

Cooper, Kathy

From: Jessica Stein Diamond
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:25 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone exam as requirement for graduation - a terrible idea

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my outrage over the proposed requirement that students pass Keystone exams for graduation.

As the parent of two kids - one with disabilities and another who is a typical student I can honestly say this would be a terrible idea for both of them and for all kids.

For students with disabilities (like my son), the exams or an exemption from exams would be profoundly humiliating. In my view Keystones as a graduate requirement are likely to do much more harm than good. The thought of a young adult being denied the right to graduate with peers and move on to learn in an appropriate and supported environment (college or other options) is absolutely horrifying. It is profoundly cruel. For a student with disabilities to take some kind of exemption is just as humiliating. In either scenario, the cruel message that young adult would receive loud and clear is that they are lesser than their peers.

For a typically learning or exceptional student like my daughter, the Keystone exams waste valuable time in the classroom. This would be yet one more experience my daughter has had -- after the terrible PSSAs and No Child Left Behind hoops-jumping boring-wasteful misuse of classroom time of all her public school experience -- requirements that basically prevented classroom teachers from fully sharing their talent and passion for teaching. This would be yet another time when her opportunities to have meaningful learning experiences in the classroom would be replaced by yet another round of exams -- yet another in a long line of experiences she has had with government-mandated testing in the public schools - yet another terrible bureaucrat-driven taxpayer-funds-diverting teacher-infuriating waste of time.

If you want to support quality education, Harrisburg bureaucrats need to wake up and fund the public schools at an adequate and equitable level. What you are doing now is diverting scarce educational dollars and resources -- and spending time and money in a way that is damaging to students throughout the state.

Every time the state require exams like the Keystones, that prevents teachers from teaching. This would be a terrible waste of time and talent!

Please stop the Keystone graduation exam requirements and let our teachers teach the students!

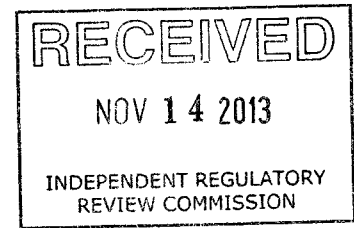
Respectfully,

Jessie

Jessica Stein Diamond

Cooper, Kathy

From: ContactForm@state.pa.us
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 3:59 PM
To: Help
Subject: IRRC Website - New Message



A new message has arrived from the IRRC Website

First Name: Zachary

Last Name: Manko

City/State: Pittsburgh, PA

Email: zmanko501@gmail.com

Subject: Common Core

Message:

Dear IRRC members, I am writing to you as a citizen concerned with the program known as Common Core. There seems to me to be many problems with this proposal, in the the reasoning behind it, the pragmatics of what it will change, and the source of its implementation. To begin with, the Common Core State Standards Initiative proposes to "provide a clear and consistent framework to prepare our children for college and the workforce" (1), by defining "the knowledge and skills students should have within their K-12 education careers so that they will graduate high school able to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs" (2). However, the PA Department of Education claims, as its mission statement, to "academically prepare children and adults to succeed as productive citizens" (3). These two precepts may, at first glance, seem to be similarly aligned in purpose. However, Common Core stresses as its goal preparing kids for college and workforce training programs - it educates them to get further educated. On the other hand, the PDE cites as its goal the formulation of adolescents and adults into productive citizens. This begs the question, is the only we can create productive citizens through higher education and workforce programs? Is college the only road to success? Is entry into a workforce program an indication of success? I would answer "no" to these questions. Attaining higher education, specifically speaking a bachelor's degree, is no longer a guarantee of a successful career. An education, in today's world, no longer sets someone apart as it may have during a more industrial age. In fact, a bachelor's degree is more often than not a ticket to the middle class. Further, workforce programs are typically seen as a last resort for most people when they are unable to find a job for themselves, need a stop-gap measure when they are between careers or positions, or when they lack direction or goals in their choice of work. The Common Core's stated purpose, from a purely theoretical standpoint, does not claim to make productive citizens, but rather intends to create students who are ready to be students. This part of Common Core's theoretical reasoning is played out in the changes it would make to English Language programs. By focusing on non-fiction materials more, students will lose valuable time reading literature. The reasoning behind this is that the majority of reading students do in college is non-fiction based. However, without spending time reading fiction, without interacting with literature, students will not develop the kinds of analytical and cognitive thinking skills needed to dissect difficult pieces, determine the meaning of texts for themselves, and to react to pieces in a meaningful written form. In fact, all these skills are

more useful for success in college than anytime spent learning how to read a technical manual(4). Lastly, the fact that, although not funded by the federal government, Common Core is a national program aimed at adjusting state standards, is worrisome. The majority of funding for education comes from the individual states for each state, not from the federal government of any national organization. Therefore, since they are the ones paying for it, the states should have control over how education is implemented, and should listen to their citizens about what is best, not the suggestions of a national council. Again dear IRRC members, not only do the changes proposed by Common Core fail to meet their intended purpose of making students more college or workforce training ready, but these purposes are at odds with the Pennsylvania Department of Education's function of creating productive citizens. Rather than a focus on college preparedness, schools should shift some focus to developing in students other aspects which will lead to success, such as financial responsibility, ambition to create a career for themselves, and an understanding in how the free enterprise system of economics works. I thank you for your time. Sincerely, Zack Manko Sources 1. <http://www.pa-commoncorestandards.com/> 2. Ibid. 3.http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/about_pde/7203 4. <http://nopacommoncore.com/english-standards/>

Cooper, Kathy

From: Ashley DeMauro <ademauro@studentsfirst.org>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:25 AM
To: IRRC
Subject: Final-Form Regulations #6-326 – Academic Standards and Assessments

The Honorable Silvan B. Lutkewitte, III

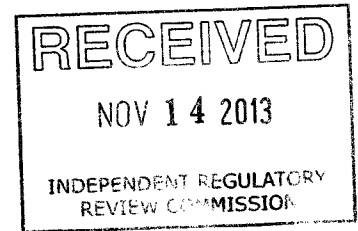
Chairman

Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC)

333 Market Street, 14th Floor

Harrisburg, PA 17101

Email: irrc@irrc.state.pa.us



Re: Final-Form Regulations #6-326 – Academic Standards and Assessments

Dear Chairman Lutkewitte:

I am writing to express my support for the final-form regulation 6-326 related to academic standards and assessments. I urge the Independent Regulatory Review Commission to approve this regulation, which adopts the Pennsylvania Core Standards in English and Math along with aligned assessments.

In order to ensure that our educational system is held accountable for preparing students to be college and career ready – and that the investment we are making in our students is yielding results – Pennsylvania has to have a standards-based education system that sets a high bar for our students and guarantees that they are meeting that bar.

But by the time Pennsylvania students graduate high school, many are not ready for college or the highly competitive global economy. This is due in no small part to weak academic standards that do not adequately prepare students. These standards allow students to graduate high school without the skills they need to be successful in the future.

This regulation makes crucial changes to these standards. It will implement the Pennsylvania-specific PA Core Standards, which took into account input from many Pennsylvanians, including educators. These standards include rigorous, 21st-century skills that will ensure that Pennsylvania students are prepared for life after their K-12 educational career.

When introducing new standards into the classroom, the system of accountability used to measure the effectiveness must also be updated. This regulation does this by containing important updates to aligned assessments, including Keystone Exams, which provide for a more accurate way to ensure students are proficient at the end of a course and ensure students have met the standards by the time they graduate. 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.

Pennsylvania's students are competing with students from across the country and around the world for college admissions and for jobs, and we know that many are not as prepared as they should be. The changes contained in the regulation before you will set a higher bar for students while also providing for a system of supports for both students and schools that will help them to meet that bar. For these reasons, I strongly support these changes and urge IRRC to vote to approve them.

Sincerely,

Ashley DeMauro

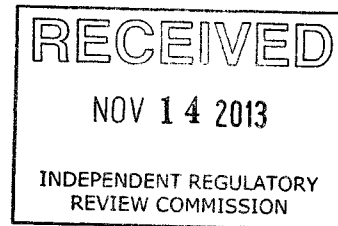
Pennsylvania State Director

StudentsFirst



Cooper, Kathy

From: ContactForm@state.pa.us
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 3:06 PM
To: Help
Subject: IRRC Website - New Message



A new message has arrived from the IRRC Website

First Name: Leigh

Last Name: Hansen

City/State: ,

Email: ziplh@yahoo.com

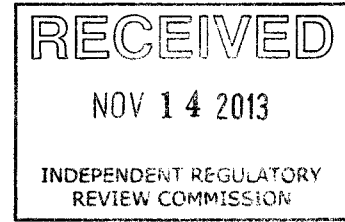
Subject: Title 22. Education Chapter 4

Message:

I support the approval of the proposed revisions to TITLE 22. EDUCATION - CHAPTER 4. ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT.

Cooper, Kathy

From: ContactForm@state.pa.us
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 3:06 PM
To: Help
Subject: IRRC Website - New Message



A new message has arrived from the IRRC Website

First Name: Leigh

Last Name: Hansen

City/State: ,

Email: ziplh@yahoo.com

Subject: Title 22. Education Chapter 4

Message:

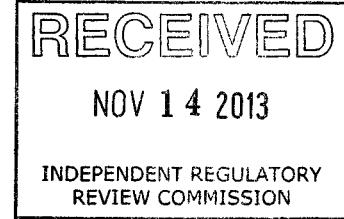
I support the approval of the proposed revisions to TITLE 22. EDUCATION - CHAPTER 4. ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT.

