

# 2976

**Cooper, Kathy**

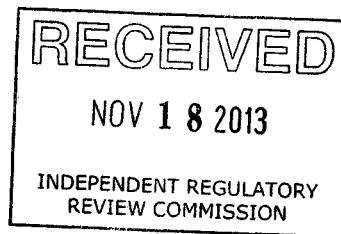
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**From:** deelucas@verizon.net  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 9:37 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone testing

I totally oppose that our children have to pass these test in order to graduate! There is enough pressure on our children they do not need this hanging over their heads. Some children are not good test takers. Passing these test in order to graduate does not promote a well rounded student . Our children are better off with the standards and requirements from our schools!

Thank you!

Denise Lucas  
484-678-9529



**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** jskuegler@comcast.net  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 9:47 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Exams--Opposed

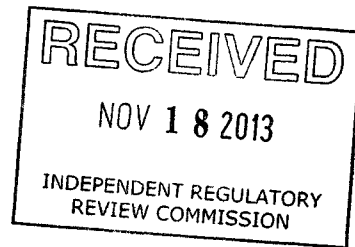
Hello-

As a resident of Chester County with 4 children attending West Chester area public schools, I'm writing to express my opposition to Keystone exams being a graduation requirement for my children.

I urge your committee to take steps to keep graduation requirements at the local level.

Thank you for your time,

Jillann Kuegler  
West Chester, PA



**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** pmbove@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 9:48 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Exams

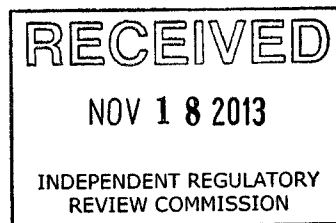
Good morning,

I, as a former teacher, parent, and taxpayer, am against the Keystone Graduation Exams because even at the elementary level, we have been teaching to the test and teaching to take tests. We have lost time to integrate and definitely time to have students create and think out of the box. Also not everyone is a test taker.....tests do not always measure intelligence. Who is to say what students need to know for graduation?? It is a global society and new information is coming to all of us everyday!

Thanks for listening!

Pat Bove

Sent from my iPad



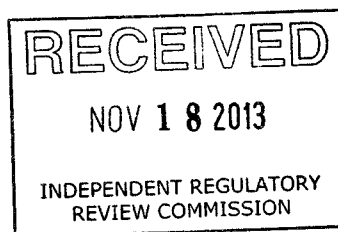
**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** W. Raymond Walsh <wrwalsh1@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 9:20 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Exams

I am not an educator, but to me, an ordinary educated citizen, it does not seem reasonable to impose this program as I understand it. IF I had a vote, I would vote against it.

William R Walsh



**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Deb Maccariella <psudebmac@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 9:22 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Exam Comments

Dear Committee Members,  
Please reconsider making the Keystone Exams a graduation requirement.  
Kids are tested enough and often without a sound educational reason.

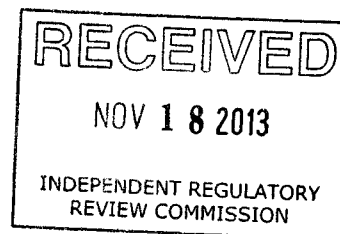
My son during his first round of PSSA testing in 3 rd grade knew he was being taught to a test. At age 9, he asked me "what are we going to do in school once the PSSA's are over?"

I am considering not having him even tested this year as this is not teaching him anything but how to take a test. Kids should not feel the impact of funding. Teachers should be allowed to teach and meet the needs of the students in the class not based on standardized testing!

Please do not make the Keystone exams a mandatory graduation requirement.

Thank you for your consideration.  
Sincerely,  
Deb Maccariella  
West Chester Area School District parent  
6104366477

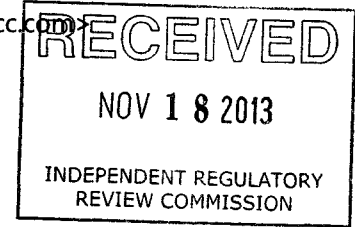
Sent from my iPhone



**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Kurowski, Mary Anne <MaryAnne.Kurowski@genesishcc.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 9:32 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** In opposition of using Keystone Exams



Having a state-designed test in Algebra 1, English composition, and Biology in order to receive a high school diploma **should not be** implemented & enforced at the state level. Graduation requirements should be determined by local school boards and not by the state.

Teachers are struggling to teach the subjects properly & are teaching to the test ,which is not an acceptable means to teach young minds.

Please remove the requirement of taking & passing the Keystone exam in order to graduate from high school and let the local school boards determine & implement the graduation requirements.

Thanks you

This e-mail and any attachments may contain information which is confidential, proprietary, privileged or otherwise protected by law. The information is solely intended for the named addressee (or a person responsible for delivering it to the addressee). If you are not the intended recipient of this message, you are not authorized to read, print, retain, copy or disseminate this message or any part of it. If you have received this e-mail in error, please notify the sender immediately by return e-mail and delete it from your computer.

**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Andrea Morganstein <andrea@isbothering.me>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 10:17 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Exams as a Graduation Requirement



Dear IRRC,

I am writing to humbly request that you consider recommending that the Pennsylvania State Board of Education not use the Keystone Exams as a criteria for graduation. While I am completely confident that my two daughters will have no difficulty achieving this requirement, I am concerned that it has the potential to pose undue hardship on others, particularly students with special needs. I am all for the attempt to create graduation standards and have been pleased to hear that the Keystones were coming. However, the product of a New York State education myself, I think that there should be two levels of diplomas offered.

I can't speak for how it is done now in New York's education system but, 20 years ago when I was in high school, I knew that there were two possible degrees that I could graduate with. One was a degree that stated that I'd met the graduation requirements of the school that I attended. The other, a Regents Diploma, stated that I had met the state's criteria for graduation. Students who were not capable of attaining the Regents level of academic achievement, still were able to succeed in their own way and have a piece of paper that was proof to the world that they still thought that it was worthwhile to complete high school. While this piece of paper didn't help them get into college, it helped them to get a job.

The reality is that while education is important and we should always strive to provide the most robust education we can to the young people who soon will be the movers and shakers or the sweat and muscle of this world, not everyone is smart. Some people are diligent workers and try their best and still struggle. For those students, there still should be a graduation option available to them. Making the Keystones a graduation requirement would jeopardize this opportunity for some students. Please don't create a situation that makes them more disenfranchised than they already are.

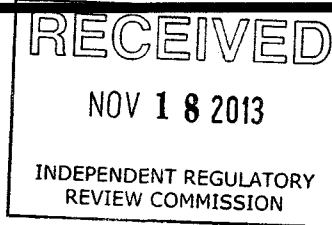
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Andrea Morganstein  
West Chester Area School District Parent

**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Latimer, Jeanne <jlatimer@wcasd.k12.pa.us>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 8:53 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Exams



As a parent of three who attend public schools in my community, I strongly support our School Board and Administration in their opposition to the Keystone Exam requirements. I believe that the necessary preparation for yet another standardized is a waste of valuable teaching time and places undue burden on the students.

I had the unpleasant experience of having one of my children be eligible for taking the test last year. I can attest to the fact that this exam hindered both the teachers and students from following a curriculum that would support their future successes. In today's world, young adults need to have more than just a passing grade on a test to be successful. The competition is fierce. Students need to be taught to be strategic and creative in their thinking; focusing all year on a "pre-boxed" test does not all any time for this!

Furthermore, it is inexcusable to require school districts to spend large sums of money on this program, when they struggle financially each year already. It doesn't make any sense to force a school district to have to make cuts in teachers, programs, and/or supplies in order to fund a program that is supposed to test quality of education!

Thank you for your consideration.



**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Lisa Delaney <Lisa.Delaney@nlcinc.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 8:54 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Exams



To whom it may concern:

I am a resident of West Whiteland Township, PA and have two children, one is a graduate of the West Chester Area School District currently attending PSU, the other a junior at Henderson High School. The Keystone Exams will not affect my children, yet as an active member of the community, I believe it will have a negative effect on our School District.

The children in schools across the country are thoroughly tested throughout their academic career. As parents, teachers, and members of the community, we already receive a great deal of feedback as to how our schools, children, and educators are performing. Benchmarks begin as early as first grade. PSSA exams are given from third grade through eleventh grade. PSATs, SATs and ACTs are available for tenth through twelfth graders. It is my opinion, as a parent, former educator, and member of the community, that another level of testing is not only unnecessary, but an undue burden of the schools, children, and community.

