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Buckheit, James

From: DeWitt, James [JDEWITT@wcasd.k12.pa.us]
Sent: Tuesday, June 17, 2008 8:44 AM
To: j buckheit@state.pa.us
Cc: andydinniman@pasenate.com
Subject: Graduation Competency Assessments

2008 JUN 23 AM 10:22
INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Dear Mr. Buckheit,

I am writing in response to the proposed amendment to PA Chapter 4 that would require students to take and pass Graduation Competency Assessments in order to receive their diploma from a PA public school. Students in Pennsylvania are already required to take a multitude of assessments that are aligned with the PA standards based curriculum but also the rigorous PSSA. With the advent of PSSA students and Districts across the commonwealth are engaged in "high stakes" testing. While I applaud the fact that PA schools are required to have students achieve to a common standard, as an educator I am not seeing the benefit. Students demonstrating difficulties with emotional anxiety is at an all time high which adds stress to families and school districts as they must find unique ways to educate these students. I would ask the Department of Education to reconsider the decision to add another "test" to an already full academic year.

Jim DeWitt

6/17/2008