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Buckheit, James

From: ferguson [ferguson@freeport.k12.pa.us]
Sent: Wednesday, June 04, 2008 11:19 AM
To: jbuckheit@state.pa.us
Subject: Proposed Chapter 4 Regulation

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

State Board of Education
ATTN: James Buckheit, Executive Director
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126

Re: Proposed Chapter 4 Regulations
Graduation Competency Assessments

Dear Mr. Buckheit:

I am writing in regard to the proposed Chapter 4 Regulation Graduation Competency Assessment. I have taught in the classroom for over 15 years and I feel very strongly about this proposed regulation.

We, as a public school system, have put in many long hours trying to devise an educational plan that will promote all kinds of students who all have many different learning styles. No one child learns the same way yet we need to teach all students much of the same information so that they will graduate and be a productive part of society. Many go on to college, learn a trade, or become employed immediately after graduation. All of these are important to society. All students learn differently and NOT all students show what they have learned by being tested using a paper and pencil. This is why we have devised graduation expectations using projects, portfolios, etc. Because research has shown us that children all employ different learning styles, we, as educators, need to employ different testing styles as well. We should not keep a child from graduating simply because he/she does not do well on a test using paper and pencil. The regulation that is being proposed would do just that.

Please, support us as educators by not allowing this to happen. Valuable children who have valuable learning styles would be prohibited from graduating simply because they are unable to pass a test of this sort. If they have done all that is required of them and have passed all of the courses they must take to graduate, this test could very well keep them from graduating. I know solely within the learning differences of my own children that two of them are very poor test takers. However, when asked them to solve a problem or recite something to me orally, they do much better than my two children who would score 100% on a "paper/pencil" test. Also, this proposal does NOT exclude students with IEP's so they would be tested in the same manner as all other students. They already have a devised educational plan yet we would insist that they be tested in a manner in which we already know would be hard for them.

As you can see by my letter, I feel very strongly about this proposal. Please help me, as well as all educators, to defeat this proposal and help students to show what they have learned in ways that as suitable for them and their various learning styles.

Sincerely,

Anne Butler Ferguson
2nd Grade Teacher
Buffalo Elementary School
Freeport, PA

6/4/2008