Thank you,

*Lisa Delaney*  
1301 Erin Drive  
West Chester, PA 19380

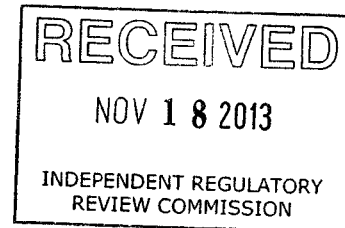
**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Joe Henderson <jeh1623@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 8:20 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Exams

- I oppose implementation of Keystone Exams as a requirement for graduation. Tredyffrin - Easttown School District is one of the best in the state. Students are already testing well above the requirements for Keystone Exams. Implementation of Keystone Exams will be redundant, unneeded, and a waste of limited school funds.

Joe Henderson  
610-212-1558  
[jeh1623@yahoo.com](mailto:jeh1623@yahoo.com)



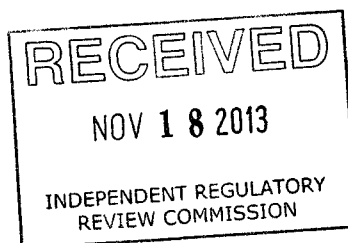
**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Carol <rarol044@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 8:42 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone graduation exams

To whom it may concern,  
I am writing this email to request that the above mentioned Keystone graduation test not be Implemented. Why should we waste more money on testing when that money should be spent on books, libraries that have closed and the hiring of more teachers to reduce class sizes.  
Carol Luby

Sent from my iPad



## Cooper, Kathy

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**From:** Christina Barrett <mytaxofficepa@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 8:43 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Common Core

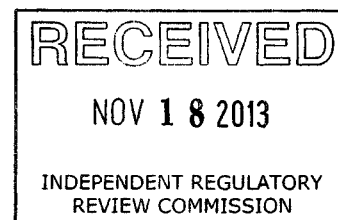
Dear Sirs,

I would like to express my great concerns with the Common Core Curriculum and Agenda. After much research it seems that the Common Core plan is not really to give our children a better education but rather a plan to take away state rights and parental rights. My children are currently in kindergarten and first grade. The first grade math is ridiculous. My child is having to take a subtract of 15-8 and change it into "tens", she is not developmentally able to understand this concept. According to leading psychologists children are not developmentally able to disassemble numbers in this fashion until they are 12 years old. Common core math has stripped the foundation. In first grade they are not learning math facts such as  $15-8=7$ , but having to separate into tens using bar graphs and counters to read 10-5-3 the sum is not even part of the equation. The only thing my child is learning is how to break equations into 5's and 10's. She had her first failing math test ever. Now she is a very smart child for being 6 years old. She was able to get the word problems correct, which is crazy to give a 6 year old word problems in its self. I have a very confused 6 year old that I am having to tutor for hours each week. Luckily for us my husband has an degree in education and I am a book keeper so we understand math fairly well. I have great concerns over the content of reading material high school children are being introduced to. My biggest concern however is that I am losing my rights with Common Core to have any say in my child's education. Once Common Core is fully established there will no longer be any reason to have school boards, pta's etc because the government will have taken over. I do not want socialized education mandated to my children from the federal level. This is unconstitutional and I am against it. I urge you to consider stopping common core in Pennsylvania and saving our children, our rights and our states rights.

Sincerely,

Chrissy Barrett

Concerned Grandmother and Citizen



**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** dick & barb <dickbarbreczek@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 7:37 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Graduation Exams

We do NOT need our teachers teaching "again" to an exam. The taxpayers of PA do NOT need an unfunded mandate of \$300M/year that these exams may cause. Enough already! Our teachers and students need good reform not more tests.

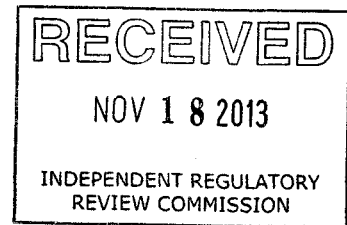
Barbara S. Reczek



**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Mark Langan <LANGANMW@VERIZON.NET>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 7:39 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Exam



I am a parent to 5 children who attend public schools in Chester County. I urgently request that the IRRC not adopt the Keystones as a graduation requirement in PA. Students have already lost valuable class time and learning opportunities due to teachers spending this time prepping students for the Keystone tests.

My 9th grade daughter's Biology teacher said, "We won't be doing ANYTHING fun in here until AFTER the Keystones. Our entire year is spent preparing for the test. Once the Keystones are over we will start dissection and other fun activities but we just don't have time for those activities until after the test."

In my opinion, my daughter's educational experience is being damaged by the anticipated implementation of these tests. They Keystones DO NOT enhance her education AT ALL that I can see. Our children do not need more standardized tests. They need hands-on activities; they need passionate teachers; they need to foster a love of learning. No one fosters a love of learning through test preparation.

Please do NOT implement the Keystones as a graduation requirement.  
Mark Langan

**Cooper, Kathy**

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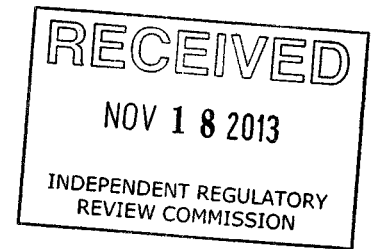
**From:** Rita Misero <rjmisero@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 9:06 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** need to reject the Proposed Keystone Graduation Exams

Dear Mr. Sumner and all commissioners,

Please say "NO" to the proposed Keystone Graduation Exams. This new unfunded mandate on local schools needs to be rejected. Please reject the entire proposed Final-Form Chapter 4 regulations and send them back to the Pennsylvania State Board of Education for further review and changes. These exams are unfair and expensive.

I trust you will do the right thing and say "NO". Thank you.

Sincerely, Rita Misero



**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** misspooopstephanie@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 9:08 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Graduation exams

RECEIVED

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

We are a homeschool family in Chester County, currently in Andrew Dinniman's district, and want you to know that we are vehemently opposed to the imposition of graduation exams. Besides the unclear means in which it's implementation would be funded, it is just purely unamerican. Education's goal should be to help children gain understanding, and most importantly, to gain the ability to continue learning by seeking answers on their own long after high school. Obviously, every child does not learn the same, nor do they show knowledge the same way. I fear that this test would further the awful practice of merely teaching to the test (as schools have been doing as part of the no child left behind act), and worse yet, would only equip students with the exact same collection of memorized information. This, of course, stifles the imaginative, inquisitive, knowledge-seeking minds that should be the future innovative leaders of our country.

Paul and Stephanie Stiles

Sent from my iPad



**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** J T Meals <jtmeals@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 9:45 PM  
**To:** IRRC; David Sumner  
**Subject:** Keystone Graduation Exams - Vote NO

To the Pennsylvania Independent Regulatory Review Commission.

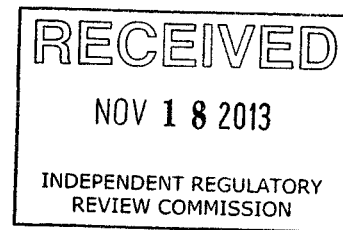
As a taxpayer, voter, and parent I am OPPOSED to the concept of the Keystone Graduation Exams. My first major concern is why propose; let alone implement, such an exam. Our school system and the education process has functioned successfully for over 100 years and will continue to function and perform with outstanding success using current proven instruction and testing methodology and processes.

This concept of another exam for students to pass to graduate and get their earned diploma is totally flawed. Here's why, a student with a 4.0 gpa - straight A's is faced with another exam and should they be in compromised health; i.e.. a migraine, fail the proposed exam and not received their earned diploma.

This proposed graduation exam must be voted down, once and for ever; I am requesting that all voting members VOTE NO to this proposal.

Thank you,

*J. T. Meals*  
*Automotive Sales & Service Professional*  
*Downingtown, Pennsylvania*  
*Ph. 484.947.1229*



**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Loretta <cheech1913@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 10:40 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** I am opposed to the Keystone Graduation Exams



Dear Sirs:

I am writing this email to voice my opposition on the IRRCs proposal for yet another standardized test of our youth. Certainly you must realize that our children are no longer being educated in our schools due to the ridiculous amount of 'testing' already being done. They spend their school year being indoctrinated in preparation for the standardized tests they are inundated with, leaving no time for them to be taught real history, math, science or the arts. Stop this incessant practice of useless testing and let teachers return to their jobs of teaching our youth. The Reece commission of 1953 exposed the plans in place to take over the education system. You are not fooling anyone any longer. Do the right thing and release our kids from the brainwashing you call this type of 'education'. You too can so 'NO' to those trying to control you.

