

RECEIVED

495

Buckheit, James

From: Margaret Kerr [MKerr@gvsd.org]
Sent: Wednesday, June 04, 2008 1:13 PM
To: 'jbuckheit@state.pa.us'
Subject: Re: Proposed Chapter 4 Regulations

2008 JUN -9 PM 3:02

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

State Board of Education
ATTN: James Buckheit, Executive Director
333 Market St.
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Dear Mr. Buckheit,

6/4/08

I have a major problem with the new GCAs. I am a special education teacher in Great Valley School District. I am passionate about what I do and the students I teach. I feel strongly that it would be big disservice to special education students to require GCAs. These students work hard every day and want to do well but most of them do not test well. Many students will never learn Algebra 2 and Calculus concepts. What good does it do to test them on this.

Standardized tests are not harmless! They take time away from teachers in that we must plan how to deliver the test, teach to the test, find coverage or make sub plans for when we administer the tests, and lastly, we must counsel and console the students before and after the standardized tests. There are already too many major tests given at the high school level during the school day. Tests such as PSSAs, PSATs, midterms, placement tests, and Finals take numerous hours away from instruction time. You cannot imagine how overwhelming these tests are for special education students! The anxiety the tests cause is very high. I am dealing with that anxiety as I write. Students are so worried about if they are to graduate or not based on grades, attendance, PSSA requirements. Imagine adding in this mix the GCAs! I see a lot of drop outs.

Please share that I oppose the GCAs. I would much rather see the money spent to help children become contributing members of our community.

Sincerely,

Margaret E. Kerr
Learning Support Teacher
Great Valley High School

6/4/2008