Cooper, Kathy

From: ContactForm@state.pa.us
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 9:37 PM
To: Help
Subject: IRRC Website - New Message



A new message has arrived from the IRRC Website



First Name: Megan

Last Name: Ochotorena

City/State: Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Email: megocho@mac.com

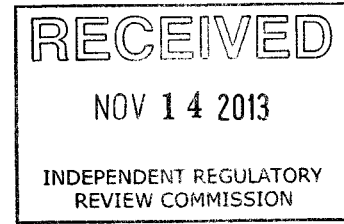
Subject: Approval

Message:

I am writing to urge the approval of the proposed revisions to title 22. education - CHAPTER 4. academic standards and assessment.

Cooper, Kathy

From: ContactForm@state.pa.us
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 7:03 PM
To: Help
Subject: IRRC Website - New Message



A new message has arrived from the IRRC Website

First Name: Lisa

Last Name: Zajdel

City/State: ,

Email: lzrnfa@ptd.net

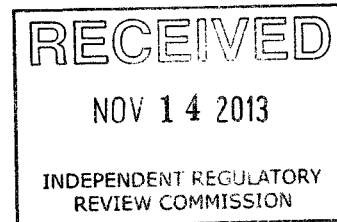
Subject: TITLE 22. EDUCATION - CHAPTER 4.

Message:

I would like to see the approval of the proposed revisions to TITLE 22. EDUCATION - CHAPTER 4. ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT.

Cooper, Kathy

From: ContactForm@state.pa.us
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 7:24 PM
To: Help
Subject: IRRC Website - New Message



A new message has arrived from the IRRC Website

First Name: Lisa

Last Name: Crowley

City/State: Coopersburg, PA

Email: lkcrowley@aol.com

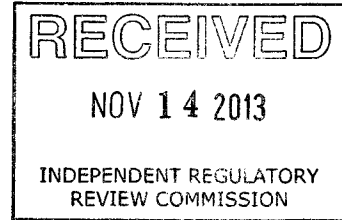
Subject: Chapter 4 Revisions

Message:

The revisions to Chapter 4 need to be approved by the IRRC to eliminate this state requirement, and push the date to begin counting Keystone exams as a graduation requirement with the class of 2017. We need to allow more local control for the education of our students. I encourage the IRRC to approve the revisions to Chapter 4 and NOT revert to the existing regulations. Of significant concern is that if the revisions are rejected, a proficient score on the Keystone exams will be required beginning with the graduating class of 2015 and the scores will count as 1/3 of the final course grade for the related high school course. This means that the district would need to go back and recalculate all grades for students who will graduate in 2015 and beyond, who have completed Algebra 1, Biology, and Literature and taken the Keystone exams for those courses last year, even though they were not necessarily taken as end-of-course exams as designed. It would not be fair to have the score on the Keystone Exams weigh so heavily on a students' final grade because they were not aware of this when they took the exam. I can not even believe that this is even an option...it is simply ridiculous that one standardized test would weigh so heavily on a final grade when a school's curriculum for that class may not include everything presented to the student on the Keystone Exam.

Cooper, Kathy

From: ContactForm@state.pa.us
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 7:49 PM
To: Help
Subject: IRRC Website - New Message



A new message has arrived from the IRRC Website

First Name: Philip

Last Name: Moreira

City/State: ,

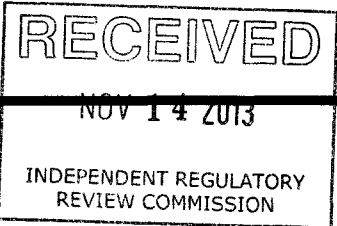
Email: philmora56@gmail.com

Subject: Proposed Revisions to Chapter 4 Education Regulations

Message:

I encourage the IRRC to approve the proposed revisions to TITLE 22. EDUCATION - CHAPTER 4. ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT. Thank you.

Cooper, Kathy



From: Liz Mercogliano Esquire <lizmercogliano@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 6:40 PM
To: IRRC
Subject: Say no to keystone exams

Please stop regulations to force our public schools to give unfunded keystone exams.

Our school is a high achieving District. Tredyffrin Easttown schools are leaders in education with 100 percent graduation.

Keystone exams will take away from instruction time and decrease student choice in electives.

Stop common core exams.

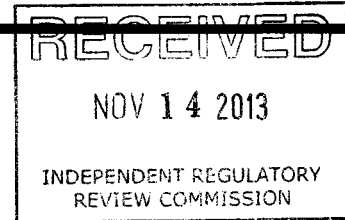
Liz Mercogliano

**Liz Mercogliano, Esquire
Long and Foster Devon
Realtor 610 225 7400
Cell/text 610 731 5630
Attorney at Law
Licensed in Pa and NJ**

These are my personal opinions and not the opinions of the TE School District

Cooper, Kathy

From: Cheryl Kerrick <greatfalls11@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 8:54 PM
To: IRRC
Subject: Common core

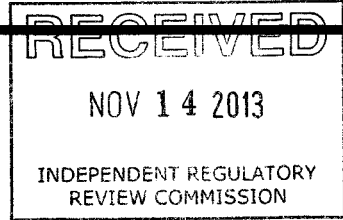


Pennsylvania must stop common core from getting into our schools. Before we make such a drastic change to our schools we must study it to make sure it is what our children need. Please research this and all new ideas before implementation. Let's do what is right for our state and have a good reason for doing it. Let us not just jump on the band wagon! Thank you!!

"All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." ...Edmund Burke

Cooper, Kathy

From: Francesca Wells <Wellsteam@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 7:29 AM
To: IRRC



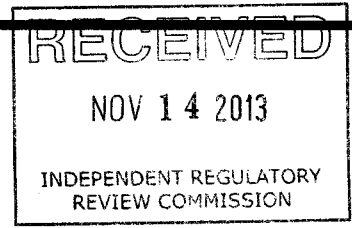
As the parent of three children, two in DASD and one in college, and a former educator, I am asking you to vote against the common core and the Keystone exams. We are over testing our children and inundating them with useless math verbage. As my college student, who is an engineering student, will tell you you do not need to be able to write math to succeed in engineering, you need to get the right answers. Math is math and it hasn't changed over the years. The change is politicians trying to reinvent math, thus creating a multimillion dollar industry that takes advantage of the taxpayers.

Let's spend our efforts on getting teachers back to teaching and engaging students and get the testing under control.

Francesca Wells
Upper Uwchlan Twp

Cooper, Kathy

From: Ingrid horne <turtlegreenbean@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:11 AM
To: IRRC
Subject: Common Core

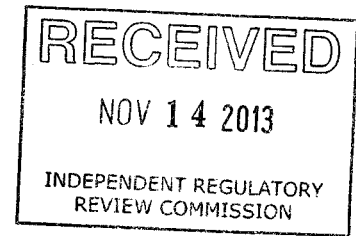


I am opposed to Common Core. I believe that our children are tested ENOUGH and that this will just muck up an already struggling educational system. It will be a strain on the tax payers and I do not want to pay any more money towards an educational system that needs a complete overhaul - NOT MORE TESTING AND RESTRAINTS!!

Thank you
Ingrid Horne
Phoenixville, PA

Cooper, Kathy

From: Susan Hoog <shoogster@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:11 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Opposed to chapter 4 Regulations under review



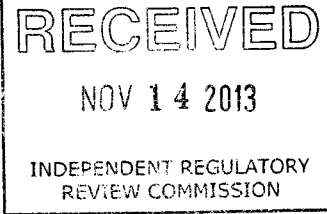
To: IRRC Executive Director David Sumner :

I am opposed to the chapter 4 Regulations under review before the Pennsylvania Independent Regulatory Review commission and urge you to not to require Keystone exams as graduation requirements

Susan Hoog
Harriton High School HSA Co- President
Lower Merion School District

Cooper, Kathy

From: Wilson-Leslie, Deborah <WilsonD@lmsd.org>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:35 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone Exams



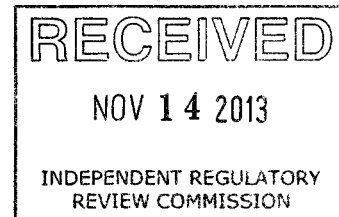
I oppose the Keystone Exam being used as a graduation requirement.

Deborah Wilson-Leslie
School Counselor
Gladwyne Elementary School

610-645-1440

Cooper, Kathy

From: Marlies Lissack <marlieslissack@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 3:07 PM
To: David Sumner
Cc: dleach@pasenate.com; repbriggs@pahouse.net; repmaryjodaley@pahouse.net; mfolmer@pasen.gov; boneill@pahousegop.com
Subject: VOTE NO on Chapter 4 Regulations



Marlies Lissack
803 Pennstone Road
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010
marlieslissack@yahoo.com

Independent Regulatory Review Commission November 12, 2013

David Sumner, Executive Director
333 Market Street, 13th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101

RE: VOTE NO on Chapter 4 Regulations

Dear Mr. Sumner,

As a Pennsylvania taxpayer and a mother of four school aged children, I am writing to say I adamantly oppose the Keystone exams being tied to a student's high school graduation. I am asking you to reject the proposed Chapter 4 regulations.

