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**Buckheit, James****From:** Heather Berra [hberra75@hotmail.com]

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**Sent:** Tuesday, June 03, 2008 7:28 AM**To:** j buckheit@state.pa.usINDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION**Subject:** please let me know if the privacy statement appears again. sorry

I am writing to let you know about my concerns about GCA's. First, as an educator of students with disabilities, I know that a number of students will never be able to reach proficient on a state exam. It is not for a lack of trying in every instance either. A lot of students want to succeed, but simply do not have the means to do so. Secondly, I work with students in a work experience program. While I understand the importance of doing well in school, not all students are able to show their ability through academics; hence, they participate in a work program where they can shine. Most of these students will be going on to a work track, therefore, work should be their focus, not doing well on an academically based state assessment. Finally, as a Master's educated professional, I feel that state exams show no evidence of a person's intellectual abilities. I finished in the top 20% of my high school class. If the standardized SAT scores were the main determining factor in whether or not I went on to college, I would probably not have been allowed in as I only scored a 980. However, I was able to go on to college and finished in the very top of my class getting only A's and B's throughout my 5 year college career where I earned a degree in special and elementary education with a minor in early childhood education. Again, after graduating with my Bachelor's degree, I had to take yet another standardized test, the MAT's. Again, I performed poorly on the exam, achieving only at the 50th percentile. However, I was accepted into the program because they took into account other factors and I graduated with a 4.0. My point??? Standardized exams are made up so that testing agencies can make money. They do not always show what a student is capable of doing. If my life was based on standardized exams, I would not have been able to obtain my Master's degree. Where would you be if your life was based on a test??? Think about it. Let's get real and focus on what students really need to learn in order to live in today's world...not what you think they should know.

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