

**Cooper, Kathy**

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**From:** David Eaton <davide@stanleylaman.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 15, 2013 4:01 PM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Cc:** dce89@verizon.net  
**Subject:** Chapter 4 (Keystone Exams requirement)



To whom it may concern:

I will not write a long dissertation on this subject but rather voice my strong opposition to the implementation of Chapter 4, or the Keystone Exam requirement for high school graduation.

I cite several reasons, briefly articulated below. By way of background:

I have a double-major bachelor's degree and also substantial graduate school education completed. My wife also has a bachelor's degree and complete about half of a master's degree.

I currently have 4 children, two of whom are in high school. My oldest is 17 and a senior and quite a good student with over a 4.6 weighted GPA and scoring well over 2,000 on his SATs.

He has already been accepted by a couple of good schools and is in-process with several others, including 3 Ivy League schools. He is also a recruited athlete for both Division 1-AA football and Division 1 lacrosse and has multiple options to weigh in his final decision of where to attend.

My limited experience with the Keystone exam idea is disturbing for several reasons, chief among them that I work in, and we built a home in, one of the best school districts in the state (Tredyffrin Easttown), primarily for the access to education for our children.

My oldest will graduate having taken, I believe, 9 or 10 Advanced Placement courses, and receiving an 87 or higher in each one. All his other courses are Honors-Level. My younger children are so far following the same path.

The Keystone Exams and the inherent requirement for the schools to structure their curriculum around them, has taken away from a high school curriculum that has proven to be excellent at preparing its students for college entrance exams and college itself.

The state appears to be effectively 'dumbing down' the overall education experience at the better schools, by creating this requirement in order to improve the result at some of the less-fortunate school systems in the state. It seems the more effective approach would be to specifically target under-performing school districts and help them improve their processes and the end result - educating students and preparing them for adulthood and being able to be productive and happy members of society in whatever field they choose to pursue.

Let the school districts that have proven successful continue to operate as they see fit - don't fix something that is not broken.

Therefore, I will closely monitor the outcome of the process and review being undertaken and should Chapter 4 be approved and implemented, I will pursue several courses of action:

I will strongly recommend to my family, friends, colleagues, neighbors and employees that they vote out any state legislators that did not strongly oppose the approval of Chapter 4.

I will give careful consideration to either pulling my children from the public school system for private education or just as likely, consider moving out of state.

(I work in New York City quite a bit and was raised in northern New Jersey so moving there would be easy.)

The above is a rather quickly-written summary of something I have thought about off and on. I know I am not alone in feeling this way about the whole Chapter 4 issue.

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