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Buckheit, James

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From: Caber, Kathi [Kathi.Caber@healthsouth.com]**Sent:** Thursday, June 12, 2008 10:30 AM**To:** j buckheit@state.pa.us**Subject:** Graduation RequirementsINDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Dear Mr. Buckheit:

I write in support of the proposed State Board of Education Chapter 4 regulations regarding academic standards and assessment and the requirement for graduation competency assessments that would be in place by 2013.

As the parent of a four-year-old son, I want to be assured that the public school he attends provides a quality education that prepares him for the next phase of his life, whether it will be college or employment. It makes no sense to me that Pennsylvania schools are currently allowed to establish their own graduation requirements.

How is a parent able to determine the quality of education their child receives if there is no uniform standard in the state? Shouldn't a high school diploma from the Penns Valley School District (where I currently live) mean the same thing as one from the State College Area School District?

I have heard all of the arguments against these requirements – too many tests, too expensive, loss of local control, etc. I have trouble finding the logic in any of those arguments. If all schools in Pennsylvania are expected to ensure that all children meet the same academic standards, it makes sense that they would all take the same test. It also makes sense that students can take the test when they finish a course, rather than wait until 11th grade for the PSSA. In regard to costs, wouldn't it actually save local school districts money if the state were developing the tests rather than each district developing their own? Finally, the local control argument is often used as a shield for districts that don't want to be accountable for producing the expected results.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Kathi B. Caber, MBA

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