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Form Letters - 2

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2008 JUN 12 AM 9:34

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION



Tredyffrin/Easttown
SCHOOL DISTRICT
 738 First Ave. | Berwyn, PA | 19312

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Comments on the Proposed Graduation Competency Assessment

The State Board of Education has officially posted the regulation regarding the proposed Graduation Competency Assessments (GCAs) in the Pennsylvania Bulletin. There is a 30 day comment period during which community members may submit written comments, suggestions or objections regarding the proposed regulation to be considered by the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC). All comments submitted during the 30 day period will be recorded by the State Board of Education and attached to the regulations as they move through the process.

Contact Information

Interested community members are invited to submit comments on the GCA proposal to Jim Buckheit, Executive Director, State Board of Education; the IRRC; and the Republican and Democratic Chairs of the Senate and House Education Committees: Senator James Rhoades, Senator Raphael Musto, Representative Jess Stairs and Representative James Roebuck. In addition, please consider sending a copy of your comments to local legislators: Representative Duane Milne, Representative Carole Rubley, Senator Edwrick Erickson, and Senator Andrew Dinniman.

For ease of sending your comments via email, here is the list of contact email addresses to copy and paste into your email:

jbuckheit@state.pa.us; irrc@irrc.state.pa.us; jrhoades@pasen.gov; musto@pasenate.com;
 jstairs@pahousegop.com; jroebuck@pahouse.net; dmilne@pahousegop.com; crubley@pahousegop.com
 eerickson@pasen.gov; andydinniman@pasenate.com

Sample Letter and Talking Points

Sample letter to copy and paste into an email and then customize:

State Board of Education
 333 Market St.
 Harrisburg, PA 17126

Dear Mr. Buckheit, and State Board of Education Members,

I am writing to express my opposition to the GCAs.

(Choose reasons that best convey your feelings about the GCAs.)

I am opposed because GCAs will not be provided in a format that meets the needs of diverse learners.
 I am opposed because we already test our students in math, reading and science through the state PSSA exams.

I am opposed to double testing of our students. I am opposed because students in our district are already reaching proficiency in reading, math, and science either through the PSSA exams or through a comprehensive, local assessment.

I am opposed because GCAs do not test our students on relevant 21st century skills, and valuable class time will have to be diverted to prepare students to take these additional tests.

Most sincerely,

(name)

Tredyffrin/Easttown resident

If you prefer to compose your own letter, here are some talking points from the T/E School Board's March 24th resolution opposing the GCAs:

- Our local school district is currently preparing all students for success in college and the workplace
- Unlike a school district's own local proficiency assessment, GCAs do not offer the flexibility to meet the needs of students who have different learning styles and do not permit assessment of students in nontraditional ways.
- The addition of the GCS battery reduces the number of instructional days and would impose an unreasonable load of high-stakes testing on students who are already facing a burden of stressful standardized tests.
- The introduction of GCAs would result in a state-controlled curriculum that reduces a local school district's ability to provide a curriculum based on community needs and desires.
- Students who have received offers of acceptance from colleges may not have the opportunity to attend if they fail to pass a test.
- The current proposal could have significant economic impact on school districts operating under A fiscal restraints and the required expenditures have no proof of effectiveness.

For more information on the GCAs, please visit the [Graduation Competency Assessment web site](#).

This is an important piece of legislation that could affect children in Pennsylvania beginning with the graduating class of 2014. The deadline to submit comments on the GCAs is **June 16, 2008**, so don't let the school year end before sending your comment!



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