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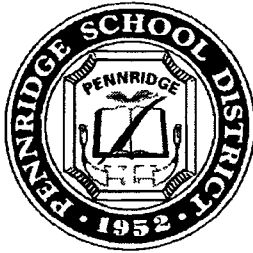
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AUG 12 2009

PA. STATE BOARD
OF EDUCATION



PENNRIDGE SCHOOL DISTRICT

*1200 North Fifth Street
Perkasie, Pennsylvania 18944-2295*

Board of School Directors

RESOLUTION OPPOSING PROPOSED KEYSTONE EXAMS COMPETENCY ASSESSMENTS AND RELATED PROVISIONS THE BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS OF THE PENNRIDGE 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 (Keystone Exams) in order to get a diploma; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly of Pennsylvania placed a one-year moratorium on the State Board prohibiting them from implementing regulations to establish GCAs or proceeding any further with them without the sanction of the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Pennridge School District Board of School Directors has previously passed, on April 14, 2008, a resolution in opposition to any standardized high stakes exit exams, and those statements still apply to exit exams, no matter what they are named; and

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education and the Pennsylvania Department of Education have ignored the one-year moratorium placed on them by the General Assembly under Act 61 of 2008 (which prohibits the establishment of high school graduation requirements) and issued a Request for Proposal for the GCA tests (now known as the Keystone Exams) in August 2008 and has since awarded contracts with Data Recognition Corporation to develop Keystone Exams in spite of the one-year legislatively imposed moratorium; and

WHEREAS, the State Board, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and the Pennsylvania School Boards Association have entered into a joint agreement that would replace the highly-controversial and highly-objectionable GCA proposal with an alternate proposal that is also highly-controversial and highly-objectionable, known as the Keystone Exams; and

WHEREAS, there already exists a broad requirement for local assessments to be aligned with the State Academic Standards that includes a requirement that performance-level expectations be comparable to the PSSA; and

WHEREAS, in the Pennridge School District, students who have not scored proficient on the PSSA have demonstrated the requisite understanding of state standards through a variety of other assessments including portfolios, oral presentations, hands-on demonstrations, and other methods; and

WHEREAS, the PSSAs and local assessments already provide districts with information about students in need of remediation, and another layer of testing will only confirm what is already known; and

WHEREAS, while the Keystone Exams proposal permits districts to use an alternative locally-designed assessment option, these local assessments must be validated through an as-yet undefined process with as-yet undefined criteria, and

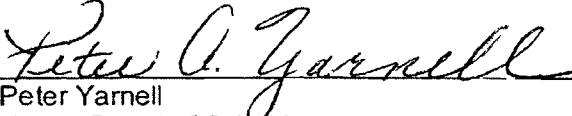
WHEREAS, verification of the validity of these alternative assessments would be required every six years and would be costly to the school district and administration in both time and money, giving districts no choice but to "voluntarily" use the GCA/Keystone Exams rather than incur the financial burden associated with the validation process; and

WHEREAS, the costs associated with validation and related curriculum revision, professional development, test preparation and administration, remediation and other costs are all expenditures that would be better spent in classrooms; and

WHEREAS, the addition of the GCA/Keystone Exams would reduce the number of instructional days and impose an unreasonable burden of high-stakes testing on students who are already facing an array of stressful standardized tests; and


NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of School Directors of the Pennridge School District opposes the State Board of Education proposals to enact GCA/Keystone Exams and any other regulations or 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; Dr. Gerald L. Zahorchack, Secretary of Education; the Pennsylvania Department of Education; legislators, including local legislators and members of the Senate and House Education Committees; the Independent Regulatory Review Commission; the Pennsylvania School Boards Association; and other school boards in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

RESOLVED, this fifteenth day of June 2009, that this resolution was approved and adopted by a majority vote of the Pennridge School District Board of School Directors at a public meeting.



Dr. Peter Yarnell
President, Board of School Directors

ATTEST:



Mrs. Anita Cron
Secretary, Board of School Directors