Keystone Exams are a waste of taxpayer dollars. It is estimated that PA will spend close to \$300 million annually on the implementation of Keystone Exams. This money would be better spent on helping teachers and students in districts that are struggling. I live in the suburbs of Philadelphia and every day I read articles about the lack of financial resources available to them. Instead of forcing all school districts to take a one-size-fits-all exam, use those dollars to help the struggling school districts, such as Philadelphia.

Keystone exams are a waste of student and teacher time. Teachers should be allowed to teach material according to their school districts curriculum. Each school should be empowered to give an exam or final project that they create. It makes no sense that a child that has completed all necessary coursework and has passed the school's necessary tests/projects could then possibly not graduate from high school due to one high stake exam.

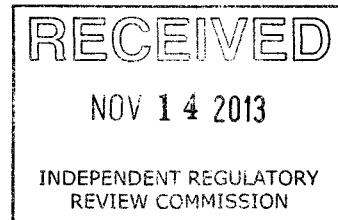
Too much time and money is already spent on standardized testing in our public schools. I want my children to enjoy school, have an inherent sense of curiosity and a love of learning. I do not want my children to spend their days preparing for state mandated exams. Next year, my 7th grade son will have to take the Alegbra 1 Keystone exam as well as the PSSA exams. My elementary school children run the risk of decreased recess, PE, art, music and foreign language due to test preparation. This is too much. **The testing madness needs to stop!**

I urge you to VOTE NO on the Chapter 4 regulations. It is time to slow down and develop a new plan to measure student progress and achievement. Let the teachers educate, and let the students learn. Do not waste our money and time on high stakes tests.

Respectfully,
Marlies Lissack

Cooper, Kathy

From: Kristine DelMonte <kristine_delmonte@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 5:17 PM
To: David Sumner
Cc: Thomas DelMonte
Subject: VOTE NO on Chapter 4 Regulations



Independent Regulatory Review Commission
David Sumner, Executive Director
333 Market Street, 13th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101

RE: VOTE NO on Chapter 4 Regulations

Dear Mr. Sumner,

As a Pennsylvania taxpayer and a mother of two school aged children, we am writing to say we adamantly oppose the Keystone exams being tied to a student's high school graduation. We are asking you to reject the proposed Chapter 4 regulations.

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Too much time and money is already spent on standardized testing in our public schools. We want our children to enjoy school, have an inherent sense of curiosity and a love of learning. We do not want our children to spend their days preparing for state mandated exams. Next year, our son will have to take the Alegbra 1 Keystone exam as well as the PSSA exams. My elementary school daughter runs the risk of decreased recess, PE, art, music and foreign language due to test preparation. This is too much. The testing madness needs to stop!

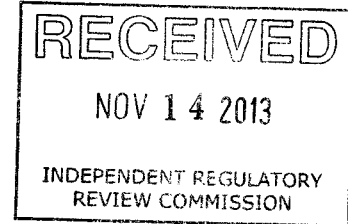
We urge you to VOTE NO on the Chapter 4 regulations. It is time to slow down and develop a new plan to measure student progress and achievement. Let the teachers educate, and let the students learn. Do not waste our money and time on high stakes tests.

Respectfully,

Kristine & Tom DelMonte

Cooper, Kathy

From: Roberta Krauss <roberta.krauss@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 7:49 PM
To: David Sumner
Subject: chapter 4 regulations/keystone exams



Dear Mr. Sumner,

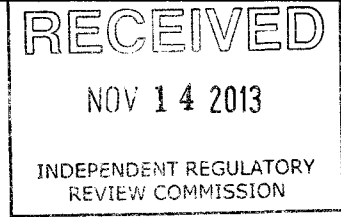
I am writing to express my concern and opposition to the extensive testing demands of the Keystone exams. As a Ph.D. level school psychologist, and a parent of a 10th grader and an 8th grader, I have seen the shift in recent years from quality instructional time to volumes of class time devoted to test preparation and direct testing. The amount of time, funding, and resources now devoted to the standardized testing process in the schools is not in addition to but now in place of providing critical additional resources for individualized support, educational interventions, and direct services to many struggling students. Pennsylvania's universities teach state-of-the-art educational practices which cannot be implemented because of the current funding system and testing-driven environment. Thank you for your time in reading and considering this message.

Sincerely yours,

Roberta Krauss, Ph.D., Licensed and Certified School Psychologist, Bryn Mawr College Child Study Institute Staff Psychologist, 610-715-7793

Cooper, Kathy

From: Priyanka Gupta <priyankadgupta@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 4:06 PM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone exams



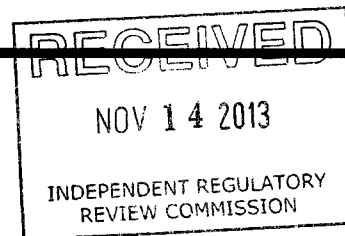
Hello,

I have been reading and hearing a lot about the proposed keystone exams for PA. I have a 4th grader and a kindergartner coming into the school system soon. The exams seem an added expense in already strained times and an incomplete picture/representation of a student's academic career. Please consider rejecting the Final Form Chapter 4 regulations and sending them back to the board. Hopefully the PA board will reconsider and review the exams and cancel their implementation if possible.

Thanks,
Priyanka Gupta

Sent from my iPad

Cooper, Kathy



From: Shonrock, Doug <doug.shonrock@jwt.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 7:47 PM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Opposition to New Keystone Regulations

Standardized testing is not teaching. Our middle school and high school instructors should spend more time teaching our children and less time prepping them for standardized tests. Additionally, as a parent with a child who suffers from 'test anxiety' these tests do not adequately display her understanding of the material being taught.

I hope that this Keystone expansion and Keystone tests as a requirement for graduation can be re-evaluated and reconsidered in order to better serve the educational needs of our children.

Respectfully,

Doug Shonrock
Parent of two Lower Merion School District students

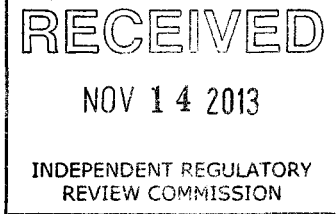
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To subscribe to our weekly newsletter for the most up to date trends, industry news and best practices click here: <http://bit.ly/1870S8p>

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Cooper, Kathy

From: Melissa Margulies <mmargulies@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 7:49 PM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Opposition to Keystone Exams



Mr. Sumner -

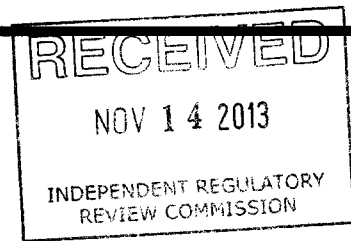
I am a parent in the Lower Merion, Montgomery County School District and I write to urge the Independent Regulatory Review Commission and the General Assembly to NOT require Keystone Exams as graduation requirements.

Instead, the Commission, the Administration, the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the General Assembly should work together and seek additional information and suggested solutions from intermediate units and school districts who see, firsthand, the unintended consequences of testing on resources, teachers and students.

Melissa Margulies
311 Rosemary Lane
Penn Valley, PA 19072

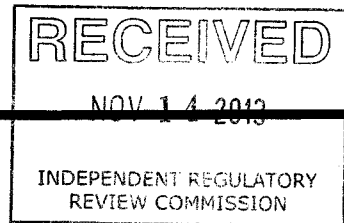
Cooper, Kathy

From: fred abrams <fredabrams2@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 8:01 PM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Opposed to the Keystones



David,
As a parent, taxpayer and voter I would like you to know that I am vehemently opposed to the keystones in general and especially as a graduation requirement. Our children have enough on their plates!
Thank you
Fred Abrams

Cooper, Kathy



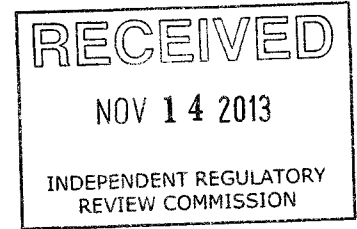
From: Karen Shapiro <tkshapiro@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 8:19 PM
To: David Sumner
Subject: against Keystone Exams and proposal to make them graduation requirement

We urge the Independent Regulatory Review Commission and the General Assembly not to require Keystone Exams as graduation requirements.

Thank you,
Karen and Tim Shapiro
Haverford, PA

Cooper, Kathy

From: Subha Robinson - Verizon <subharobinson@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 8:32 PM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone Regulations

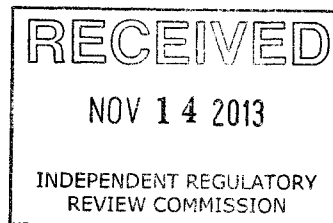


We urge the Independent Regulatory Review Commission and the General Assembly not to require Keystone Exams as graduation requirements.

