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Buckheit, James

RECEIVED

From: Elizabeth Whitehead [ewhitehe@basd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, June 04, 2008 1:55 PM
To: Elizabeth Whitehead
Subject: Oppose the GCA Proposal!

2008 JUN -9 PM 2: 57

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Message sent to the following recipients:

Senator Wozniak

Message text follows:

Elizabeth Whitehead
207 Warwick Street
Philipsburg, PA 16866-1857

June 4, 2008

[recipient address was inserted here] ✓

Dear [recipient name was inserted here], ✓

As your constituent, I urge you to oppose the State Board of Education's proposed Graduation Competency Assessments. This proposal would mandate high-stakes standardized high school exit exams and would deny students a high school diploma if they do not score "proficient" on these statewide tests.

There are numerous reasons I oppose the GCA proposal, but first and foremost I do not believe that standardized tests are the best determination of student achievement. The thought of denying students a high school diploma - which has long-term negative effects on their lives - because they didn't score "proficient" on a statewide test truly concerns me.

At a time when we know that Pennsylvania's public education system lacks the funding it needs by over \$4 billion in order to help every student meet the state's academic standards, it is irresponsible to impose high-stakes testing on our students. In addition, no analysis has been done on the cost of developing and administering the GCAs, let alone what it would cost to remediate those students who do not score "proficient" on the exam.

Please talk to your colleagues on the Education Committee and ask them to oppose the GCA proposal. Thank you

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Whitehead