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**Buckheit, James****From:** ruma ali [sabrumon1@yahoo.com]

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**Sent:** Friday, June 13, 2008 9:47 AM**To:** j buckheit@state.pa.usINDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION**Subject:** Regarding more proficiency tests and those with ieps. Please listen.

Please read below how the proposed rules could hurt my son who has an iep. He is diagnosed with autism. He is a wonderful guy who is non-verbal and intelligent and needs extra help. He is 4 years old and can read and type at at least a first/second grade

level, but we are trying to help him use his communication device functionally. If more proficiency tests are ruled in, then regardless of my son and a few classmates' test scores, he will pass. But the typical students must pass the test to graduate. Which means that teachers will focus on the typical students. How is it fair that the kids who have special needs will get fewer needs met realistically with this proposal in place? Please do not allow this proposal to go through. Please. Thanks for your time.

Read below. Please bring this issue up at the next meeting. Thanks.

Rummana

MAY GOD BLESS US ALL.

#### Proposed Rules Will Hurt Students With IEPs

If adopted, new regulations proposed by the PA Board of Education in Harrisburg would prevent students from receiving high school diplomas unless they earn a "proficient" grade on 6 of 10 new standardized state tests. This new requirement would be so even if the student attended school for 12 years, completed all of their courses, passed all 12 grades, earned good grades on all of their research papers and projects, etc. These tests are called Graduation Competency Assessments (GCAs) (also known as "high stakes" graduation).

For students with an IEP, the regulations would still require them to take the test, but it would exempt them from having to earn a "proficient" grade in order to graduate. Students in special education would be harmed because school resources would likely be diverted to the task of getting general education students prepared to score "proficient" on the standardized tests. (For illustration purposes, if a class has 20 general education students who will not graduate unless they score "proficient" and 5 students with IEPs who will graduate regardless of whether they score "proficient", then the pressure on teachers and school administrators will be very strong to focus most or all of their time and attention on the 20 general education students.

In addition, this new proposed regulation would very likely cause a flood of students attempting to get into special education as a way to avoid having to score a "proficient" in order to graduate. With the increased number of new special education students, time and resources focused on students who

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truly need special education services would be diverted and/or spread thin.

These new regulations have not been approved yet. The PA Board of Education is accepting public comments through June 16th. Official comments must be made to Jim Buckheit, Executive Director, State Board of Education, 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333, or to [jbuckheit@state.pa.us](mailto:jbuckheit@state.pa.us). Comments will be shared with the Independent Regulatory Review Commission and the House and State Education Committees, who will also have an opportunity to comment as well.