Subha Robinson
subharobinson@verizon.net
610-420-4310

Cooper, Kathy

From: Clif Payne <cpayne44@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 8:12 PM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Oppose Mandatory Keystone Exams



Mr. Sumner -

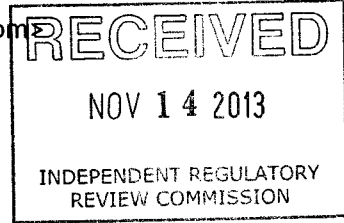
I have two children who attend Harriton High School in Lower Merion Township in Montgomery County. I strongly urge that the Independent Regulatory Review Commission and the General Assembly **not** require Keystone Exams as graduation requirements. Sincerely.

Clifton Payne
1207 Limberlost Lane
Gladwyne, PA 19035

610-642-1979

Cooper, Kathy

From: constance culpepper <connieculpepper@me.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 8:31 PM
To: David Sumner
Subject: opposition of the keystone exams



Director Sumner,

As a parent of three children in the Lower Merion School District of Montgomery County, I am writing to voice my opinion that the Keystone Exams NOT be a requirement of graduation! I would vote for them to be abolished altogether. There is too much emphasis placed on standardized testing. Let's go back to teaching our children, not preparing them for test after test.

Thank you,
constance culpepper

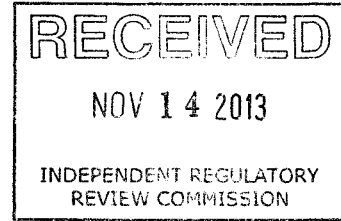
constance culpepper

constanceculpepper.com

facebook.com/ccpaintings

Cooper, Kathy

From: ELIZABETH MUIR <muirals@msn.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 8:33 PM
To: David Sumner
Cc: Muir (work) John
Subject: Keystone exams



Dear Director Sumner,

I am a parent in the Great Valley School District. I currently have one student, in the class of 2017, who will be directly affected by the Keystone Exams. My concern is for cost of implementing the exams and those districts who do not have the advantages that we are so fortunate to have.

I do understand that while a student may pass a course they may not receive a diploma if they are not proficient in the Keystone Exams. To have a diploma resting on the taking of a test and not a grade from a full course of work is putting undo pressure on the poor test takers.

All schools have had programs cut due to budget constraints. To pass this cost along to the taxpayers in the districts is an additional tax increase that many people just cannot afford.

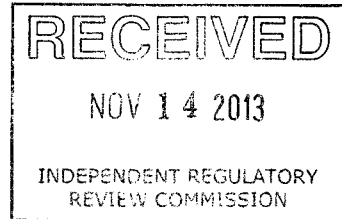
Please, I urge you to, reject the entire proposed Final-Form Chapter 4 regulations and send them back for review.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Muir

Cooper, Kathy

From: Susan Bleiman Soll <sbs@thewilliamscorp.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 8:43 PM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone exams



Dear Mr. Sumner:

I am the parent of a freshman and junior who attend Harriton High School. Both of my daughters are high achieving students (the junior is an IB student, the freshman is all Honors w/perfect grades). For years, I have sensed that they are becoming exhausted by continued standardized testing. Now, there are even more tests to add to the list. Not only does this create more stress for them, but classroom time is being devoted to teaching for the test, which should not be! Teachers also seem to have a higher degree of stress because of these guidelines.

Please consider what school districts, teachers, parents and students in Pennsylvania have to say about the Keystone exams. While it is important to master a subject, continued testing is probably not the answer.

Respectfully yours,

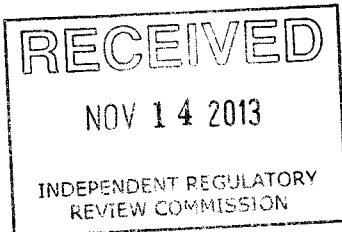
Susan Bleiman-Soll
Lower Merion School District

Susan Bleiman-Soll
Williams Financial Corporation
Tel: 610.645.7701
Fax: 610.658.2379
Mobile: 610.772.0880
Email: sbs@thewilliamscorp.com
www.thewilliamscorp.com

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Cooper, Kathy

From: Maxine Dotseth <maxinedotseth@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 8:46 PM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone Testing for PA Schools



Dear Mr. Sumner,

At a time when schools and budgets are stretched as much as they are, you are considering a huge strain on the educational system to introduce this testing to juniors in high school and middle schoolers? Is PA that far behind the national average in terms of intellect and academic readiness?

In particular, the stress that is imposed on juniors to complete college testing requirements and maintain grades and activities is tremendous. Adding new and non-essential testing that is out of sync with their studies does not make sense. Let them focus on the SAT, ACT, and SAT II requirements to get prepared for college or vocational pursuits. They are building life profiles to ready themselves for post-high school academic requirements. That is enough.

Our son never got any sleep in his junior and senior years of high school. It worried us greatly. Give these kids a break, they are working hard already and the pressure is on for them – some self-imposed, but overall coming from peers and the requirements of the institutions that they are attending.

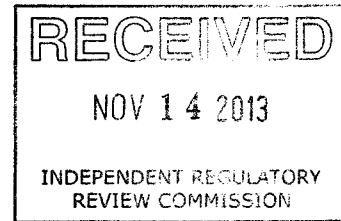
This is not a necessary legislative shift for educational enhancement.

Thank you.

Maxine Dotseth
Montgomery County, PA

Cooper, Kathy

From: Lucy Tscherne <lucyst@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 9:07 PM
To: David Sumner
Cc: lucyst@verizon.net
Subject: PA Core Standards IRRC No. 2976



Mr. David Sumner
Executive Director of the IRRC

Mr. Sumner,

I am concerned about the adoption of Common Core in PA because -

Dr. R. James Milgram, professor emeritus of Mathematics at Stanford University and the only mathematician on the Validation Committee for the Common Core Math Standards, refused to sign off on the standards. Doing so would have required him to assert that they reflect international expectations for Math, but he believes they are considerably below that level.

Dr. Milgram told a conference of concerned citizens that Common Core Math standards are sufficient only for those who attend community colleges, and not reputable 4 year colleges. Only 33% of students taught using CC Math standards will finish a 4 year college, based on Federal data.

Dr. Milgram also said that the Common Core Math standards were developed in an incredibly short time frame, about 9 months, where normally such efforts take years.

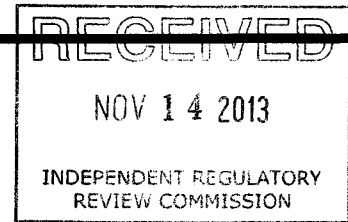
Please do not diminish the education of our children by implementing Common Core.

Thank you,
Lucy Tscherne
Bryn Mawr
Mother and Grandmother

 This email is free from viruses and malware because avast! Antivirus protection is active.

Cooper, Kathy

From: Cindy Cook <ccook0505@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 8:43 PM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone Exams



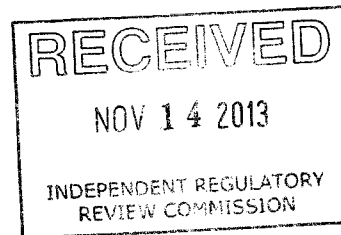
Please consider making Keystone Exams not mandatory for graduation from public schools in Pennsylvania. The money spent could be better utilized in other ways. I support what the majority of the superintendents in our region support.

Thank you.

Cynthia Cook
Bala Cynwyd
parent of a freshman at Harriton High School, Montgomery County

Cooper, Kathy

From: Bryony Kay <bryony.kay@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 9:05 PM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone Exams



Dear Sir,

I am writing to you as both an educator, and parent, to express my extreme disapproval at the use of Keystone exams as part of the high school graduation requirement. This is simply not good educational practice for many, many reasons.

I therefore urge your committee to seriously consider the issues, and very real concerns, documented by the Coalition of Pennsylvania's Public School Superintendents and Intermediate Unit Executive Directors in their recent letter to you.

We are talking about our children's education, our children's lives and our children's future. These are very high stakes indeed to play with.

Thank you for your attention.

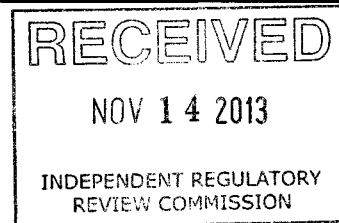
Kindly,

Bryony Kay

*Bryony Kay. Ph.D. C.S.P.
School Psychologist*

Cooper, Kathy

From: Margolit Hillsberg <mchillsberg@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 9:10 PM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone Exams



Dear Executive Director Sumner,

I am writing to express my concern and opposition to the extensive testing demands of the Keystone exams. As a parent of a 10th grader, 8th grader, and 5th grader, I have seen the shift in recent years from quality instructional time to volumes of class time devoted to test preparation and direct testing. The amount of time, funding, and resources now devoted to the standardized testing process in the schools is not in addition to but now in place of providing critical additional resources for individualized support, educational interventions, and direct services to many struggling students. Pennsylvania's universities teach state-of-the-art educational practices which cannot be implemented because of the current funding system and testing-driven environment. Thank you for your time in reading and considering this message.

Sincerely,
Margolit Hillsberg

Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone

Cooper, Kathy

RECEIVED

From: Samantha Brumberger <samrb@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 9:12 PM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Please do not increase Keystone Exams or make them a Requirement for Graduation!