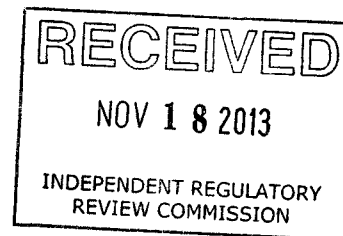
Best Regards,

Loretta

**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Joseph Cochran <jccochran@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 11:11 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Exams



To Whom It May Concern:

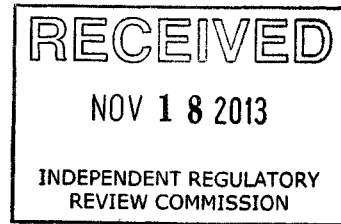
I feel that, with all the pressures facing high school students today, forcing them to take a standardized test in order to graduate from high school is unnecessary. It just one more thing for them to stress over. As a teacher, I know that some students do not do well on standardized test despite the fact that they do will in class. No doing well on a standardized test is by no means a reflection of their intelligence, knowledge, or capabilities; it just means they don't test well. If the state feels that, certain schools are not teaching the students what they need to know in order to graduate, then fix THOSE schools. Do not punish our kids by allowing a test they take once, to determine their entire high school career. I am in full support of doing away with the requirement that the students pass the Keystone Exams in order to pass high school.

Joanne Cochran  
West Chester Area School District

**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Meredith B <mbrunel@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 5:41 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Exams



I live in zip code 19333, and I oppose the imposition of the Keystone Exams on Pennsylvania students. Our school district has been graduating educated and competent students for decades without the need for a costly, anxiety-provoking, time-consuming exam that will simply consume valuable instruction time, add stress, and a "teaching to the test" mentality in what is now a fine and well-working school district.

Surely the Board of Education can find a more efficient, effective, and nimbler way to improve problem school districts in PA than simply clumsily imposing this across-the-board requirement on everyone. It is the bureaucrats and the consultants that will benefit from the Keystone Exams, not Pennsylvania's good students.

Meredith Brunel  
295 Forest Hills Circle  
Devon, PA 19333  
484-222-3104

**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Pam Pastorino <liv4fun@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 6:09 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Exams



**Keystone exams should not be a requirement for graduation. Readiness and intelligence are much more varied than two tests can possibly measure.**

**Thank you,**

**Pam Pastorino**

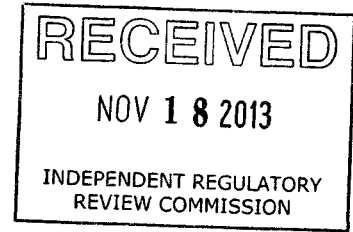
**Write.Edit.Design  
1511 Calhoun Ln.  
West Chester, PA 19380**

**liv4fun@verizon.net**

**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** kelly meagher <klmar1@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 7:25 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Taxpayer opposed to Keystone Exams



To the IRRC Review Board,  
As a taxpayer in the West Chester Area School District I am opposed to the implementation of Keystone Exams as graduation requirements. With the existing levels of testing, these exams are unnecessary and are of little value to students. These tests will take up too much class time, and will reduce the amount of actual learning time available to students.

Kelley Meagher  
1203 Waterford Road  
West Chester, PA 19380

**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Concannon, Susan <SCONCANNON@wcasd.k12.pa.us>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 7:29 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** No to Keystone Exams



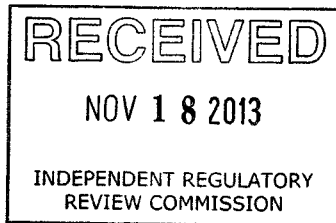
Hi,  
I would like to tell you that there should be less testing and more teaching. Keystone exams will do NOTHING to help our students achieve their academic goals. There is already too much testing on these students and there needs to be more time for the teachers to teach them and for them to learn. Students get nothing out of another test, except more stress and pressure. It is not fair to test a student on a subject that he/she may not have had in a long time. It doesn't make any sense at all. Thank you for your time,  
Sue Concannon

"Life isn't about how to survive the storm, but how to dance in the rain."

**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Mary Ann Twarog <matwarog@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 7:45 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** keystone graduation exams



I am opposed to the keystone graduation exams. I am in agreement with the decision of several IU Directors and most school superintendents that these tests will not resolve the problems of our school system but will place undue hardship on our students, teachers, and taxpayers. Mary Ann Twarog, Ed.D.



## Cooper, Kathy

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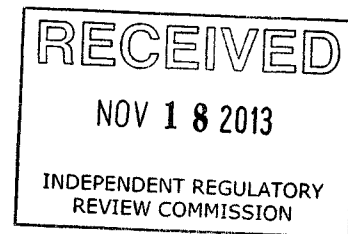
**From:** Pete Goodman <Peteg@bee.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 8:04 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Graduation Exams

The Keystone Graduation Exams are a bad idea.

This unfunded mandate will cost me serious school tax dollars and will do little if anything to improve our schools. Did we (collectively) learn nothing from "no child left behind".

Don't spend my money on measuring education, rather, spend it on educating our children.

Walter E. Goodman, III  
2194 Valley Hill Road  
Malvern, PA 19355  
Phone: (610) 827-7619



**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** BETH KNOWLTON <bethbob87@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 3:16 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone exams

I oppose using the Keystone exams as graduation requirements for our high school children. The State of Pa is putting way too much pressure on our kids!! Not all students test well, and not everyone understands enough algebra I or biology to pass the keystone exam. Biology is only studied one year, and then the state wants kids to take the exam again when they do not have biology anymore-why???The schools cannot afford the remediation that is necessary for all the kids that do not pass these keystone tests. STOP WASTING OUR TAX DOLLARS and do not require these Keystone exams for graduation!!

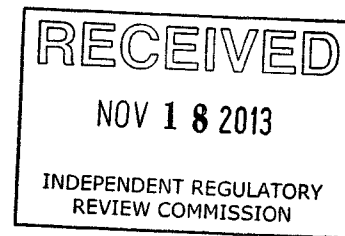
Beth Knowlton  
1270 Eagle rd  
West Chester PA 19382



**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Borzillo, Hillary <HBorzillo@umasd.org>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 4:48 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Exams



To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to oppose the Keystone Graduation Exams. It is my understanding that it would be possible for students to pass all of their classes with straight A's and yet, by failing a single Keystone exam, not receive their high school diploma. While I understand the importance of high standards, a single exam on a single day only reflects a snapshot of a student and their academic performance. There can be many reasons why a child might not achieve to their potential on a given day.

It also appears that these exams will put an unusual burden on the taxpayer. We have so little funding for public education as it is. It seems as though there is a much better way to spend our tax dollars.

Thank you for your time,

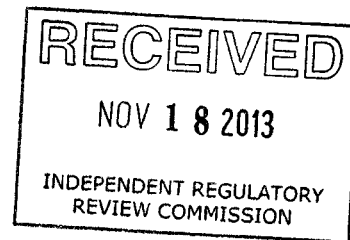
Hillary Borzillo

**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** lyndaspencer78@yahoo.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 5:28 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** No Keystone Exams

I am writing to let you know I oppose the Keystone exams as a parent, tax payer, and special ed aide. To use one test to determine if a student gets a diploma is short sighted, ill planned and potentially a civil rights issue. The idea that one day one/ test can make or break a students future is going to make our schools teach to the test which is not a research based program not to mention dishearten students. There is surely a better way to solve our broken systems. This is not child centered approach. We are not dealing with machines. Why wait to see the damage and problems this testing will create. Stop now. Keystone tests are not the solution. Lynda Spencer Sent via BlackBerry from T-Mobile



**Cooper, Kathy**

---

**From:** B McGee <rrbam@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 5:47 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Graduation Exams

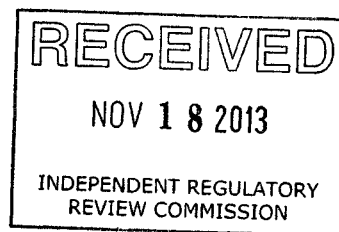
To Whom it May Concern,

I've recently learned of a disturbing piece of legislation titled Keystone Graduation Exams. This legislation will unfairly subject students to the possibility of not graduating because they don't pass standardized tests, even if they get straight A's in all of their classes. The Department of Education and the Governor clearly have no regard for the added burden this will cause for young adults, schools and taxpayers. It is also fundamentally irresponsible to pass legislation which is completely unfunded. The PA Dept of Education can't even fund what it needs to fund now, let alone adding an additional burden which will need to be passed onto taxpayers and also force already poor school systems into bankruptcy.

As a concerned citizen, taxpayer and an employee of a social service non-profit agency who deals with individuals and families who suffer from an already overburdened system I 100% oppose this!

Sincerely,

Beth McGee  
Concerned Citizen of PA



**Cooper, Kathy**

---

**From:** Jim Sumner & Etha McDowell <jimandetha@zoominternet.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 6:32 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** keystone grad exams



Students do not need another paper and pencil exam.  
Give them ability to write and create by letting teachers improve their  
methods and diversity of styles instead of concluding all learning  
is a "fill in the bubble" demonstration.  
Jim Sumner

**Cooper, Kathy**

---

**From:** DiSerafino, Constance <cdiserafino@wcasd.k12.pa.us>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 7:44 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Exams

If you judge a fish by it's ability to climb a tree, he will always believe he is dumb.



