



Head Start / Early Head Start Of Fayette County

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January 3, 2008

State Board of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, Pa. 17126

Dear Chairman Griton:

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PA. STATE BOARD
OF EDUCATION

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SERVICES:

I am writing to you to offer my support for a quality and rigorous education for all Pennsylvania students. I support the State Board of Education's efforts to establish statewide graduation requirements to ensure that all Pennsylvania's high school graduates are adequately prepared for life after high school. Student achievement is an extremely relevant factor in our country's economic future.

I believe it is our responsibility to guarantee that all students master the math, science, reading, writing and social studies skills they need to succeed. Those efforts should be recognized with a high school diploma that represents a level of academic achievement that is uniform across the commonwealth regardless of which high school or school district has awarded it. Graduation Competency Assessments (GCAs) are a common sense way to offer such assurances to students, parents, colleges, universities and employers.

In a world where academic and professional standards are becoming ever more rigorous, we cannot afford to have a patchwork system for awarding diplomas to our students. We need to ensure that every Pennsylvania high school diploma means real opportunity for success.

As an employer working with pre-school aged children and families, it is of extreme importance to me that high school graduates are well equipped to continue their educational journey. Those choosing to stay in the field of education should not be penalized by entering college without the confidence they need to succeed because our school systems have failed to accurately assess and address their needs.

I understand that the State Board of Education will consider graduation requirement regulations that include GCAs at its January meeting. I ask that you move forward with this important effort.

Thank you for your time and I would appreciate hearing your views on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Sandra J. Hall

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Assistant Director of Early Childhood Development

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REVIEW COMMISSION