NOV 14 2013
INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Please do not require students to take the Keystone Exams as a requirement for graduation. The proposed increased testing negatively impacts students from 8-12 grade. Students spend roughly 4 weeks taking Keystone Exams, AP exams and final exams, not to mention SAT's, SAT 2's, ACT's and PSAT's in high school. Increasing this already huge burden on our students not only adds unnecessary strain to an already stressed out student population, but also takes a MASSIVE chunk of time AWAY from our teachers to actually TEACH OUR STUDENTS!!! They are basically DONE teaching and start test preparation by late February, early March--this is grossly unfair to our children. I have a daughter who is a freshman in college, who I feel graduated public school just in time because these proposals put an onerous burden on our students. I moved my second daughter to private school last year and I am so relieved that she does not have all of this extra testing and can instead spend her time and actually focus on learning. My third child is about to enter public high school next year, and I am definitely considering moving her as well so that she does not have to endure these new testing practices, should our schools have the misfortune of having to adopt them.

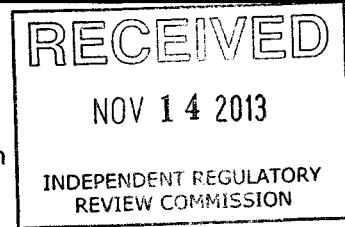
PLEASE explore other options to ensure the accountability of our schools.

Respectfully,

Samantha Brumberger

Cooper, Kathy

From: Glen L. <gyen@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 10:33 PM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone exams as requirement for HS graduation



Dear IRRC Executive Director Sumner,

As the parent of two children in PA public schools (Lower Merion Township, Montgomery Co.) I would like to express my *support*, but with some reservations, for requiring a passing grade on Keystone exams for graduation from PA high schools.

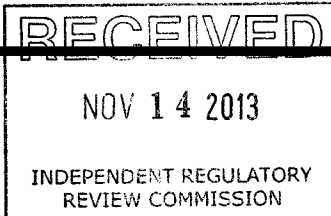
This would “even the playing field” and show that a diploma from every PA high school has worth and represents a real achievement by the graduating students.

My reservations are in the realm of cost, and time. This new requirement will inevitable cost school districts more money; state funding should be increased to the schools to compensate for these extra costs, even if that requires some increase in taxes. I also think that consideration be given to extending the number of instructional hours that are provided to students, to accommodate the additional time required for test preparation, so that this does not take away from other instructional areas. Compared to many 1st world countries, our children are falling behind in educational achievements, and while the Keystone requirement may help, there is no substitute for having sufficient instructional time.

Thank you very much for your consideration,

-Glen Loev, DDS
Bryn Mawr, PA

Cooper, Kathy



From: Jay Beidel <jrbeidel@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 5:27 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Vote NO concerning CC

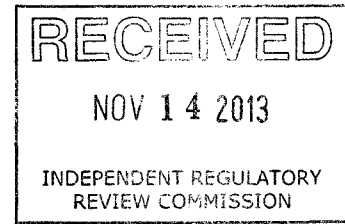
Please consider the impact of mandates and an untested system that reminds me of a train wreck if it is called an educational system. School systems do not have the moneys to implement and tax payers have been hit to the limit.

As the more important part- out children and grand children- this is a farce to be called an education!!!!

Jay Beidel
1720 Walnut Bottom Road
Carlisle Pa 17015

Cooper, Kathy

From: wisco@hushmail.com
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 9:26 PM
To: David Sumner
Subject: IRRC No. 2976



IRRC No. 2976

Dear Mr. Sumner,

Please stop the implementation of Pa Core Standards immediately. No one can determine how much it will cost. Our school districts are already plagued with budget problems and is trying to deal with the imminent pension crisis, which will soon be upon us. Pa Core Standards are nothing more than another unfunded mandate. No one can confirm how much the implementation will cost let alone remediation. How can we implement something without knowing how much it will cost? This is senseless and dangerous. We need to control our children's education on a local level.

Thank You

G Cibbs

IRRC No. 2976

Cooper, Kathy

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NOV 14 2013

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

From: Ellen Wallace <hkamail@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 11:08 PM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Oppose propped Regulation #6-326 amendment to the Keystone examinations

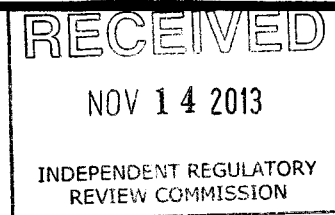
Dear Executive Director David Sumner,

I am writing to inform you that I extremely opposed to the new regulation #6-326 amending the Keystone examinations. I urge the Commission and our Legislators to reexamine the proposal requiring Keystone exams for students' graduation and to expanding the number of Keystone exams from 3 to 5 as well as to use a single high-stakes test to measure student learning and achievement. Pennsylvania school districts invest time and resources to equip students with the skills they need to be ready for college and careers. However the cost associated with the implementation of Keystone exams has negatively affected the students, their families and the school districts. I urge independent Regulatory Review Commission and the General Assembly not to require Keystone examinations as graduation requirement. I appreciate the fact that you are trying to strengthen the public school system but do not agree with the proposal on the table.

Ellen Wallace

Cooper, Kathy

From: Kassie Abrams <kassieabrams2@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 7:21 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone Exams



Hello,

I am a parent of 3 children. Each with very different learning styles & abilities. Two of my children have education plans, one is for gifted and one if for a learning disability. The Keystones are not good for us. My son who had all A's & B's last year in Lower Merion School District in Algebra did not pass the exam. I ask how could this happen? According to the school & his private tutor for Algebra, he has mastered Algebra. But, according to the State he did not. This has set off a series of events in my child's life. So, now in a subject that he hates--math, he needs to take 2 classes (Algebra & Geometry). This has caused his self-esteem to suffer and has created great angst. Our government really needs to take a look at what it values. I can tell you that I value a student who is creative, self-assured, able to express his/her ideas. I value an education that values the differences in learning styles & wants children to succeed in ways that are best for them individually.

I live in one of the best school districts in the State. If our kids are not achieving success in these tests, there is a problem! Stop this standardized testing craze. It is not good for our children and not sending the right message to what is important. Stop spending our money on testing. Start spending our money on bettering the education. Let's not make the testing companies rich, let's make our children enriched. The arts, music and gym are just as important to their growth and success as any other subject. Please PA let's get it right! Stop TESTING!

Thank you,

Kassie Abrams
610 668 8383

Cooper, Kathy

From: Marci Herman <herman407@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 7:47 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone Exams

RECEIVED

NOV 14 2013

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

IRRC:

I am a parent of a high-school student in Lower Merion School District. I am tired of watching my child prepare for high-stakes test. As stated in the letter from the Interschool Council, I agree fully that our students are over tested. Too many precious learning days are lost due to "teaching the test" days and then "test days." The kids laugh about it and look as these days as "days off."

I was shocked to learn that my child was taking the biology Keystone exam 2 years after taking biology. If you really want to test the students and teachers, why not combine the mid-term/final exam into a Keystone exam while student and teacher are preparing for these tests - saves time saves money.

Stop the politics and focus on what's important EDUCATION!

Thank you
Marci Herman

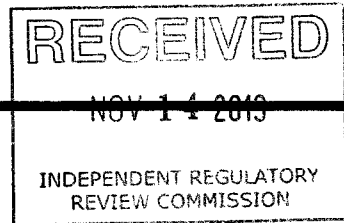
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Marci Herman
Neighbor Saver & NeighborSaver.net
O: 610-331-7060
C: 484-802-5495

Shop Local. Support Local First!



Cooper, Kathy



From: Alison Deutsch <alisonjdeutsch@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 7:56 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Please Don't Use Keystone Exams as a Graduation Requirement

I am a parent with two children in the Lower Merion School District in Montgomery, PA. I am writing to personally urge you to reconsider the law recently implemented that requires passing Keystone Exams for graduation. There are many reasons I feel this way, many of which were eloquently laid out in the letter sent to you by a group of superintendents in my region of the state. I am a huge proponent of school accountability, but the focus on teaching to the test has gotten out of hand and using a single test as a graduation requirement exacerbates and already untenable situation. From a more personal perspective, I have a son with anxiety disorder and expressive language disorder, and I can tell you when you turn an proficiency assessment (like a PSSA) into a one time graduate requirement tool, it raises the stakes considerably. My son was significantly stressed leading up to the test, asked for extra tutoring to prepare for it (at our personal expense) and felt a considerable increase in his anxiety the two days of the test. You are causing a significant amount of unnecessary pressure and strain when you require them to have to perform on a single, high stake test the the Keystone. **I therefore respectfully request that you reverse the ruling.**

Sincerely,

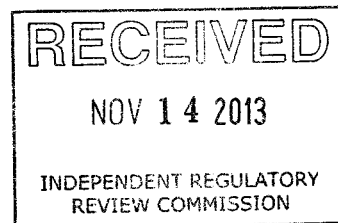
Alison J. Deutsch
Haverford, PA
Harriton HS

--

Marketing Your Business Like a World Class Brand
305-586-5921
alisonjdeutsch@gmail.com
<http://www.linkedin.com/in/alisonjdeutsch>

Cooper, Kathy

From: Leslie Hafter <leslie.hafter@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:12 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: NO Keystone Exam graduation requirement



Mr. Sumner,

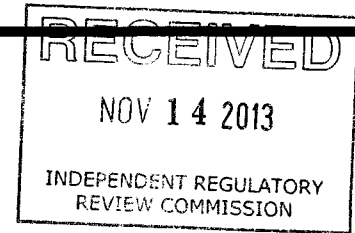
I am emailing you to let you know that I support the VAST majority of school Superintendents in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania who are urging the IRRC and General Assembly not to require Keystone exams as graduation requirements. I encourage you and the committee to work with our Superintendents to arrive at a plan and requirement that is truly in the best interests of our students.

