposed the State Board of Education's proposal to allow the use of graduation competency exams (GCAs) because they believed exit exams would take away local control from school boards. Furthermore, a larger majority - **58 percent** – said they support the proposal as a way to ensure all high school students graduate with a minimum level of knowledge and skills.

Despite misleading rhetoric from vocal opponents, the state is not eliminating local school board control for graduation requirements.

The State Board's proposal leaves in place the core requirement that in order to graduate, students must demonstrate achievement of the state standards by scoring proficient or above on the 11th grade PSSAs, or a local assessment that is aligned to the state standards. The rulemaking provides school districts additional options for students to demonstrate achievement through the GCAs and Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate exams. The rulemaking also establishes how a local assessment can be validated as being aligned with the state academic standards. School districts will still maintain full control over other graduation requirements such as what courses a student needs to take, passing grades, graduation projects, etc.

Loss of local control is a fallacy! But one thing's for sure: **Implementation of the State Board's proposal will help ensure all students graduate from high school ready for college or career.**

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.papartnerships.org/readyat21/index.asp>

The State Board of Education is proposing regulations that would revise high school graduation

requirements to establish consistent statewide measurement of the minimum knowledge and skills that a public high school diploma signifies as well as a system of academic supports to help students achieve.

All young people in Pennsylvania should have the opportunity and education to build productive and successful lives for themselves and their families. Pennsylvania should hold all its high school students -- regardless of where they live, their race, income level, or future education or work-related aspirations -- to the same standards and assess them through comparable, validated tools.