

**RESOLUTION OPPOSING PROPOSED HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION COMPETENCY ASSESSMENTS
BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
KEYSTONE OAKS SCHOOL DISTRICT**

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education has approved a proposal to revise the current high school graduation requirements under the Chapter 4 regulations to require students to pass a series of standardized high stakes Graduation Competency Assessments in order to get a diploma; and

WHEREAS, these new requirements and exams will be the same for all students, whether they are taking college prep or vocational courses, are English language learners or participating in individualized programs, and all students effectively will be required to take the same courses in order to pass this new battery of state tests; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 4 currently allows districts to use either the PSSA or rigorous local assessments for their students to demonstrate proficiency of the state academic standards; and it is misleading and incorrect to make the assumption that because students demonstrate their achievements on local assessments rather than the PSSA that there is a disconnect between proficiency and graduation; and

WHEREAS, although the GCA proposal permits schools to use a local assessment option, it establishes numerous limitations, including the elimination of the ability to use various assessment strategies not available to local entities and requires local tests to be closely modeled to the GCAs; and

WHEREAS, decades of research shows many reasons why standardized pencil and paper test scores should never be the determining factor in making major decisions about students, and that a diploma should be granted based on the coursework, tests and quizzes, presentations, projects and papers throughout the student's career; and

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education has not prepared a cost analysis or fiscal note, even though this will create a large financial impact on state and local budgets, and the State Board's own costing study did not include the costs for this new system and found that the state already is \$4.4 billion short in helping school districts prepare students to meet the academic standards by 2014; and

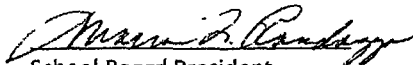
WHEREAS, the proposal requires school districts to absorb many new costs related to revising curriculum, professional development, test development and validation, test preparation and administration, remediation and other costs. Given the state's funding shortfall and the Act 1 limitation on tax increases, school districts have limited ability to fund these potential new costs.

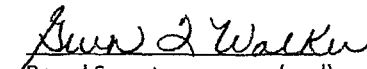
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Board of School Directors of the Keystone Oaks School District who are also members of South Hills Area School District Association (SHASDA), **opposes the State Board of Education's proposal to enact Graduation Competency Assessments** and any other regulation or legislation that usurps the authority of local school districts to determine whether their students have earned a high school diploma. This resolution will be shared with the State Board of Education, state legislators including local legislators and members of the Senate and House Education Committees, and the Independent Regulatory Review Commission.

Adopted this 21st day of February, 2008.

Signed,

Attest:


School Board President


Board Secretary (seal)

Keystone Oaks

Kraus, Mary Ann

From: Mary Ann Kraus [merniek@comcast.net]
Sent: Saturday, February 23, 2008 9:35 AM
To: Kraus, Mary Ann
Subject: Fw: BOARD RESOLUTION OPPOSING GCAs
Attachments: RESOLUTION OPPOSING HS GRAD COMPETENCY pdf

----- Original Message -----

From: ~~Masztak, Charmaine~~
To: Mary Ann Kraus
Sent: Friday, February 22, 2008 2:04 PM
Subject: BOARD RESOLUTION OPPOSING GCAs

Hi Mary Ann,

Attached is a copy of our Board Resolution (passed last evening, February 21, 2008) opposing High School Graduation Competency Assessments. The vote was unanimous. The following Board Members voted:

Marian Randazzo, President

Dennis Fuga, Vice President

Joanne Borgesi

Robert Brownlee

David Dristas

Robert Lloyd

Michael McMullen

Thomas Nee

Evelyn Weaver

If you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thanks and enjoy your weekend!

Charmaine

Handwritten notes in the right margin:
Feb 22 11:09:53
Charmaine