

#2696

BOARD APPROVED
6/23/09

RESOLUTION REGARDING PROPOSED
HIGH SCHOOL KEYSTONE EXAMS
By the Board of School Directors
Garnet Valley School District
June 23, 2009

RECOMMENDED

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WHEREAS, the Garnet Valley School District is currently preparing all students for success in college and the workplace, and

WHEREAS, an average of 93% of Garnet Valley graduates have attended four or two year accredited universities, colleges, and associate programs over the past three years, and

WHEREAS, the average Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) score for Garnet Valley Students attending four-year universities has been 1,545 (560 Mathematics, 540 Reading, and 545 Writing) over the past three years, and

WHEREAS, a three-year average of 81% of eleventh grade students in the Garnet Valley School District have demonstrated proficiency on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) in reading and a three-year average of 71% of eleventh grade students have demonstrated proficiency in mathematics, and

WHEREAS, in the Garnet Valley School District, students who have not scored proficient in the PSSA have shown understanding of the state standards through a variety of local assessments including a comprehensive, standards-based portfolio which is evaluated by Garnet Valley teachers, curriculum supervisors and administrators, and

WHEREAS, the PSSA's and Garnet Valley local assessments already provide the district with information about students in need of remediation, and adding another layer of testing will only regurgitate what is already known, and

WHEREAS, the Garnet Valley School District conducted a thorough survey of educators, parents, administrators, and students regarding the teaching of 21st Century skills and compared those results to national data; and

WHEREAS, the Keystone Exams will not measure 21st century skills employers and universities are seeking and will reduce instructional time that should be used for developing skill sets in the area of leadership, collaboration, problem solving, critical thinking, and technology rather than unreasonably increasing the amount of high stakes testing students currently face, and

WHEREAS, the criteria for local assessments are undefined and may discourage assessments that would be beneficial for diverse learners and special education students, and

WHEREAS, the introduction of Keystone Exams amounts to a state controlled curriculum that reduces the District's ability to provide a curriculum that focuses on

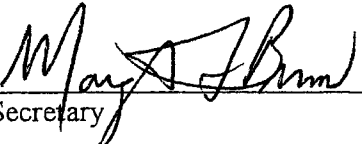
developing a passion for learning, the pursuit of excellence and social responsibility in students; and

WHEREAS, the State, having already identified best practices related to local proficiency assessments, can share these methods with all districts without the need to add Keystone Exams and their related expenses, and

WHEREAS, the Keystone Exams would have continuing economic impact on districts operating under the Act 1 fiscal constraints and on taxpayers across the Commonwealth, and these required expenditures have no proof of cost effectiveness; and

WHEREAS, the cost for districts to verify the validity of alternative assessments every six years would necessitate expenditures that would be better suited for instructional materials and classrooms;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of School Directors of the Garnet Valley School District opposes the State Board of Education's proposal to enact Keystone Exams and any other regulation of legislation that usurp the authority of local school districts to determine whether their students have earned high school diplomas. This resolution will be shared with the State Board of Education, legislators including local legislators and members of the Senate and House Education Committees, and the Independent Regulatory Review Commission.


Secretary


President