

Buckheit, James

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From: Tom and Pam Mase [pntmase@comcast.net]
Sent: Thursday, May 29, 2008 2:46 PM
To: jbuckheit@state.pa.us
Subject: Graduation test

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

As a parent of two children I am totally against a graduation test. To have students take a test to see if they are eligible to graduate seems to me like just another way to divert the students from their actual learning to concentrate on another standardized test. Their senior year will be used to prepare them for this test rather than prepare them for college, jobs, and life in general. Right now we stop teaching midway through our school year to review with our kids so they do well on the PSSAs. Seniors in high school will have already made college plans, etc. and if they just happen to not do well on that one test will all that be taken away? It seems ridiculous to me that one test will determine if you can graduate or not regardless of if you've done well throughout your 12 years of school in these subjects. If you pass the course itself with the teacher's tests, then there shouldn't be an issue. There are so many pressures on kids these days to begin with and to put another test on them that could seriously affect what direction their lives take seems wrong to me. Also, seniors have a graduation project to do which is also a requirement. Won't that and all other high school activities, etc. suffer since the students will now be too busy worrying about whether they can pass this "final test" before graduation? If students have reached 12th grade yet can't perform to certain standards, then something should have been done earlier in the education process to work with those students. Just because some students haven't done well in school doesn't mean that all students should suffer. I honestly think that it's a shame that we will use one test to see if students are eligible to graduate. Why bother in regular classes and regular tests then? Some students will figure that out and then there will be even more of a problem. I think the entire concept of a graduation test is ridiculous if the student has made it to 12th grade to begin with. Let's concentrate on better issues within our education system. I'm just sad as a parent that my children's entire education will be based upon this one test. Please look at all the issues before implementing this.

Thank you.
Pamela M. Mase