



# DANIEL BOONE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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2696

May 29, 2008

Mr. Edward J. Sheehan, Jr.  
333 Market Street, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Dear Mr. Sheehan:

Attached is a resolution opposing Proposed High School Graduation Competency Assessments that was approved by the Board of School Directors of the Daniel Boone Area School District.

The reasons for the opposition are clearly stated. I would ask that you also oppose the Graduation Competency Assessments when they come for a vote.

We have more than enough assessments to measure student growth. It is time for the pendulum to swing where the emphasis is on the content taught and the effectiveness of that delivery system. Let us turn to what education should be, the process of learning, and this process is much larger than one more mandated assessment.

Thank you for your continued support of public education. If you have questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Robbins", is written over a horizontal line.

David H. Robbins  
Superintendent of Schools

DHR/lab

Attachment

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PA. STATE BOARD  
OF EDUCATION

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

# **DANIEL BOONE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **RESOLUTION OPPOSING PROPOSED HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION COMPETENCY ASSESSMENTS**

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education has approved a proposal to revise the current high school graduation requirements under the Chapter 4 regulations to require students to pass a series of standardized high stakes Graduation Competency Assessments in order to get a diploma; and

WHEREAS, these new requirements and exams will be the same for all students, whether they are taking college prep or vocational courses, are English language learners or participating in individualized programs, and all students effectively will be required to take the same courses in order to pass this new battery of state tests; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 4 currently allows districts to use either the PSSA or rigorous local assessments for their students to demonstrate proficiency of the state academic standards; and it is misleading and incorrect to make the assumption that because students demonstrate their achievements on local assessments rather than the PSSA that there is a disconnect between proficiency and graduation; and

WHEREAS, although the GCA proposal permits schools to use a local assessment option, it establishes numerous limitations, including the elimination of the ability to use various assessment strategies now available to local entities and requires local tests to be closely modeled to the GCAs; and

WHEREAS, decades of research shows many reasons why standardized pencil and paper test scores should never be the determining factor in making major decisions about students, and that a diploma should be granted based on the coursework, tests and quizzes, presentations, projects and papers throughout the student's career; and

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education has not prepared a cost analysis or fiscal note, even though this will create a large financial impact on state and local budgets, and the State Board's own costing-out study did not include the costs for this new system and found that the state already is \$4.4 billion short in helping school districts prepare students to meet the academic standards by 2014; and

WHEREAS, the proposal requires school districts to absorb many new costs related to revising curriculum, professional development, test development and validation, test preparation and administration, remediation and other costs. Given the state's funding shortfall and the Act 1 limitations on tax increases, school districts have limited ability to fund these potential new costs.