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From: rackowassociates@comcast.net
Sent: Saturday, September 12, 2009 9:42 AM
To: jroebuck@pahouse.net; jpiccola@pasen.gov; IRRRC
Cc: lfeinberg@thelocalgroup.com
Subject: Keystone Exams proposal / HR 456

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Dear Sirs:

The majority of educators, as well as literature on the subject, indicate that there is little or no meaningful correlation between state mandated "exit" or "final" exams (such as the proposed "Keystone Exams") and post high school work success...or success in college. In fact, the tests may, in many instances, do more harm than good.

Not surprising.

The real point of most school tests should be to focus attention on what is actually *retained* and what is not. High stakes testing has been shown over and over again to have little connection with long term retention. That is just one of the reasons why, for my money, I'd put every penny of Federal, State and local education money available behind improving instruction...improving the level of and quality of technology...improving facilities...reducing class size drastically, especially at elementary levels. And why we should all support HR 456 and stop wasting precious and scarce tax dollars in a troubled economy on unwanted, unproven, redundant testing.

If we do that consistently for every child in every one of our public schools, the many levels of testing already "bought and paid for" will show real progress.

If we don't do that, all we'll be doing is putting money in other people's pockets and further documenting failures...our failures as adults.

David M. Rackow
School Director of Cheltenham Township

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***"Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take,
but by those moments that take our breath away."***