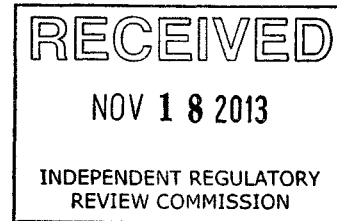
**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** berylen1@aol.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 12:51 PM  
**To:** irrc@irrc.state.pa.us.  
**Subject:** Keystone Graduation Exams

Please reject the Keystone Graduation Exams. This is NOT a reliable way of evaluating a student's knowledge. I taught school for 30 years and was required to administer standardized tests. I found that the results did not give a true picture of a student's achievement, AND administering them took away precious time from the meaningful education environment. Standardized tests are a waste of time and VERY unfair.

Beryl Norris, Retired Teacher  
Exton, PA





**Cooper, Kathy**

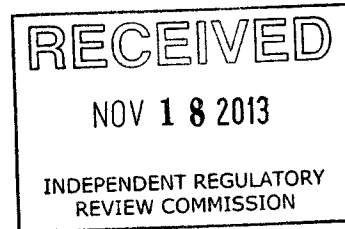
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**From:** Leigh Anne Eaton <laeaton1@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 12:54 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone exams

I am a resident of Tredyffrin township and my children attend Conestoga High School.  
I am strongly opposed to the new Keystone Exams and vote to stop the legislation from passing.

Leigh Anne Eaton  
1750 Minden Lane  
Malvern PA. 19355

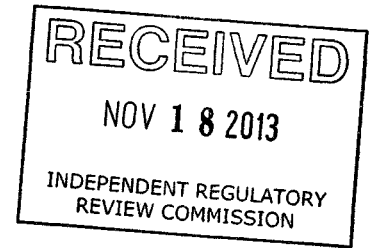
Sent from my iPhone



**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Charles A Higgins <cahiggins@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 2:14 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Graduation Examinations



To Whom It May Concern:

Please note that I am firmly opposed to the passage and implementation of the proposed Keystone Graduation Examinations in any public school in Pennsylvania. There are already enough children being short changed by "No Child Left Behind". We are graduating a group of uneducated children from our schools throughout this country not just in this state.

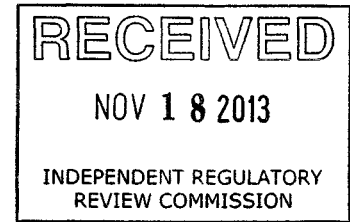
Stop it now once and for all!

Charles A. Higgins  
904 Vista Drive  
West Chester, Pa. 19380-6042

**Cooper, Kathy**

---

**From:** GINA ARLEN <migi4@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 16, 2013 8:54 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Graduation Exams



Dear Pennsylvania IRRC,

As a parent of a sixth grade boy with autism, I strongly and respectfully oppose the implementation of Keystone Exam Graduation requirements.

High-stakes graduation exams run contrary to all of our efforts to recognize different learning styles and embrace an individualized approach to success.

**Specifically, my son would face the possibility of passing all his classes, but failing a Keystone Exam and being denied a diploma.**

It is illogical for the Pennsylvania Department of Education to continue to expand standardized testing at a time when increasing evidence challenges the notion that it is the best way to gauge student learning. **My son, for example, has difficulties with standardized tests, but has made the honor roll on several occasions since starting middle school. It is unfair to label him a "failure" because his learning style is "outside the box."**

In summary, the Keystones will only further promote "teaching to the test," while sacrificing more valuable instruction time in the name of standardization.

Please do not implement these misguided mandates.

Thank you for your consideration.

Gina Arlen  
Wayne, PA

**Cooper, Kathy**

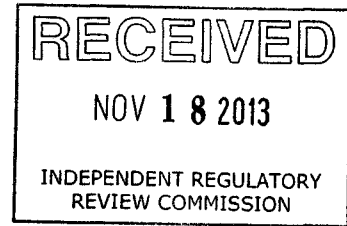
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**From:** Sandra M. Hewlett CG <shewlett@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 16, 2013 9:19 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Oppose Keystone Graduation Exams

Although I understand the need to periodically test students, at this time I feel that the money you are planning to spend on testing, using the Keystone Graduation Exams. should first be applied to enhancing our basic education programs.

It's too late to test students just before their graduation. Instead, educate them to academic standards beginning in first grade. I often find myself embarrassed at the lack of basic math skills exhibited by young people in the marketplace today. After 12 years of education, surely they should be able to do arithmetic in their heads and without a computer of calculator.

I oppose the Keystone Graduation Exams.



--  
SANDRA M. HEWLETT, CG  
249 HANOVER ROAD  
PHOENIXVILLE, PA 19460-5652  
610-933-4211  
\*\*\*\*\*

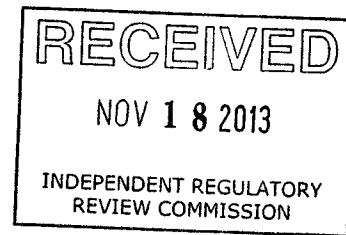
CG AND CERTIFIED GENEALOGIST ARE SERVICE MARKS OF THE BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION OF GENEALOGISTS®, WASHINGTON, DC, AND IS USED UNDER LICENSE AFTER PERIODIC EVALUATION

**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** lilycyn@aol.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 8:19 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** KEYSTONE EXAMS

PLEASE DO NOT ACCEPT THIS PLAN WE CANNOT AFFORD ANY MORE UNFUNDED MANDATES. LETS GET MORE OUT OF THE TEACHERS AND PERSONELL WE HAVE  
CYNTHIA MARRIOTT WEST CHESTER PA



**Cooper, Kathy**

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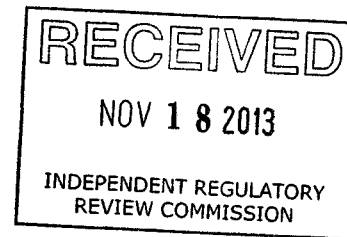
**From:** Eileen <E.Leyoldt.121@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 8:39 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** keystone examsexams

Nov. 17, 2013

Hello,  
I am opposed to the Keystone exams. Students are already being tested so often with standardized tests. It will cause more teaching to the test, instead of helping every student to feel that they are making progress toward being productive and contributing citizens of PA.

Thank you for understanding my opposition to this bill.

Eileen Leyoldt  
121 Milbury Road  
Coatesville, PA 19320



**Cooper, Kathy**

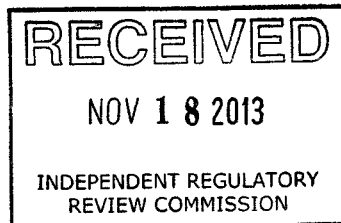
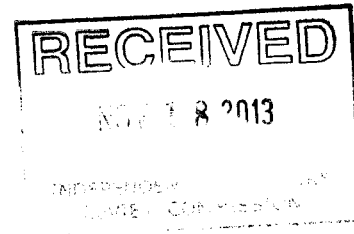
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**From:** Elaine Friedlander <elaine.friedlander@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 9:04 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone grad. exams

To Whom it May Concern,

I want to go on record to say that I believe teaching to one exam is ludicrous. We already know simply teaching to the test is no way to educate. As an educator with 47 years experience I can tell you that there are many ways to insure proficiency in students. We should strive for excellence not the result of one test.

Elaine Friedlander, NCTM  
PMTA conference chair  
Home phone: 610-696-7662  
Cell: 484-459-3370  
Fax: 610-886-4688



## Cooper, Kathy

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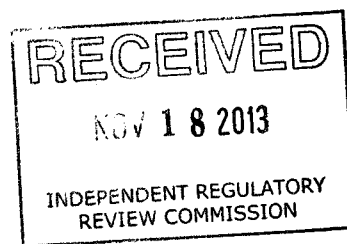
**From:** Denny, Ruth <rdenny@dcui.org>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 10:58 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystones

Dear Politicians,

I am a special education teacher who is studying in an Educational Doctorate Program for administration. Many of my colleagues and I strongly oppose the Keystone Exam as a prerequisite for graduation from high school. There are students who have not taken the necessary courses to take the exams, let alone pass them! The projected cost of remediation is enormous. Who is going to pay for this? The districts which will be hardest hit with a tax burden to fund remediation are the ones that will not be able to afford tax increases.

Please reconsider your proposed bill!

Ruth Denny





**Cooper, Kathy**

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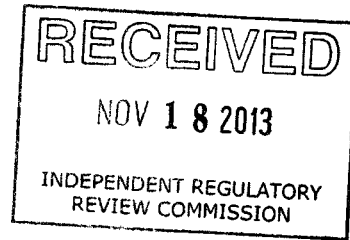
**From:** Ellen Millick <ellpallmill@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 16, 2013 11:06 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Graduation Exams

I wish to express my opposition to the proposed Keystone Graduation Exams. They could be unfair to the students and would take away from regular class room instruction. There is too much "teaching to the test" now. Do not let this happen to the children of Pennsylvania.

