

# 2696

**From:** Ruth Bell [bell@southfayette.org]  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 20, 2009 8:14 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** FW: South Fayette School District Resolution OPPOSING GCA/Keystone Exams  
**Attachments:** 20090820073134934.pdf; PA House Education Committee; PA Senate Education Committee

**Importance:** High

Good morning,

Attached is a Resolution from the South Fayette Board of School Directors that was passed on Tuesday, August 18, 2009, OPPOSING the GCA/Keystone Exams.

Please forward to anyone else in PSBA who is involved with the GCA/Keystone Exams.

Sincerely,

Ruth Bell  
Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent School Board Secretary Open Records Officer  
South Fayette School District 3680 Old Oakdale Road McDonald, PA 15057

Phone: 412-221-4542, ext. 414

Fax: 724-693-0490

-----  
Disclaimer: This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and are intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. This communication represents the originator's personal views and opinions, which do not necessarily reflect those of South Fayette School District.

If you are not the original recipient or the person responsible for delivering the email to the intended recipient, be advised that you have received this email in error, and that any use, dissemination, forwarding, printing, or copying of this email is strictly prohibited. All emails and files are property of the school system and are archived. If you received this email in error, please delete it from your system.

Please consider your environmental responsibility before printing this e-mail and any documents.

-----  
Disclaimer: This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and are intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. This communication represents the originator's personal views and opinions, which do not necessarily reflect those of South Fayette School District.

If you are not the original recipient or the person responsible for delivering the email to the intended recipient, be advised that you have received this email in error, and that any use, dissemination, forwarding, printing, or copying of this email is strictly prohibited. All emails and files are property of the school system and are archived. If you received this email in error, please delete it from your system.

Please consider your environmental responsibility before printing this e-mail and any documents.

**RESOLUTION 09-05 OPPOSING PROPOSED  
HIGH SCHOOL GCA/KEYSTONE EXAMS  
by the Board of School Directors  
South Fayette School District  
August 2009**

**WHEREAS, the South Fayette 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 South Fayette 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 GCA/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 GCA/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

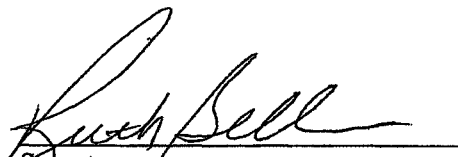
WHEREAS, the introduction of GCA/Keystone Exams amounts to a state controlled curriculum that reduces the District's ability to provide a curriculum based on community needs and desires for education that focuses on developing in students a passion for learning, personal integrity, the pursuit of excellence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

WHEREAS, the GCA/Keystone Exams will not measure 21<sup>st</sup> 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 GCA/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 GCA/Keystone Examinations and related expenses;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of School Directors of the South Fayette 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, legislators, including local legislators and members of the Senate and House Education Committees, and the Independent Regulatory Review Commission.

  
Secretary

  
Board President

**Distribution List Name:** PA Senate Education Committee



ATT3972196.txt

**Members:**

Andrew Dinniman, Minority Chair	andy@pasenate.com
Jeffrey E. Piccola, Chair	jpiccola@pasen.gov
John Pippy	jpippy@pasen.gov
Joseph B. Scarnati	jscarnati@pasen.gov
Mary Jo White	mwhite@pasen.gov
Mike Folmer	mfolmer@pasen.gov
Patrick Browne, Vice-Chair	pbrowne@pasen.gov
Robert Tomlinson	rtomlinson@pasen.gov
Senator Anthony Williams	williams@pasenate.com
Senator David Argall	dargall@pasen.gov
Senator Lawrence Farnese	lfarnese@pasenate.com
Vincent J. Hughes	hughes@pasenate.com

---

**Distribution List Name:** PA House Education Committee



ATT3972195.txt

**Members:**

Barbara McIlvaine Smith	repbsmith@pahouse.net
Bernie O'Neill	boneill@pahousegop.com
Chelsa Wagner	cwagner@pahouse.net
Daryl D. Metcalfe	dmetcalf@pahousegop.com
Duane Milne	dmilne@pahousegop.com
H. Scott Conklin	sconklin@pahouse.net
Jake Wheatley	jwheatley@pahouse.net
James R. Roebuck, Chair	jroebuck@pahouse.net
John E. Pallone	jpallone@pahouse.net
John T. Yudichak	judicha@pahouse.net
Karen D. Beyer	kbeyer@pahousegop.com
Kathy L. Rapp	klrapp@pahousegop.com
Ken Smith	ksmith@pahouse.net
Lawrence H. Curry	lcurry@pahouse.net
Mark Longietti	mlongiet@pahouse.net
Michael O'Brien	mobrien@pahouse.net
Mike Carroll	mcarroll@pahouse.net
Mike Fleck	mfleck@pahousegop.com
Mike Reese	mreese@pahousegop.com
Patricia J. Harkins	pharkins@pahouse.net
Paul Clymer, Minority Chair	pclymer@pahousegop.com
Richard Grucela	rgrucela@pahouse.net
Rosita Youngblood	ryoungbl@pahouse.net
Thomas J. Quigley	tquigley@pahousegop.com
Thomas P. Murt	tmurt@pahousegop.com
Todd Rock	trock@pahousegop.com
Will Tallman	wtallman@pahousegop.com