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Buckheit, James

From: Rosati, Jerry [G_Rosati@easdpa.org]
Sent: Thursday, August 13, 2009 3:51 PM
To: '00statbd@psupen.psu.edu'
Subject: Keystone Awards

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PA. STATE BOARD
OF EDUCATION

Department of Education:

Attached is a copy of the letter that was sent to the representatives and senator from our area.

Representatives Creighton, Boyd, Denlinger and Senator Brubaker

Thank you,
Clare M. LeFevre
Admin. Asst. to the Supt. &
School Board Secretary
Ephrata Area School District
803 Oak Blvd.
Ephrata PA 17522
(717) 721-1513

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Thank you. If you wish to view information about Ephrata Area School District, please visit our website at www.easdpa.org.

2696

Ephrata Area School District
803 Oak Boulevard, Ephrata, Pa 17522-1998
August 13, 2009 Phone:(717)-721-1513 Fax:(717)-721-1514
www.easdpa.org

Hon. Gordon Denlinger
House of Representatives
Harrisburg PA

Dear Hon. Denlinger:

I understand that representatives of the Department of Education have been circulating a "joint letter from Pennsylvania superintendents on stronger high school graduation requirements." Many of my colleagues have signed it.

Appropriately, the joint letter acknowledges the improvements to the end of course testing proposal during the last year, particularly the last few weeks. It correctly recognizes that under the new proposal, as opposed to the proposal that was before you last year, students will have more options to earn a diploma, and students will be subject to less testing. As important as these advances are, I believe that the regulation can be improved with two simple amendments.

Under the proposal, student performance on the Keystone exams must account for at least one-third of the student's final grade in the course for which the exam is required. This is too much weight to put on the test. It means that everything else the student does during the course of the academic year can count at most for two-thirds of their grade. Most districts count final exams as less than 20% of a student's course grade.

Students scoring below basic on a Keystone exam would get no credit for what they do know. They would be assigned a zero. I think this is unfair, and again, places too much emphasis on the state test. We recommend recognizing the actual score of every student without the artificial cliff.

I urge you, as you review and comment on the regulation, to seek these two simple changes.

Sincerely,



Gerald B. Rosati
Superintendent

cl
c Department of Education
PASA