Thank you,

Leslie Hafter
Narberth, PA (Lower Merion school district)

Cooper, Kathy

From: Debbie Ginsberg <debbieginsberg@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 7:47 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone Exams



Mr. Sumner

I am writing to voice my concerns regarding the proposed policy for the Keystone Exams. I agree with the concerns stated in the letter sent from the Superintendent of Lower Merion.

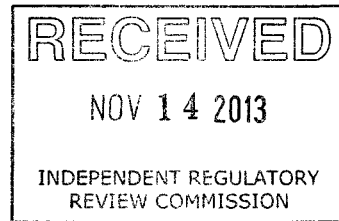
As a parent of students who try to excel and enrich their education--these exams would not accurately reflect knowledge of subjects that may have been a course that the child has taken years prior. If a exam is required in a subject-let that be part of the original cirriculum of that subject regardless of when that subject is taken by the student.

Thank you,
Debbie Ginsberg

Debbie Ginsberg PO Box 264 Gladwyne, PA 19035 debbieginsberg@yahoo.com

Cooper, Kathy

From: Rena Margulies <rmargulies66@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:06 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: No keystones for graduation



I oppose the graduation requirement of the keystones.

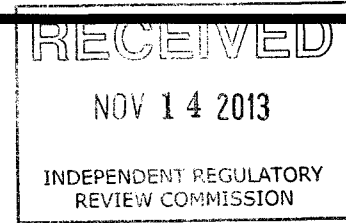
Sincerely,

Rena Margulies

Sent from my iPhone

Cooper, Kathy

From: Francis Leake <fmleake@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:15 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Common Core



One may recall that Nancy Pelosi stated that "It must first be passed before we can know what's in it." when speaking of Obamacare (the affordable crd act)." To this notorious remark, a doctor was heard to say "That's the definition of a stool sample!"

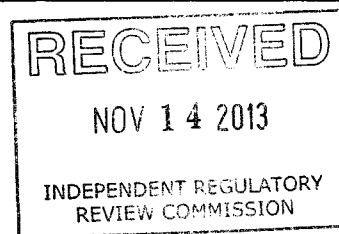
This same logic can now be applied to Common Core. Why is this initiative being forced on every school district in PA when it is untested and when there is no empirical evidence that it will improve learning outcomes? It is being pushed ahead without thorough examination prior to imposition. Where is the evidence of knowledge of costs or funding source connected with it's implementation? This is another Obamacare, a "stool sample", a shot in the dark, a pig in a poke, a wish list header.

If people ran their households the way governments institute untested, unresearched programs, there wouldn't be any households left. It's only because governments can fall back on tax hikes to cover up their blunders. Let's not implement the Common Core program, it needs vast amounts of research before anyone knows what to really expect from it; let's not use public school students as lab rats to see what happens with this idea. Unfunded mandates, like this one, smack of dictatorialism.

Francis M. Leake
Bethlehem, PA

Cooper, Kathy

From: Stacy Levitan <jehla@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:16 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone Exams



Dear Mr. Sumner,

I am a parent of a Lower Merion High School senior and a Bala Cynwyd Middle School 8th grader. I have seen over the years of their education the drastic increase in the number of standardized tests required of my children and the negative impact it has had on the quality of the education they are receiving. When my son (the older child) was in elementary school, he spent far less time practicing for the PSSAs than my daughter did by the time she was in 4th and 5th grade. It astounded me that she spent months practicing how to answer specific types of questions, instead of learning substantive material that actually might be useful for what should be the school's ultimate goal -- graduating educated citizens.

Now that the Keystone exams have begun to be implemented, the students are spending even more time worrying about passing specific test requirements that have more to do with how to perform well on the tests than on teaching material that is useful. Frankly, at the Lower Merion schools, we are not concerned with our children being taught an insufficient amount. The Keystones require a much lesser standard than our schools have required in the past. Instead, our teachers are having to figure out how to teach the kids to respond to the tests at the same time that they are trying to teach them more rigorous material. The ultimate result is that they are learning less, but they are becoming experts in standardized test performance.

I understand that some schools are graduating students who are ill-prepared educationally. But the solution to that issue is not to require all schools -- no matter how good they are -- to conduct vast amounts of standardized testing that is dumbing down their curriculum. If the Keystones become required, there should be an opt out system that will not be too expensive for schools to use it or just requires schools to substitute different standardized testing. These children are spending too much time on standardized testing and not enough time on what the teachers are hired to teach.

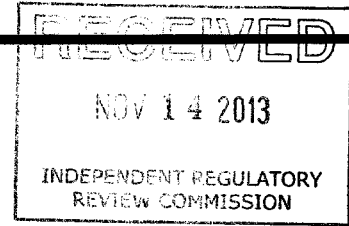
The Keystones should not be a requirement for graduation in Pennsylvania -- and the most recent letter from the vast majority of school superintendents from the Philadelphia suburban schools should be taken seriously. They have the students' best interests at heart and should be heard in this decision.

Sincerely,

--
Stacy Levitan
430 Williams Road
Wynnewood, PA 19096
610-642-9181

Cooper, Kathy

From: Jillt <jillt@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:23 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone Exams

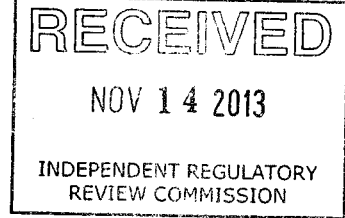


My children are students at Harriton High School in the Lower Merion School District. I do not believe that the Keystone Exams are a true measure of classroom success. I urge you to not require them for graduation.

Sincerely,
Jill Tarnoff Wolf

Cooper, Kathy

From: tomandellens@verizon.net
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:31 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: IRRC No. 2976



Dear Mr. Sumner,

I have several concerns about Common Core.

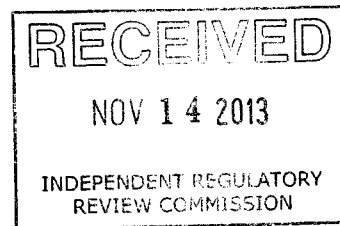
1. It's untried and untested.
2. It's an unfunded mandate. How will it be funded in our local school districts? We cannot afford any tax increases, as we are stretched to the limit now.
3. This is a complete overhaul of education which we, the taxpayers and parents of the children involved, were not informed about. It was done in an underhanded way, and all efforts to implement the Common Core Standards in PA should be put on hold until the public is educated and aware of each and every consequence they will bear due to it. Parents should be involved when any such changes are made to public education, along with the taxpayers.

Thank you for your time.

Ellen M. Swenson

Cooper, Kathy

From: Bois, Debora <Debora.Bois@willis.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:22 AM
To: David Sumner
Cc: Rfcicalese@aol.com
Subject: Keystone exams



Dear Mr. Sumner:

I am a parent of a 10th grade student at Harriton High School located in Lower Merion township in PA. I am writing to express my concerns about proposed legislation that would require Keystone Exams as graduation requirements. I am concerned about the amount of money being allocated for these tests and ongoing remediation, the amount of time being taken away from classroom instruction and the unnecessary stress being placed on the students themselves. Our school system is doing a superb job educating our children; average SAT scores and college admissions rates are among the highest in the state. While I understand that schools need to be accountable for their results, it's a waste of valuable resources to apply a standardized test requirement for schools that are already exceeding recognized performance standards.

Sincerely,

Debora Bois-Cicalese

Debora A. Bois, CLU, Vice President, Human Capital Practice
Willis Group, 100 Matsonford Road, Suite 200, Radnor, PA 19087
Direct: 610-254-7479, Fax: 610-254-5600, debora.bois@willis.com, www.willis.com



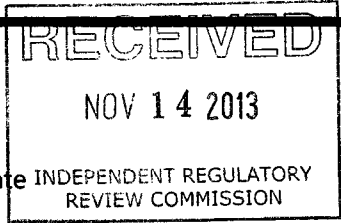
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We are now able to offer our clients an encrypted email capability for secure communication purposes. If you wish to take advantage of this service or learn more about it, please let me know or contact your Client Advocate for full details. ~W67897

Cooper, Kathy

From: Davina Hagan <dvhagan@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:25 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Opposed to Keystone Exam Proficiency in order to graduate



Hello, Mr. Sumner,

Nice idea, imperfect solution. "Proficient score on Keystone exams in order to graduate - Opposed." In addition, too expensive, dollars spent more wisely in other ways and in other arenas.

It is estimated that Pennsylvania will spend \$300 million dollars annually to administer the Keystone Exams, money that would inarguably be better spent in providing teachers with professional development and students with additional resources in the classroom to enable them to succeed.

