

Cooper, Kathy

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IRRC

From: Gwenn Mascioli [gwennmascioli@verizon.net]
Sent: Friday, November 02, 2012 5:24 PM
To: IRRC
Subject: T/E Resident - opposed to the changes to the Chapter 4 regulations

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To the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC):

I am a resident of the Tredyffrin/Easttown School District, and I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed changes to Chapter 4 regulations regarding high school graduation requirements. Students in Tredyffrin/Easttown School District have historically experienced high degrees of success in college and the workplace, and I am concerned that the addition of high-stakes exit exams may have the unintended consequence of hindering students who are proficient but do not always demonstrate the fullest extent of their skills in a traditional testing environment. Beyond my opposition to the concept of graduation exams, I am further concerned by the following components of the proposed regulations:

- In addition to the Algebra 1, Literature and Biology Keystone Exam requirements, the State plans to add an exam in English Composition for the class of 2019 and beyond and a Civics and Government exam for the class of 2020 and beyond.
 - Two separate tests in English Composition are unnecessary and a poor use of taxpayer resources.
 - A Civics and Government exam will require expensive restructuring of high school curricula across the State because many local districts will need to move the related course out of the junior or senior year to an earlier year.
 - The costs to local taxpayers for textbooks alone may exceed \$100,000 to facilitate such a change.
- The requirement of three (3) years of instruction prior to an alternative assessment places an undue burden on students, limits their ability to choose other courses, and could harm the college admissions process. The alternative assessment path should be made available at an earlier point.
- Will this unfunded mandate permit flexibility for high-performing schools with a record of success and also provide additional support for struggling schools? Is this another State remedy that assumes "one size fits all?"

Our school district is struggling financially. And, if Tredyffrin Easttown is struggling – given our substantial community economics and our impeccable school ratings – I can't even fathom how other Districts will cope with this. In reality – TESD will figure out a way to cope with this mandate should it pass. But it will be at a cost. Some of the costs will be obvious and some will be subtle.

These unfunded state mandates are eroding the exemplary education that is currently offered in our district.

I'm counting on you and everyone who works for the Commonwealth to pay attention to the important legislation.

I urge you to amend the proposed Chapter 4 regulations to reflect these concerns.
Thank you.

Sincerely,
Gwenn Mascioli
12 Williams Lane, Berwyn, PA 19312