



# 2696

**CENTRAL COLUMBIA SCHOOL DISTRICT**

4777 OLD BERWICK ROAD  
BLOOMSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17815-3515

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MAR 10 2008

**PA. STATE BOARD  
OF EDUCATION**

March 9, 2009

Mr. Joseph Torsella, Chair  
State Board of Education  
333 Market Street, First Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Dear Mr. Torsella:

I wish to express my support for the State Board's most recent Chapter Four proposal regarding Graduation Requirements and to thank you for your work on this proposal.

It is my belief that a course-aligned assessment system, when coupled with the current PSSA, will provide a comprehensive measure of student proficiency on the Reading, Writing, Mathematics, and Science Academic Standards. In addition, I believe that the proposed system will strengthen high school curricula and instruction and will restore the value of the high school diploma. Ultimately, it is my belief that this system will provide for improved student academic achievement and an improved workforce.

I understand that there may be issues to be worked out. I believe, for example, in the need for ensured validity and reliability—that the proposed Keystone Assessments, as well as the locally developed assessments, provide a true measure of minimum proficiency. In addition, I urge the department to work with the USDOE to make the PSSA optional in terms of AYP if a student has met graduation requirements through other means.

I wish to congratulate you on developing regulations that will provide for stronger high schools throughout the Commonwealth.

Please let me know how I can be of further support.

Sincerely,

Harry C. Mathias, Jr.  
Superintendent

District Administration  
Office

570-784-2850  
FAX 570-387-0192

High School Office

570-784-2833  
FAX 570-784-3570

Athletic Office

FAX 570-784-0863

Middle School Office

570-784-6103  
FAX 570-784-4935

Elementary School Office

570-784-6120  
FAX 570-784-2582

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