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1254 Laurytown Rd.
Weatherly, PA 18255
June 9, 2008

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

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

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JUN 11 2008

PA. STATE BOARD
OF EDUCATION

Dear Mr. Buckheit,

I STRONGLY OPPOSE the proposed regulations being considered in Harrisburg for Graduation Competency Assessments (GCA'S) Even if a student had attended school for 12 years, completed all of their courses, passed all 12 grades, earned good grades on all of their papers and projects, if they do not earn "proficient" grades on six of ten new standardized state tests in subjects such as Algebra II and Chemistry, they do not receive a high school diploma.

As a Special Education teacher of Learning Support Students, I feel my students would be harmed, as resources are diverted to the unnecessary task of getting regular education students ready to score Proficient on MORE STANDARDIZED TESTS. I also feel there would be a flood of students trying to get into special education to avoid the GCA requirement. This would take time and resources from the children who truly need special education services.

Special Education students are not exempted from taking these Standardized Tests. Even though there is a proposed regulation allowing IEP teams to exempt special education students from scoring proficient to graduate, most special education students become extremely upset while struggling to do their best on another standardized test.

These millions of dollars \$\$\$\$\$\$ spent on testing could be better spent to help students: parental involvement programs, smaller class sizes in younger grades, and tutoring and summer school programs. Please do not waste money on MORE STANDARDIZED TESTING when we already have the PSSA tests. Legislators have no idea the amount of class time necessary in preparing students for standardized tests and the amount of time needed to administer the tests....time taken away from class instruction.

A Concerned Educator,

Linda Wagner
Linda Wagner

Pennsylvania desperately needs a permanent and equitable funding for public education.