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**Buckheit, James**

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**From:** Kathy Fernandez [kjf1218@msn.com]**Sent:** Friday, June 13, 2008 8:23 PMINDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION**To:** j buckheit@state.pa.us**Subject:** Graduation Competency Assessments

I am NOT in favor of the "GPA"s.

My daughter is a senior and on the dean's list at James Madison University. Growing up, she received poor scores on every standardized test she ever took; her SATs were low enough that we worried about college acceptance even though her grades were good. She's an extremely bright young woman who, for whatever reason, has never tested well.

I work in the office of a wonderful middle school but every year that goes by I see more and more of "teaching to the test" in order to make our students "proficient".

Yes, schools have an obligation to teach "facts" to our students. But even more important is teaching them where to find the facts, when to question the facts, and think critically using those facts. Students should be exposed to as much information as possible; some will retain most of it and others will retain less. A student's class grades, attendance, and citizenship should be the only determinations when deciding who will receive a diploma and who will not. Those who test poorly should not be penalized if they have successfully completed the requirements to graduate.

Sincerely,  
Kathy Fernandez