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RE

**RESOLUTION OPPOSING PROPOSED HIGH SCHOOL KEYSTONE EXAMS,  
by the Board of School Directors  
Kiski Area School District  
May 18, 2009**

**WHEREAS, the Kiski Area School District is currently preparing all students for success in college and the workplace; and**

**WHEREAS, students who have passed the local proficiency evaluations and have historically experienced placement and success in college could be denied the opportunity to attend even after offers of admission have been granted; and**

**WHEREAS, in the Kiski Area School District, students who have not scored proficient on the PSSA have shown understanding of state standards through a variety of other assessments including portfolios, oral presentations, hand-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, the State, without regulatory change, can extend technical and financial assistance to districts already known to be struggling; 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 Keystone Exams rather than incur the financial burden associated with the validation process; and**

**WHEREAS, the monies required by the districts for verification of the validity of alternative assessments would require expenditures that would be better spent in classrooms; and**

**WHEREAS, the criteria for local assessments are undefined and may discourage assessments that would be beneficial for diverse learners; and**

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

WHEREAS, the introduction of Keystone Exams amounts to a state controlled curriculum that reduces the District's ability to provide a curriculum based on community needs and desires for education that focuses on developing in students a passion for learning, personal integrity, the pursuit of excellence and social responsibility; and

WHEREAS, the Keystone Exams will not measure 21st century skills employers are seeking and will take away instructional time that should be used for developing skills sets in the areas of leadership, collaboration, creativity and technology; and

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

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of School Directors of the Kiski Area School District opposes the State Board of Education proposals to enact 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.

Gary R. Haag  
President

Rebecca A. Dunmire  
Board Secretary (Seal)