Many schools estimate that anywhere from 10 to 20 percent of the school year is now spent preparing for and/or taking high---stake tests, time that would be much better spent in actual instruction especially when students are not enrolled in the course corresponding to the test (i.e., physics students taking the biology Keystone). As a result, more time and money is being spent on testing and many districts have had to reduce their arts, music, history, civics, physical education, sciences, and world language courses to make up the difference.

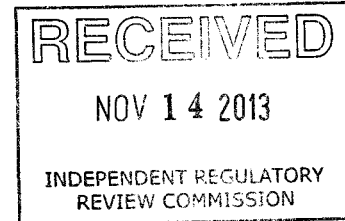
Sincerely

Davina Hagan

Cooper, Kathy

From: Gail Morrison <Gail@pobox.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:34 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Oppose Keystone Exam - reject proposed Chapter 4 regulations

**Independent Regulatory Review Commission
David Sumner, Executive Director
333 Market Street, 13th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101**



RE: VOTE NO on Chapter 4 Regulations

Dear Mr. Sumner,

As a Pennsylvania taxpayer and a mother of two school aged children, I am writing to say I adamantly oppose the Keystone exams being tied to a student's high school graduation. I am asking you to reject the proposed Chapter 4 regulations.

Keystone Exams are a waste of taxpayer dollars. It is estimated that PA will spend close to \$300 million annually on the implementation of Keystone Exams. This money would be better spent on helping teachers and students in districts that are struggling. I live in the suburbs of Philadelphia and every day I read articles about the lack of financial resources available to them. Instead of forcing all school districts to take a one-size-fits-all exam, use those dollars to help the struggling school districts, such as Philadelphia.

Keystone exams are a waste of student and teacher time. Teachers should be allowed to teach material according to their school districts curriculum. Each school should be empowered to give an exam or final project that they create. It makes no sense that a child that has completed all necessary coursework and has passed the school's necessary tests/projects could then possibly not graduate from high school due to one high stake exam.

Too much time and money is already spent on standardized testing in our public schools. I want my children to enjoy school, have an inherent sense of curiosity and a love of learning. I do not want my children to spend their days preparing for state mandated exams.

I urge you to VOTE NO on the Chapter 4 regulations. It is time to slow down and develop a new plan to measure student progress and achievement. Let the teachers educate, and let the students learn. Do not waste our money and time on high stakes tests.

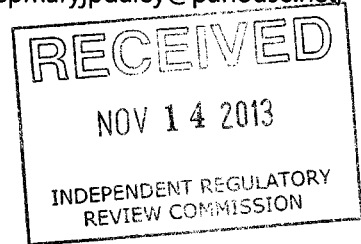
Respectfully,

Gail Morrison

306 Greenbank Rd, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010

Cooper, Kathy

From: kwagula@yahoo.com
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:09 AM
To: David Sumner
Cc: dleach@pasenate.com; repbriggs@pahouse.net; repmaryjpdaley@pahouse.net; mfolmer@pasen.gov; BONEill@pahousegop.com
Subject: Vote NO on Chapter 4 Regulations



Independent Regulatory Review Commission
David Sumner, Executive Director
333 Market Street, 13th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Dear Mr. Sumner,

As a Pennsylvania taxpayer, former teacher, and a mother of a school aged child, I am writing to say I adamantly oppose the Keystone exams being tied to a student's high school graduation. I am asking you to reject the proposed Chapter 4 regulations.

I have heard that Pennsylvania will spend close to \$300 million annually on the implementation of Keystone Exams. How is this an acceptable use of taxpayer money when there are school districts that can't afford to provide the staff to keep their children safe, much less provide the resources to teach to state mandated tests? Use this money to help struggling school districts, such as Philadelphia, instead of forcing unequal school districts to take a one-size-fits-all exam.

Too much time and money is already spent on standardized testing in our public schools. I want my child to learn how to LEARN, to ask questions and seek out answers, to love the process of learning rather than thinking there is only one correct answer. Already his school is discussing decreasing recess, PE, art, music, and foreign language in order to find time to prepare for these tests. There are other ways to measure student assessment rather than continuous standardized testing. Let our teachers teach and our students learn. Please vote NO on the Chapter 4 regulations.

Sincerely,
Kerry Wagner

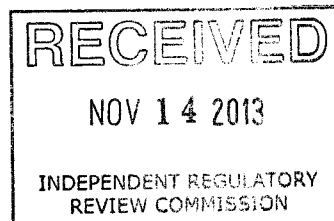
Cooper, Kathy

From: David Lazarus <dmlazarus@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:13 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone Testing

Ladies and Gentlemen – please do not further waste our children’s precious educational time in school by adding yet another standardized test requirement to their agenda –

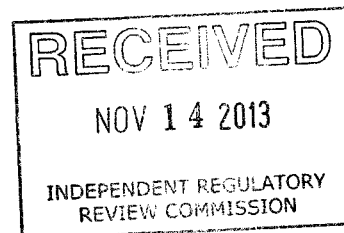
Regards,

David Lazarus



Cooper, Kathy

From: john disanto <jdisanto0521@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:56 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Vote 'No' to Keystone Graduation Exams



Dear Mr. Sumner and members of the IRRC,

I have four children. Three children in the Downingtown Area School District: One in 5th grade, Two in 10th grade and one in college at George Washington University. I have seen the exams affect kids at all grade levels. Although my students are strong in school, they are still so very concerned about the exams and passing them or not. They often discuss what is the point of being in class, studying, handing in work, etc. if all that is really needed to graduate is to pass the Keystone exams. There is some truth to this as our district has now eliminated a minimum GPA to graduate and rewards the students who pass the Keystones with Proficient or better, with no final exam in that subject in their senior year. Passing the Keystones to graduate and bribing them to try to do well, only teaches the students that the end result is all that counts. Not the work, the dedication, the internalization of educational materials, not learning how to work together - none of this becomes essential if the focus is passing the exams. It rewards the students who happen to be good test takers, not the students who are strong, dedicated workers. Which would you all rather work with?

Look at how the test results were already skewed when the correct bubble was or was not colored in, asking the student if the year they took the Keystone was the year they took the class. Our district is going student by student, checking records, to make sure the bubble was colored in or not, appropriately. How many hours is this taking and where could these hours be better spent?

I will not go into the cost of researching and testing the exam, implementation of the exam, correcting the exam, etc. That would take too long.

I can support the concept of The Common Core, but there needs to be careful attention paid to the goals as this can easily turn disastrous. No Child Left Behind also was great in theory, where is it now?

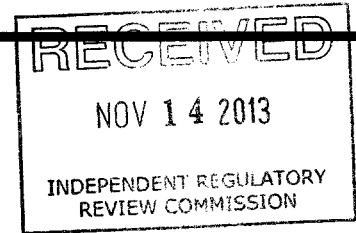
So, Mr. Sumner and the other members of the IRRC, I ask you all to vote 'NO' to the Keystone Graduation Exams.

Thank You,

Pia DiSanto

Cooper, Kathy

From: Geoffrey Hillsberg <ghillsberglaw@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:12 AM
To: David Sumner



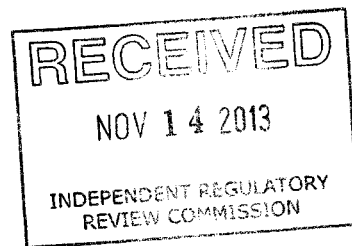
Dear Mr. Sumner,

I am writing to express my concern and opposition to the extensive testing demands of the Keystone exams. As a graduate of the Lower Merion School District (Merion Elem, BCMS, LMHS), I know that a quality education can be provided in our schools. I am concerned that too much emphasis is being placed on standardized testing and not enough on the teaching of new material and development of young minds. I am far less interested in how our schools test on the Keystone than I am in how much our students learn and how much they are actually prepared to contribute to our society. Thank you for your time in reading and considering this message.

Law Office of Geoffrey Hillsberg
115-117 W State Street, Suite 400
Media, PA 19063
(610) 566-0600
ghillsberglaw@yahoo.com

Cooper, Kathy

From: Amy Colcher <amycolcher@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:17 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: testing



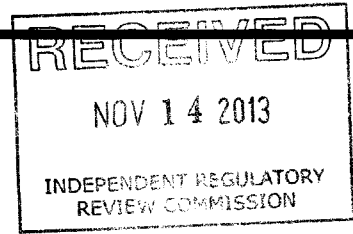
Dear Mr. Sumner,

I am the parent of a 10th grader at Lower Merion High School and a 5th grader at Merion Elementary school. I was distressed to learn of the new requirement that Keystone exams be required for graduation. Students who want to go to college take the PSATs, the SATs, potentially advanced placement examinations, and quarterly examinations in multiple subjects are part of the school curriculum. Adding additional testing puts undue stress on the students. It suggests that the value is only on test performance and not on learning and education. A curriculum based only on test performance on standardized tests is not one that is conducive to learning. I am opposed to this new regulation. It is not good for our children.

