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**From:** Robert Quinter [bada48@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 15, 2009 3:48 PM  
**To:** jpoiccola@pasen.gov; jroebuck@pahouse.net; IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Exams

2009 SEP 15 PM 3:48  
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Gentlemen and members of the Independent Review Commission:

Earlier this year I had the pleasure of talking with Senator Piccola at a Pennsylvania School Board Association meeting concerning the proposed Keystone Exams. Because I feel that the anticipated expenditures for the exams is excessive, I made the following recommendation to address the problem of curricula standardization in the state's schools.

The plan, as briefed to us, calls for \$20 million for creation of state tests with individual districts afforded the option of individually created tests to be validated by an independent company at the Districts expense.

If the justification for the test is to ensure compliance by individual districts with state mandated curricula, I believe a system patterned after that utilized by many government and commercial organizations would be less expensive and more effective than the tests.

That system involves the periodic review of individual districts for compliance with state and federal mandates. If we round the number of districts to 500 and hire 6 inspectors, each of whom would be responsible for inspecting approximately 28 districts per year, all the districts would be evaluated in three years. Even with very generous salaries, and an office formed and staffed to accomplish administrative support for the inspectors, initial and continuing expenses would not approach the anticipated combined costs for the Keystone Exams. Additionally, the emphasis of the inspectors could be modified from time to time to provide that information the Legislative or Executive Branches felt necessary.

I recognize that much effort has been spent on the Keystone Exams, however, student tests do not reflect compliance with state guidance or mandatory areas of concentration. They merely reflect the quality of preparation of students to take an exam. I do not feel our educational system should be centered around such a restrictive system.

Thank you for your service,

Robert H Quinter  
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