Ellen Millick

East Goshen Township

West Chester School District



**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Nancy Hratko <hratko@ptd.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 16, 2013 11:09 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Graduation Exams

I see no evidence that a graduation exam will improve our education system. And, I am far from convinced that it can be implemented without serious cost to the taxpayer or stress on school budgets. College-bound students have sufficient hurdles to challenge them. Those who are not on that path do not need the discouraging prospect of investing 13 years in school without a diploma. And, there is a portion of both groups who are simply not good test takers. Do we really want to inhibit functioning and ambitious kids from entering college or finding jobs?

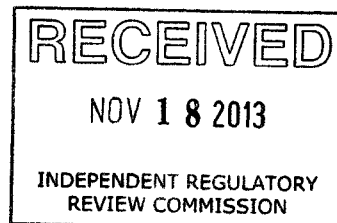
It is difficult enough to tailor education to each child's needs. There is certainly no test that accurately measures what they know. Therefore, I am against spending money and time on graduation exams. What will happen when too many children fail? We will simply lower the standards of the test so our state does not look too bad to the rest of the country. Hence, money wasted.

Please vote against the Keystone Graduation Exams.

Sincerely,

John R. Hratko MD  
28 West High Street  
Nazareth, PA 18064

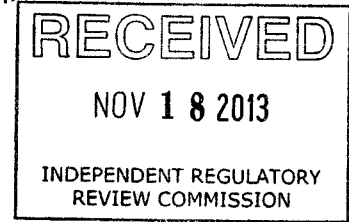
Sent from my iPad



**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Thomson, Graeme <Graeme.Thomson@Megger.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 16, 2013 11:26 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Graduation Exams



Dear Sirs:

As the father of an 8-year child, I am writing this e-mail to ask you to oppose the proposed Keystone Graduation Exams. These exams are a bad idea with the potential to cause damage on many levels. It is wrong to let standardized tests determine if a student graduates. Among the problems with this plan are:

- Course teachers and local districts ave no input into the development of the tests.
- Students face the prospect of passing all classses and still not graduating if they do not take standardized tests well.
- There will be more "teaching to take the test" and less real teaching in the schools.

It just doesn't make sense for the Pennsylvania Department of Education to continue to expand standardized testing at a time when there is increasing evidence that challenges the notion that it is the best way to evaluate student achievement and learning.

Sincerely,  
Graeme Thomson

667 Saylor's Mill Road  
Spring City, PA 19475

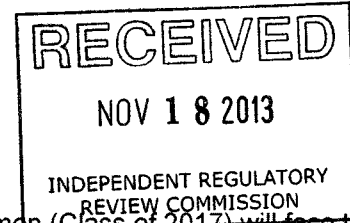
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This e-mail has been scanned for viruses by MessageLabs.

**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** ncaracciol@aol.com  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 16, 2013 11:48 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Graduation Exams



Dear Administrator:

Is the following information correct? High school students starting with current freshmen (~~Class of 2017~~) will face the possibility of passing all their classes with straight A's yet failing one of the keystones and not getting a diploma.

As an educator of 18 years, I cannot support a Keystone Exam that would be the sole means of evaluating whether a student receives a diploma or not. Differentiated instruction demands that teachers have a variety of ways in which to evaluate student achievement, therefore how is it possible for the state to require ONE test that will evaluate if a student graduates from high school?

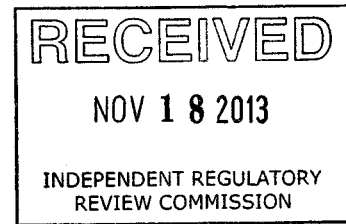
Please reconsider your standardized testing procedures because students are individual people who should not be evaluated by a "one fit all" test.

Sincerely,  
Nicole A Caracciolo  
Educator

**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** P. Coleman <pwpc@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 16, 2013 12:32 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Graduation Exams



To whom it may concern:

I am opposed to the Keystone Graduation Exams. Our children are tested enough in their regular curriculum. Their grades should be sufficient to determine eligibility for graduation. My 7th grader passed the Keystone Algebra exam last year, but she was unnecessarily stressed by the pressure of taking an exam at age 12 that would determine whether she could graduate from high school. In addition, the cost of the program further burdens our school districts, which are already struggling with budget cuts. That money would be better spent elsewhere.

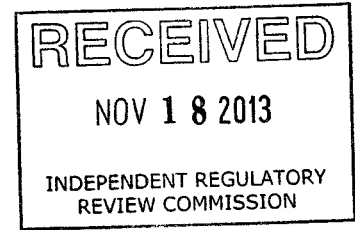
Respectfully,

Pam Coleman  
18 Broad Street  
West Chester, PA 19382

**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Fr. Daniel Meyer <frdanielmeyer@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 16, 2013 1:16 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Please Reject Keystone Graduation Exams



To Whom it Concerns,

As a registered voter, I am opposed to the Keystone Graduation Proposal, and most standardized testing in general. Please keep my opinion in consideration at the time of your decision.

Thank you,  
Daniel S. Meyer

770 Buck Run Rd.  
Coatesville, PA 19320

## Cooper, Kathy

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**From:** Bornhouse@aol.com  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 16, 2013 1:17 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Cc:** bornhouse@aol.com  
**Subject:** Keystone Exams



To whom it may concern,  
I am writing to voice my opposition to the Keystone Exams for the following reasons:

- There are high achieving districts for whom this structure is unnecessary and will, likely, be detrimental to the education that they are currently providing their students.
- The cost in terms of personnel, instructional time (being forced "to teach to the test"), and dollars is wasteful. All of these resources could be used more effectively to ensure that children are receiving the best education possible.
- I propose that the money and personnel being used to develop and implement the exams would be better spent/used to provide additional resources in the form of teacher training and support; smaller class sizes; greater security; additional counselor, special ed and teacher aides; parent training and support, etc in those schools and districts that are in need.

I encourage the committee to defeat this proposal and for efforts to be turned towards aiding those districts that need it most. And in doing so to look closely at each district to determine what is most needed for the students in it to determine a plan that will be of benefit. Not all districts will benefit from the same strategies and to assume that they will is wasteful and detrimental.

It has been disconcerting and appalling to me to witness the amount of time, energy and money that our district administrators have had to spend on the Keystone Exams. Time, energy and money that could be spent in ensuring that the a strong, forward looking curriculum and opportunities for academic growth of our students could be continued. Ours is a suburban, high achieving district.

My experience as a volunteer at an elementary school in SW Philadelphia has provided me with a very different window into our public education system and the idea of the Keystone Exams is disconcerting for other reasons. I have been appalled at the lack of basic resources and conditions that exist for the teachers, administrators and children at this inner city school. A few of my observations include not enough text books for students in each class; too few desks and chairs; crowded rooms with not enough space for each child to even have a desk; no paper towels for students to use after washing their hands in the bathroom; students with behavioral and educational issues in a class of 30 and no additional support for them or the teacher; too few support staff so that there are times when there is no one available to remove a child who is acting out (and sometimes dangerously so) from a classroom -- to name but a few examples. Implementation of the Keystone Exams will not solve any of these issues and the cost of these exams will only drain funds that could be used to try to address these basic needs.

Again, I encourage you to defeat the Keystones proposal.

Thank you.

Meg Born  
412 School House Lane  
Strafford, PA 19087  
610-995-9799 (h)

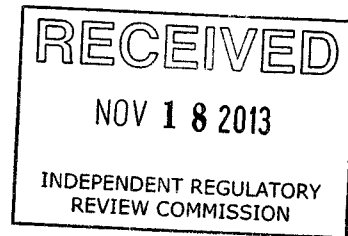
**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Barbara Geltosky <barbara@geltosky.com> on behalf of Barbara Geltosky <b.geltosky1615@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 16, 2013 1:28 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Cc:** Liz Mercogliano  
**Subject:** keystone exams

I am opposed to the keystone exams. As a teacher, I know that some students do not perform well on standardized tests. If my son who went through the TE schools, and took untimed tests, had to take these Keystone exams, there would have been a real possibility he would not have graduated. Our school districts are hurting, imposing a further burden without funding, will cause them to divert other instructional funding, which will not benefit our students!

Sent from my iPad, excuse the auto correct Barbara Geltosky  
[Barbara@Geltosky.com](mailto:Barbara@Geltosky.com)





**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Linda DAdamo <Imdadamo@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 16, 2013 4:48 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Exams

As a mother of an 8th grade child diagnosed with dyslexia (a language based learning disability) and a 6th grader who struggles in school, I am strongly opposed to these Keystone Exams. It's a given fact that children with learning disabilities do not score well on standardized tests. I've always put more faith in the in-class grades that show how well my children are currently doing. These exams will put more stress on our children. We need to stop them now!