Amy Colcher, MD
Professor of Neurology
Cooper University Health System
Rowan University School of Medicine

Cooper, Kathy

From: David Steinman <davidsteinman2@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:18 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Impact of Keystone exams



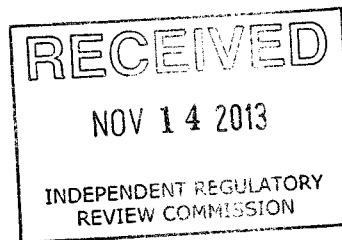
As a parent in the Lower Merion School District, I want to ask the Pennsylvania Assembly to put politics last and ask if the costs, both financial and personal, to our districts and our student, is worth the value of expanding the requirements of the Keystone exams for our students in public school in Pennsylvania.

I am writing to register my opposition to the expansion of the Keystones as a requirement for graduation in Pennsylvania.

--
David Steinman, MD, PC
191 Presidential Ave., Suite 111-B
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004
610-664-7204
610-664-4988 fax

Cooper, Kathy

From: JESSEDEUTSCH@comcast.net
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:19 AM
To: David Sumner
Cc: Alison Deutsch
Subject: Keystone requirement reversal

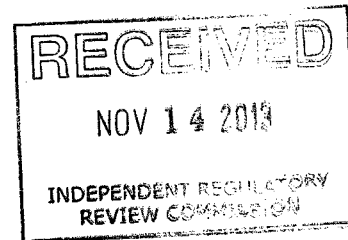


We are parents with two children in the Lower Merion School District in Montgomery, PA. We are writing to personally urge you to reconsider the law recently implemented that requires passing Keystone Exams for graduation. There are many reasons we feel this way, many of which were eloquently laid out in the letter sent to you by a group of superintendents in my region of the state. we are huge proponents of school accountability, but the focus on teaching to the test has gotten out of hand and using a single test as a graduation requirement exacerbates and already untenable situation From a more personal perspective, we have a son with anxiety disorder and expressive language disorder, and I can tell you when you turn an proficiency assessment (like a PSSA) into a one time graduate requirement tool, it raises the stakes considerably. My son was significantly stressed leading up to the test, asked for extra tutoring to prepare for it (at our personal expense) and felt a considerable increase in his anxiety the two days of the test. You are causing a significant amount of unnecessary pressure and strain when you require them to have to perform on a single, high stake test the the Keystone. **We therefore respectfully request that you reverse the ruling.**

Jesse and Alison Deutsch
269 Booth Lane
Haverford, PA 19041
484-416--3569

Cooper, Kathy

From: ilyeager@zoominternet.net
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:01 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone Graduation Exams



Dear Mr. Sumner:

The Keystone Graduation Exams details and criteria effectively :

Remove all local school district input into the educational process – where such input should remain

Become another unfunded mandate authorized and demanded by the combining of these exams with Common Core (which in itself changes the entire scope of education)

Transfer all authority from “we, the people” to a monolithic government entity.

None of our children is “common” and the state should not support such an effort to lump everyone together, and then determine who should fit into what career.

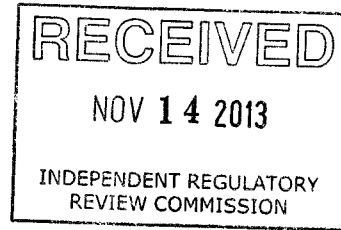
We respectfully request that you reject the proposed Chapter 4 regulations.

Very Truly Yours,

Ida Laquatra Yeager

Cooper, Kathy

From: Susan O'Hare <susanco1@me.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 8:11 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: IRRC - Proposed Regulations



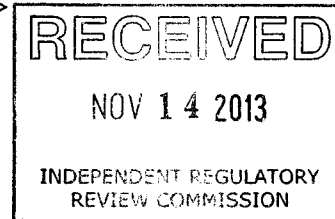
Dear Mr. Sumner,

I am writing to let you know that I am opposed to the pending Regulations and are urge the IRRC and General Assembly not to require Keystone exams as graduation requirements. I am a parent with two children currently in the Pennsylvania School System and these regulations would impact may family directly.

Susan O'Hare

Cooper, Kathy

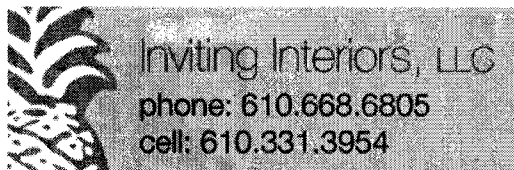
From: JENNIFER GELINAS <jen@inviting-interiors.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:09 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone Exams



David Sumner,

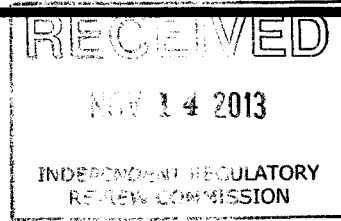
I am writing to you to let you know that I oppose the implementation of the Keystone Exams. One of our biggest concerns is with public school is the amount of time our children spend taking state mandated tests instead of learning academics. The students do not need the government to implement anymore state testing into their curriculum. I urge you to please not vote for the proposed changes in the Keystone Exams. Thank you for your time.

Jennifer Gelinas



Cooper, Kathy

From: Denton, Lauren L <l_denton@uhc.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:19 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Opposed to Keystone exams



As a parent of 7th and 9th grade student in the Lower Merion school district I am opposed to Keystone exams. Please reconsider the tests as we have so many tests already and this take away from the students time and our resources.

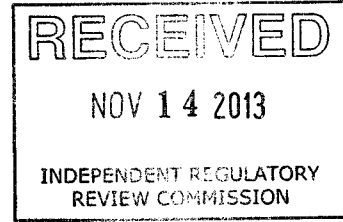
Lauren Denton

Lauren Denton
Advertising Marketing Specialist
680 Blair Mill Rd
Horsham, PA 19044
215 902 8778

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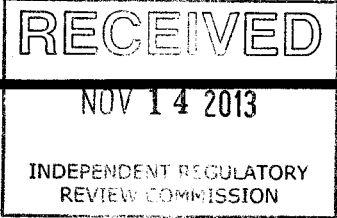
Cooper, Kathy

From: CBSKatz@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:10 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: enough with the testing



I have 2 high school graduates and 1 senior who went through all of this testing. SAT's should suffice! My kids didn't care about the tests, they didn't need nor want to take more tests and ultimately it had no impact whatsoever on entering college. Kari Katz LMSD

Cooper, Kathy



From: Erin Durant <erindurant@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:25 AM
To: David Sumner
Cc: dleach@pasenate.com; repbriggs@pahouse.net; repmaryjodaley@pahouse.net; mfolmer@pasen.gov; BONEill@pahousegop.com; repdelissio@pahouse.net
Subject: VOTE NO on Chapter 4 Regulations

My name is Erin Durant. I live in Bryn Mawr, Lower Merion, Montgomery County, PA. I

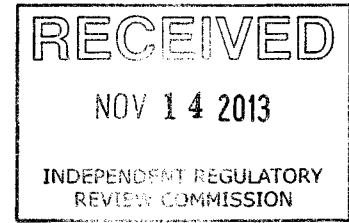
am writing to say I adamantly oppose the Keystone Exams being tied to a student's high school graduation. I am asking you to REJECT the proposed Chapter 4 regulations. I urge you to VOTE NO on November 21st.

Respectfully,

Erin Durant

Cooper, Kathy

From: irsrosen@comcast.net
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:29 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone Exams as a graduation requirement -- no!



I am writing to support my and many other superintendents' request that Keystone Exams NOT be made a graduation requirement. Their arguments are made clearly and plainly in their letter -- this requirement adds more needless testing, spends money needed elsewhere, and will negatively impact mostly poorer districts and their students. If Pennsylvania wants to be sure its students are learning adequately, as it should, there are many other, more meaningful ways to do so without adding another test. These include reviewing grades or taking the scores of the myriad other standardized tests students take.

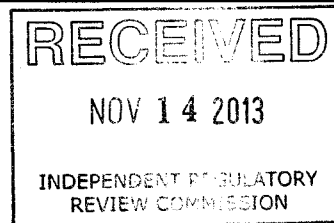
From my own perspective, as the parent of high-achieving students in an affluent district, adding yet another exam to a season full of high-stakes exams wastes time and adds stress without providing any benefit.

Thank you for your attention,

Ilene S. Rosen
Bala Cynwyd, PA

Cooper, Kathy

From: Jami Fisher <jnfisher01@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:29 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone Exam OPPOSITION



Dear Executive Director David Sumner,

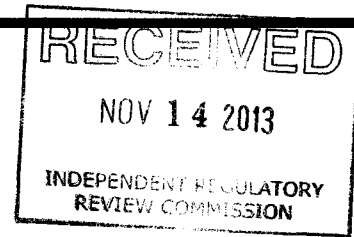
As a parent of a Lower Merion School District student, I am writing to express my concern that the state is considering Keystone exams as a requirement for graduation. After reviewing the expectations for the exams, I am concerned that they will put an onerous burden on the school districts and the individual students. Thus, I am opposed to their implementation. This email serves as public opposition to the State's proposal.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Jami Fisher

Cooper, Kathy

From: Julianne Grady <jgradyvmd@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2013 10:38 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: No keystone exam requirement



I just wanted to let you know that in accordance with our superintendent of the Lower Merion School district, I am opposed to a graduation requirement of Keystone examinations.

Julianne Grady -parent of 3 Lower Merion school age children