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Buckheit, James

From: Christopher SantaMaria [lmeducationassoc@comcast.net]
Sent: Tuesday, September 16, 2008 2:04 PM
To: Buckheit, James
Subject: Oppose the GCA proposal!

Christopher SantaMaria
306 Parsons Avenue
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004-2817

September 16, 2008

James Buckheit
Executive Director, State Board of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101

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2008 SEP 22 AM 9:27
INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Dear James Buckheit:

I oppose the State Board of Education's proposed Graduation Competency Assessments. This proposal would mandate high-stakes standardized high school exit exams and would deny students a high school diploma if they do not score "proficient" on these statewide tests. There are numerous reasons I oppose the GCA proposal, but first and foremost I do not believe that standardized tests are the best determination of student achievement. The thought of denying students a high school diploma - which has long-term negative effects on their lives - because they didn't score "proficient" on a statewide test truly concerns me. At a time when we know that Pennsylvania's public education system lacks the funding it needs by over \$4 billion in order to help every student meet the state's academic standards, it is irresponsible to impose high-stakes testing on our students. In addition, no analysis has been done on the cost of developing and administering the GCAs, let alone what it would cost to remediate those students who do not score "proficient" on the exam. Thank you for your consideration of my views.

Sincerely,

Christopher SantaMaria