Linda D'Adamo



**Cooper, Kathy**

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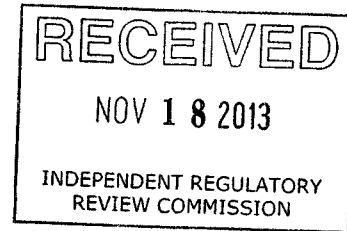
**From:** Hwlyfstr@aol.com  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 16, 2013 4:48 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Graduation Exams

Gentlemen: I join with many others in opposing the Keystone Graduation Exams proposal.

It is wrong for a mere three standardized tests to determine a person's high school graduation. A student could do well all through high school and be denied a diploma based on three tests. Once again, this is an attempt to squeeze thousands of people into a small pigeonhole which may or may not be relevant to further success.

It is irresponsible to spend \$65 million dollars a year on this program that could result in a lot of students who cannot even claim a high school diploma. It will result in a \$300 million unfunded mandate that will massively increase property taxes.

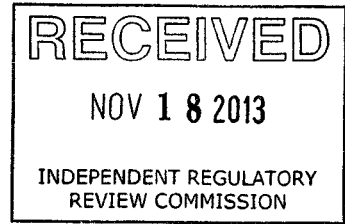
Please use common sense and reject this package. If you want to spend so much money, spend it on the schools themselves. Thank you, Beverly Foster, Wayne



**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Barbara Nicholson <barbara.nicholson@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 16, 2013 4:59 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Graduation Exams



Dear IRRC,

I am contacting you to let you know of my opposition to the Keystone Graduation Exams. I am concerned that they would result in increased property taxes, increased standardized testing and additional teaching to the tests that financially stressed schools can ill afford. It doesn't seem fair that a student could fail to graduate based on the results of one test.

Thank you,

Barbara Nicholson  
[Barbara.nicholson@verizon.net](mailto:Barbara.nicholson@verizon.net)  
403 Berkley Road Exton, PA 19341

**Cooper, Kathy**

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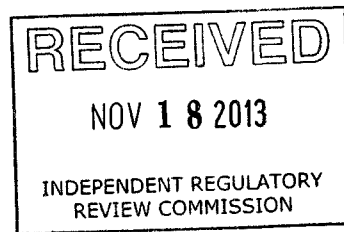
**From:** Bobbie Bash <rlbash@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 16, 2013 5:00 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Graduation Exams

I am a retired grandmother of five who had a career in Marketing. I have five grandchildren in PA schools. I oppose the standardized graduation exams for many reasons but mostly because some children with fantastic potential and skills do not test well on standardized tests. I am one of those people who did not test well on standardized tests but went on to graduate with honors from college as well as receive two master degrees. Had I been boxed in by a standardized exam, then I never would have had that advanced educational opportunity and would not have had a career in Marketing.

Please do not use a standardized test to measure a student's grasp of a particular subject matter or their limit their future.

Sincerely,

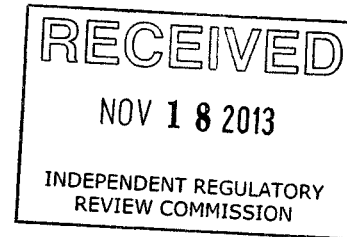
Roberta L. Bash  
913 Harbour Ridge Lane  
Downingtown, PA 19335



**Cooper, Kathy**

---

**From:** kathryne clark <kassyclar@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 16, 2013 7:55 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Top down, one size fits all if a fools errand. It's a waste of money and disrespectful of tax payers!!



**Cooper, Kathy**

---

**From:** ContactForm@state.pa.us  
**Sent:** Friday, November 15, 2013 8:58 PM  
**To:** Help  
**Subject:** IRRC Website - New Message



A new message has arrived from the IRRC Website



**First Name:** Chris

**Last Name:** Youngs

**City/State:** Coopersburg, PA

**Email:** [cyoungs@ptd.net](mailto:cyoungs@ptd.net)

**Subject:** TITLE 22. EDUCATION - CHAPTER 4

**Message:**

Hello. I am writing to encourage the approval of the proposed revisions to TITLE 22. EDUCATION - CHAPTER 4. ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT. These revisions would allow a reasonable amount of time for districts to adjust to the requirements. Thank you.

**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** ContactForm@state.pa.us  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 16, 2013 5:35 PM  
**To:** Help  
**Subject:** IRRC Website - New Message



A new message has arrived from the IRRC Website



**First Name:** Myra

**Last Name:** Miller

**City/State:** Kennett Square, PA

**Email:** [myramiller@hotmail.com](mailto:myramiller@hotmail.com)

**Subject:** Keystone Graduation Exams

**Message:**

I am opposed to the Keystone Graduation Exams.

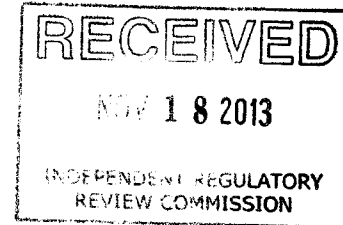
**Cooper, Kathy**

---

**From:** ContactForm@state.pa.us  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 4:16 PM  
**To:** Help  
**Subject:** IRRC Website - New Message



A new message has arrived from the IRRC Website



**First Name:** Keith

**Last Name:** Crawford

**City/State:** Gibsonia, PA

**Email:** [kcrawf@consolidated.net](mailto:kcrawf@consolidated.net)

**Subject:** Common Core Education

**Message:**

The last thing we need to improve our educational system is to adopt Common Core. Talking with teachers from around the states they all agree it lacks teaching the history of our great nation and substitutes a teaching methodology where the method to an answer is more important than the correct answer. Wrong Wrong Wrong. DO NOT ACCEPT Common Core



**Cooper, Kathy**

---

**From:** ContactForm@state.pa.us  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 4:16 PM  
**To:** Help  
**Subject:** IRRC Website - New Message



A new message has arrived from the IRRC Website

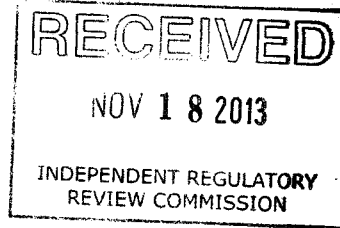
**First Name:** Keith

**Last Name:** Crawford

**City/State:** Gibsonia, PA

**Email:** [kcrawf@consolidated.net](mailto:kcrawf@consolidated.net)

**Subject:** Common Core Education



**Message:**

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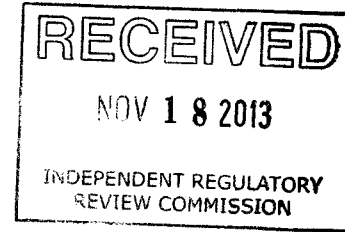
**Cooper, Kathy**

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**Last Name:** Crawford

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**Email:** [kcrawf@consolidated.net](mailto:kcrawf@consolidated.net)

**Subject:** Common Core Education

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**First Name:** Keith

**Last Name:** Crawford

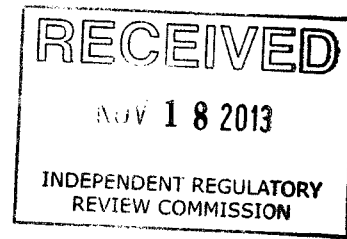
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**Cooper, Kathy**

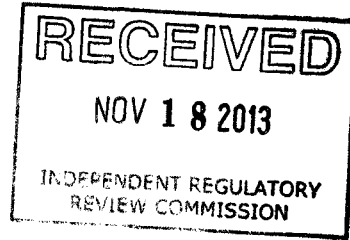
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**From:** ContactForm@state.pa.us  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 8:36 AM  
**To:** Help  
**Subject:** IRRC Website - New Message



A new message has arrived from the IRRC Website

**First Name:** Diane  
**Last Name:** Welsh  
**City/State:** Exton, PA  
**Email:** 19341



**Subject:** Keystone Exams

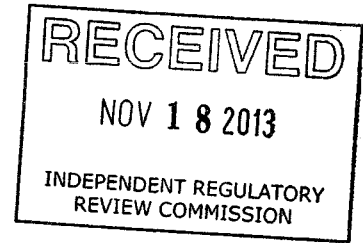
**Message:**

From everything I've read, the Keystone Exams are very bad news for the tax payers and students in Pennsylvania. I am the mother of a 34 year old who was identified with a learning disability in elementary school. Tests were a real problem for him. He was allowed to take his tests out of the classroom, and received extra instruction so that he could graduate from high school, graduate from college and have a very successful career. A pass/fail test is disasterous for many children, and expecting all kids to pass a test to graduate is a very BAD idea.

