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**Buckheit, James**

**From:** William Beck [williambeck@alltel.net] 2008 JUN 12 AM 9:38  
**Sent:** Friday, June 06, 2008 2:29 PM  
**To:** j buckheit@state.pa.us  
**Cc:** William L. Beck  
**Subject:** GCA testing

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

Dear Mr. Buckheit,

I am writing this email to express my displeasure at the prospect of the state requiring a Graduation Competency Assessment exam. There are too many tests as it is now. Someone needs to take into account that some students do not do well on standardized tests even though they make good grades. When I was in school, I was one of those students as I had to take my college boards twice and did not score well on them or any other type of standardized test and I was an honor roll student. Just to let you know that I went on to college and graduated with a 3.2 average in 1965, attained a MLS degree from Pitt with all A's with the exception of one B. I also completed another 36 credits beyond the Master's with a 4.0 average, worked in education 36 years--4 as a teacher and 32 as a college librarian. When I retired 7 years ago I was Dean of Library Services at California U. of PA--not bad for an individual who is not a good standardized test taker.

All of these tests, like the PSSA's, are detracting from the time teachers can spend in the classroom teaching!! Teaching geared towards learning and not passing a test! When will society wake up and realize that everyone is not an A or B student. The bell curve is realistic--there are more average people. And there will always be those who simply do not have the capacity to excel. One is only born with so much gray matter. I think it is time to return to common sense in education. A high school diploma was never meant to be universal, and in doing so, education is watered down.

Sincerely,

William L. Beck  
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