## SECURITY GUARDS, INC.

## **WSK and Associates Consulting Group**

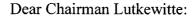
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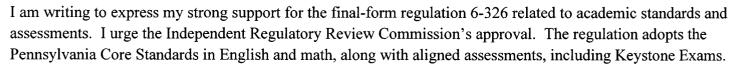
November 5, 2013

The Honorable Silvan B. Lutkewitte, III Chairman Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) 333 Market Street, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor Harrisburg, PA 17101 Email: <u>irrc@irrc.state.pa.us</u>

Re: Final-Form Regulations #6-326

- Academic Standards and Assessments





These important educational reforms will create rigorous, internationally benchmarked academic standards to prepare our students to be successful in postsecondary education and 21<sup>st</sup> century careers while providing a strong system of supports for students. The aligned assessments, including Keystone Exams, provide a practical accountability system for measuring student achievement and ensuring students have met the standards by the time they graduate from high school.

This regulation makes some important changes to the commonwealth's current education standards and assessments. If approved, this final-form regulation will replace the national Common Core State Standards with the Pennsylvania-specific PA Core Standards. It will also reduce the number of Keystone Exams from ten to five, thus reducing testing time for students and cutting the number of subjects in which school districts are required to provide remediation and administer project-based assessments in half. The final-form regulation also eliminates the requirement that every high school senior complete a culminating project -- which will free up resources that can be used to administer the project-based assessments or provide supplemental instruction.

Pennsylvania's students are competing with students from across the country and around the world for college admissions and for jobs. We know, however, that too many of our young people are graduating without the academic foundation and skills they need to succeed. These final-form regulations offer students and school districts a variety of pathways to success and include specific supports for students and schools.

Again, I strongly support the regulations and urge the IRRC to vote to approve them.

Sincerely.

Guido M. Pichini President/CEO