**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** ContactForm@state.pa.us  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 16, 2013 11:23 PM  
**To:** Help  
**Subject:** IRRC Website - New Message



A new message has arrived from the IRRC Website

**First Name:** Cathy

**Last Name:** Craddock

**City/State:** Drexel Hill, PA

**Email:** [cathy.craddock@gmail.com](mailto:cathy.craddock@gmail.com)

**Subject:** IRRC #2976

**Message:**

Dr. Mr. Sumner: Enticed by the Federal Department of Education with offers of multi-million dollars grants (bribes) and No Child Left Behind waivers, Pennsylvania is among 46 states that blindly agreed to participate in the unproven and untested education reform initiative known as Common Core Standards. As a grandmother and former teacher, I am appalled that the PA Department of Education is willing and indeed eager to use our students as guinea pigs for this nationalized education experiment. Members of the PA BOE are unelected and unaccountable yet they are very powerful. It is extremely presumptuous of the Board to exercise authority of this magnitude without having public or legislative hearings first. Obviously they did not value input from those pesky legislators, teachers, school boards, parents and taxpayers. I first became aware of Common Core last Spring so I was surprised on Grandparents Day last week to learn that my grandchild's school has been participating in the program for several years already. This information was not offered. I asked the teacher during the classroom visit. Each student is unique but Common Core is a one-size-fits-all reform. Teachers are not really teaching anymore. They have become facilitators in today's student-lead classroom. The children form small think tanks and work out solutions to problems. From what I understand, accuracy is not that important as long as the children can explain how they reached their wrong answer. So  $2 + 2 = 5$  is an acceptable if the thought process was reasonable. If accuracy isn't stressed, how well-prepared will our students be for careers in medicine, science, finance, building trades, etc.? Rote learning is taboo now. Phonics a no-no! Multiplication tables – so yesterday! Cursive writing is also abandoned so I guess signatures will no longer be required ID in the future. What was good is now bad in this upside down world. What should be taboo is the assault on students' privacy rights. Common Data is a national database that tracks all students from Kindergarten to Career – without parental notification or consent. The data kept on the student records academic progress, behaviors and attitudes, plus private information about the family (religion, politics, gun possession, etc.). Why is such detail necessary and can this cumulative record have a negative or prejudiced impact on the child as he moves from school to school? Also what about security? Will the student be guaranteed that his privacy rights will not be violated by hackers or internal unauthorized viewers? Today's headlines confirm that these concerns are not unfounded. The multiple assessments involved in Common Core present yet another matter of concern. The keystones have not yet been approved by the Federal Department of

Education. Aren't you extremely concerned that the Feds have the final say? Doesn't that violate the 10th Amendment and at least 3 federal laws against nationalizing education? If our PA schools are forced to administer the nationwide CCS Tests, students will have to answer essay questions that do not measure what our children know, but what they think, their beliefs and attitudes. How can they possibly be graded in a non-subjective way? In addition, I can't imagine that teachers who clearly resented having to teach to the test for No Child Left Behind are thrilled with having to endure another experiment in teaching methodology that actually will be NCLB on steroids. I am also alarmed by news reports from parents in other states complaining about how the Common Core curriculum is bombarding students with progressive indoctrination regarding collectivism, climate change and secularism. This undoubtedly pleases the United Nations in its quest for Global Citizenship and Agenda 21 - but our founding fathers must be spinning like tops in their graves! Finally, as a taxpayer, I anticipate that the huge costs of implementation will surely have a dire impact on homeowners who are already struggling with high school property taxes in this fragile economy. What a pity that rising taxes may force retirees and young families to give up their homes for an experimental reform initiative that most probably will be deemed a failure in years to come. Since the 1960s academics have introduced and discarded one education "reform" after another. Let's reject Common Core and get back to the tried and true basics of years long gone. Let's not sacrifice this generation of students to yet another experimental methodology. Please... no more guinea pig trials!

## Cooper, Kathy

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**From:** ContactForm@state.pa.us  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 12:32 AM  
**To:** Help  
**Subject:** IRRC Website - New Message



A new message has arrived from the IRRC Website

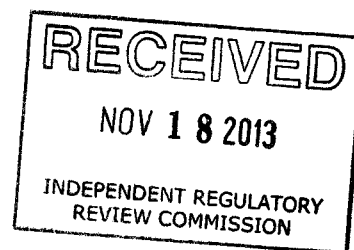
**First Name:** Edessa

**Last Name:** Snyder

**City/State:** Newtown Square, PA

**Email:** [Edessa@comcast.net](mailto:Edessa@comcast.net)

**Subject:** Common Core Concerns



**Message:**

Please prevent the Common Core Curriculum from being implemented in Pennsylvania, as the drastic changes with the group teaching style has caused an alarmingly negative reaction on our middle school children, on their classmates, and on the voiceless parents who have unfairly been dismissed from our children's education. Our daughter has always excelled in math and has voiced her frustrations with the curricular changes since others in her group are lowering her grade because they are not completing assignments or earning higher scores. While she is not being challenged to exceed as an individual, she is now required to pull the weight of the lazy, defiant and less skilled children in her group, and her teacher has actually announced that if one child in the group fails a test, the group is to blame, rather than the teacher or the failing student taking on this responsibility. While it is already a concern that teachers no longer check that students are completing homework assignments, this responsibility has also been passed on to students, giving children authority over each other to rate one another's work, the opportunity to cheat, and the added the pressure of lying for classmates in an attempt to be socially accepted. If this absence of a moral authority isn't already a cause for concern, this teacher actually posts the answers online for students to view, and while the answer keys can not be viewed on the parents webpage, the teacher jokingly added that she would never know if her students cheated. The school principal actually stated that the subject of math no longer requires correct answers because it is the student's efforts to communicate how they arrived at their answer that must be applauded. While I'm certain that pharmacists, engineers, and accountants would disagree with this argument, it is deeply troubling that this teacher is literally instructing students to "CLAP" when a classmate answers incorrectly "to encourage class participation and to prevent students from judging each other unfairly." This insane coddling will cripple the next generation, especially when they enter the work force, but children are viewing these juvenile teaching techniques as an insult to their intelligence, and it is stirring a negative atmosphere into these groups that will result in a total defiance of authority. Our son has already revealed the social pressures he is witnessing within his group, where one student never completes homework and regularly copies the answers from group members so they all get full credit. Being that the social consequences of being outcasted is more of a threat, my son has no reason to inform the teacher that cheating is a regular occurrence within his group, but students can not be expected to rate their friends work when teachers who assign the homework don't even care that the work is being

completed. Another major concern we are facing is that parents are not able to assist our children with the problems teachers are presenting in class because parents have not been included in the changes and are not familiar with the new methods being introduced. As our son has an IEP and has needed more creative techniques to understand new concepts, these unfamiliar lessons are literally preventing parents from being involved in their child's education. When speaking with other parents, I sadly learned that our neighbor's son asked his mother to stay home from school because he is also struggling with the new curriculum. He is another child with an IEP, and while he knows he is struggling, the kids in his class are blaming him for holding his group back and bullying him in the halls. This child refused to ask the teacher for help because he was too embarrassed to admit in front of his class that he was falling behind, as this group teaching style does send students the message that teachers are not considerate of individual needs. Feeling helplessly stranded by a school that has hijacked our children's education, the principal's response to my concerns were to refer me to a website called Kahn Academy, a demand to trust him, and a promise to schedule a parent meeting sometime in December. Not only were my concerns as a parent dismissed, but words can never express my disgust when the principal justified these extreme radical changes by falsely blaming "No Child Left Behind." It is the implementation of "COMMON CORE" that has caused every child to be abandoned as an individual in the classroom, and this curriculum has caused parents to lose all rights to be involved in their child's education. As an educator of 20 years who specializes in the redirection of troubled youths, there are numerous children voicing their discontentment to any adult willing to listen, and my children's friends have been alarmingly vocal about the various difficulties they are each facing with the implementation of these new methods. Knowing that my daughter tested in the advanced level in last year's PSSA, her Common Core Foresight testing has just downgraded her scores to proficient, and as this is a young lady who enthusiastically spoke of her future desire of becoming an algebra teacher, she now resents math because all her teacher does now is present problems, not teach how to solve them! When every last child I know received plummeting test scores after the introduction of this experimental curriculum, perhaps the authors of Common Core can measure the impact their dangerous methods had on our children's confidence levels. I would challenge these creators to do their own math and explain what the results will be when you rapidly remove all that is familiar from a child's world from text books to the interactive authority of a teacher in a classroom, tell these kids that they are responsible for solving their own problems while they socialize in their little groups, lie to these kids by claiming there are no wrong answers in math anymore, pamper them by clapping for incorrect answers, lead students to cheat by posting the answer keys online, imply that it is acceptable to disrespect the authority of parents by not displaying the answers on the parents web page, and while there is no accountability for cheating or bullying, students who do speak up about individual concerns are penalized with public humiliation and the fear of being outcasted by their peers. Our children are not your political guinea pigs, and it would be a reasonable request to instruct the Common Core creators to revisit their studies in history and humanities before this out-of-touch math experiment destroys the next generation. To vote in favor of Common Core is to declare an end to personal freedom, and removing individual recognition from the classroom will not just cause a frustrated youth to seek out negative attention in an effort to be heard, but school violence will escalate to unimagined levels because our youth will no longer be free to express their creativity. What is so much worse is that the hidden geniuses within these classrooms will never even be recognized because teachers are more concerned with off-loading their jobs on to their students rather than challenging these future innovators to explore, discover, and invent real solutions to real problems. With so many improvements needed in our educational system, the Communist mentality of Common Core is a dangerous direction because it removes our personal freedom, destroys the desire to succeed, muzzles our children's individual voices, and it dismisses the parents' right to be involved in the educational process of our own children. So before you vote to spend taxpayer money to silence the creative individuality of our youth, please consider the cost we will all pay if we don't listen to these students directly, as the most useful tool in mending a failing education system is to hear the individual descriptions of those being effected by it. While teachers who abuse their authority are still protected by unions and not held accountable for violating a sacred trust against our youth, most of the good teachers will not stand up because they fear the consequences of losing their job. Rather than protecting the corrupt and their political agendas, schools finally need to accept responsibility for such negligence and become the tool in which our children can express problems they are encountering. With the proper safe-guards in place, drop out rates and school

