

CONSUMER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
READING DISTRICT OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
c/o Abilities In Motion
210 North Fifth Street
Reading, PA 19601

2696

June 22, 2009

Mr. Joseph Toresella, Chairman
Pennsylvania State Board of Education
P.O. Box 230
Flourtown, PA 19031

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**PA. STATE BOARD
OF EDUCATION**

*Jim
Pleasant*

Dear Mr. Toresella,

The Consumer Advisory Committee of the Reading District Office of Vocational Rehabilitation would like to express its concern regarding the proposed Keystone Exams. While there should be a system of accountability for both students and educators, we feel that placing graduation requirements solely on a general competence assessment will encourage an increased drop-out rate among high school students. As representatives of individuals with disabilities we fear that even though there would be provisions for students with IEPs there are students who fall through the cracks, never being identified with learning disabilities, autism, or other disabilities, who will be adversely affected. This, in turn, will place an increased burden on the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, or in the worst cast scenario, on the already stressed prison and welfare systems.

We urge the members of the State Board of Education to consider the alternative of utilizing additional methods of assessing readiness for graduation, such as class participation, homework, etc. in addition to a general competence assessment.

Yours truly,

Mary Baum

Mary Baum
President, Berks Consumer Advisory Committee

cc.: Governor Edward Rendell
Dr. Edward Zahorchak, Secretary of Education
William Gannon
Senator Michael O'Pake
Senator David Argall
Rep. Thomas Caltagirone
Rep. Jim Cox
Rep. David Kessler
Rep. Sam Rohrer
Rep. Dante Santoni