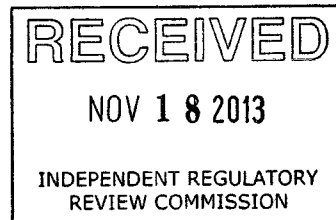


violence can decrease dramatically, good teachers could be rewarded for inspiring the next generation, and children would finally have the resources to speak up when something is wrong, find solutions to real-life problems, and to no longer fear the consequences of being different or for choosing the right path in life . . . May God bless all of those who vote on the future of the next generation because the time is quickly approaching when all of our futures will be held in their hands . . . Thank you for taking the time! Warmest Regards, Edessa Snyder Newtown Square, PA (267) 978-3320

**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Hoffman, Stephen F.  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 8:50 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** FW: IRRC No. 2976



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**From:** Edessa Snyder [mailto:edessa@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, November 18, 2013 12:43 AM  
**To:** Hoffman, Stephen F.  
**Subject:** IRRC No. 2976

**Dear Stephen Hoffman:**

**Please prevent the Common Core Curriculum from being implemented in Pennsylvania, as the drastic changes with the group teaching style has caused an alarmingly negative reaction on our middle school children, on their classmates, and on the voiceless parents who have unfairly been dismissed from our children's education.**

**Our daughter has always excelled in math and has voiced her frustrations with the curricular changes since others in her group are lowering her grade because they are not completing assignments or earning higher scores. While she is not being challenged to exceed as an individual, she is now required to pull the weight of the lazy, defiant and less skilled children in her group, and her teacher has actually announced that if one child in the group fails a test, the group is to blame, rather than the teacher or the failing student taking on this responsibility.**

**While it is already a concern that teachers no longer check that students are completing homework assignments, this responsibility has also been passed on to students, giving children authority over each other to rate one another's work, the opportunity to cheat, and the added the pressure of lying for classmates in an attempt to be socially accepted. If this absence of a moral authority isn't already a cause for concern, this teacher actually posts the answers online for students to view, and while the answer keys can not be viewed on the parents webpage, the teacher jokingly added that she would never know if her students cheated.**

**The school principal actually stated that the subject of math no longer requires correct answers because it is the student's efforts to communicate how they arrived at their answer that must be**

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**Our son has already revealed the social pressures he is witnessing within his group, where one student never completes homework and regularly copies the answers from group members so they all get full credit. Being that the social consequences of being outcasted is more of a threat, my son has no reason to inform the teacher that cheating is a regular occurrence within his group, but students can not be expected to rate their friends work when teachers who assign the homework don't even care that the work is being completed.**

**Another major concern we are facing is that parents are not able to assist our children with the problems teachers are presenting in class because parents have not been included in the changes and are not familiar with the new methods being introduced. As our son has an IEP and has needed more creative techniques to understand new concepts, these unfamiliar lessons are literally preventing parents from being involved in their child's education.**

**When speaking with other parents, I sadly learned that our neighbor's son asked his mother to stay home from school because he is also struggling with the new curriculum. He is another child with an IEP, and while he knows he is struggling, the kids in his class are blaming him for holding his group back and bullying him in the halls. This child refused to ask the teacher for help because he was too embarrassed to admit in front of his class that he was falling behind, as this group teaching style does send students the message that teachers are not considerate of individual needs.**

**Feeling helplessly stranded by a school that has hijacked our children's education, the principal's response to my concerns were to refer me to a website called Kahn Academy, a demand to trust him, and a promise to schedule a parent meeting sometime in December. Not only were my concerns as a parent dismissed, but words can never express my disgust when the principal justified these extreme radical changes by falsely blaming "No Child Left Behind." It is the implementation of "COMMON CORE" that has caused every child to be abandoned as an individual in the classroom, and this curriculum has caused parents to lose all rights to be involved in their child's education.**

**As an educator of 20 years who specializes in the redirection of troubled youths, there are numerous children voicing their discontentment to any adult willing to listen, and my children's friends have been alarmingly vocal about the various difficulties they are each facing with the implementation of these new methods. Knowing that my daughter tested in the advanced level in last year's PSSA, her Common Core Foresight testing has just downgraded her scores to proficient, and as this is a young lady who enthusiastically spoke of her future desire of becoming an algebra teacher, she now resents math because all her teacher does now is present problems, not teach how to solve them!**

**When every last child I know received plummeting test scores after the introduction of this experimental curriculum, perhaps the authors of Common Core can measure the impact their dangerous methods had on our children's confidence levels. I would challenge these creators to do their own math and explain what the results will be when you rapidly remove all that is familiar from a child's world from text books to the interactive authority of a teacher in a classroom, tell these kids that they are responsible for solving their own problems while they socialize in their little groups, lie to these kids by claiming there are no wrong answers in math anymore, pamper them by clapping for incorrect answers, lead students to cheat by posting the answer keys online, imply that it is acceptable to disrespect the authority of parents by not displaying the answers on the parents web page, and while there is no accountability for cheating or bullying, students who do speak up about individual concerns are penalized with public humiliation and the fear of being outcasted by their peers.**

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**Thank you for taking the time!**

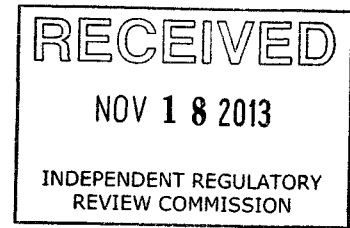
**Warmest Regards,**

**Edessa Snyder  
Newtown Square, PA  
(267) 978-3320**

**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** Mary Ann Novak <ranman\_93@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 17, 2013 6:47 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** IRRC No. 2976



Dear Mr. Sumner:

I am writing to convey my deep concern over Common Core, something which was never voted on by the Senate, House of Representatives or any voter. I have never missed voting since I was old enough to accept the duty/responsibility. I read over every subject/person before I vote to be informed and to know an issue of such importance as our children's education and not have that opportunity, greatly troubles me.

Every parent wishes their children to be successful and no one has a greater investment in them than their parents. We certainly expect to have a say so in what they are taught in our schools. This takes that away and we lose our voice. These are OUR CHILDREN, NOT the government's.

Another disturbing fact is that this curriculum was implemented without any regard to a budget. I don't know of any business owner who does not take into consideration the cost of a project without doing research on whether or not it's feasible to proceed. No such research was done. How can a state agree to implement something, sight unseen, not knowing what finances are involved? Not only that, but to actually sign a disclaimer at the end denouncing ANY AND ALL consequences?

I am also extremely concerned over the so-called Data Collection on our children. To have anyone at any time have access to the personal and private lives of our children goes way beyond an invasion of privacy and intrusiveness. This is about control. If I am living in the "Land of the Free" then why doesn't it feel that way?

Another thing: our classrooms have at least (30) students, all of which learn in different ways. This is not a one-size-fits-all and I have yet to see that exhibited in any home, let alone a classroom. Even though my children have the same parents, they are so different from each other and that MUST be taken into

consideration as well within  
the classroom.

I STRONGLY URGE you to reconsider implementing this curriculum. I sincerely believe that this  
does not in  
any way, shape or form have our children's best interest at heart.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Mary Ann Novak

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