

Regulation #6-326 (IRRC #2976)
State Board of Education
Academic Standards and Assessment

Larry Wittig, Chairman
State Board of Education



Date: 11/19/13

 * P. 01 *
 * TRANSACTION REPORT *
 * NOV-19-2013 TUE 04:00 PM *
 * FOR: *
 * SEND *
 * DATE START RECEIVER TX TIME PAGES TYPE NOTE M# DP *
 * NOV-19 03:56 PM 97973455 4' 07" 14 FAX TX OK 088 *
 * TOTAL : 4M 7S PAGES: 14 *

Facsimile Cover Sheet



Phone: (717) 783-5417
 Fax #: (717) 783-2664
 E-mail: irrc@irrc.state.pa.us
 Website: www.irrc.state.pa.us

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY REVIEW COMMISSION
 333 MARKET STREET, 14TH FLOOR, HARRISBURG, PA 17101

To: Honorable Mike Folmer, Chairman
Agency: Senate Education Committee
Phone: 787-5708
Fax: 787-3455
Date: 11/19/13
of Pages: 14

RE State Board of Education #6-326 (IRRC #2976) – Academic Standards and Assessments

URGENT!

Section 5.1(j) of the Regulatory Review Act (71 P.S. § 745.5a(j)) requires us to forward to you any documents we receive during the 48-hour blackout preceding our public meeting, upon receipt. **Please distribute this material to the appropriate regulatory staff as soon as possible.**

TRANSACTION REPORT

P. 01

NOV-19-2013 TUE 03:55 PM

FOR:

SEND

DATE	START	RECEIVER	TX TIME	PAGES	TYPE	NOTE	M#	DP
NOV-19	03:53 PM	97831665	2' 02"	14	FAX TX	OK	087	
TOTAL :						2M 2S	PAGES:	14

Facsimile Cover Sheet



Phone: (717) 783-5417
 Fax #: (717) 783-2664
 E-mail: irrc@irrc.state.pa.us
 Website: www.irrc.state.pa.us

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY REVIEW COMMISSION
 333 MARKET STREET, 14TH FLOOR, HARRISBURG, PA 17101

To: Honorable James Roebuck, Minority Chairman
 Agency: House Education Committee
 Phone: 783-1000
 Fax: 783-1665
 Date: 11/19/13
 # of Pages: 14

RE: State Board of Education #6-326 (IRRC #2976) – Academic Standards and Assessments

URGENT!

Section 5.1(j) of the Regulatory Review Act (71 P S. § 745.5a(j)) requires us to forward to you any documents we receive during the 48-hour blackout preceding our public meeting, upon receipt. **Please distribute this material to the appropriate regulatory staff as soon as possible.**

TRANSACTION REPORT

P. 01

NOV-19-2013 TUE 03:53 PM

FOR:

SEND

DATE	START	RECEIVER	TX TIME	PAGES	TYPE	NOTE	M#	DP
NOV-19	03:50 PM	97051854	2' 22"	14	FAX TX	OK	086	

TOTAL : 2M 22S PAGES: 14

Facsimile Cover Sheet



Phone: (717) 783-5417
 Fax #: (717) 783-2664
 E-mail: irrc@irrc.state.pa.us
 Website: www.irrc.state.pa.us

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY REVIEW COMMISSION
 333 MARKET STREET, 14TH FLOOR, HARRISBURG, PA 17101

To: Honorable Paul Clymer, Chairman
 Agency: House Education Committee
 Phone: 783-3154
 Fax: 705-1854
 Date: 11/19/13
 # of Pages: 14

RE: State Board of Education #6-326 (IRRC #2976) – Academic Standards and Assessments

URGENT!

Section 5.1(j) of the Regulatory Review Act (71 P.S. § 745.5a(j)) requires us to forward to you any documents we receive during the 48-hour blackout preceding our public meeting, upon receipt. **Please distribute this material to the appropriate regulatory staff as soon as possible.**

TRANSACTION REPORT

P. 01

NOV-19-2013 TUE 04:14 PM

FOR:

SEND

DATE	START	RECEIVER	TX TIME	PAGES	TYPE	NOTE	M#	DP
NOV-19	04:12 PM	97874384	1' 21"	14	FAX TX	OK	090	

TOTAL : 1M 21S PAGES: 14

Facsimile Cover Sheet



Phone: (717) 783-5417
 Fax #: (717) 783-2664
 E-mail: irrc@irrc.state.pa.us
 Website: www.irrc.state.pa.us

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY REVIEW COMMISSION
 333 MARKET STREET, 14TH FLOOR, HARRISBURG, PA 17101

To: Honorable Andrew E. Dinniman, Minority Chairman
 Agency: Senate Education Committee
 Phone: 787-5709
 Fax: 787-4384
 Date: 11/19/13
 # of Pages: 14

RE: State Board of Education #6-326 (IRRC #2976) – Academic Standards and Assessments

URGENT!

Section 5.1(j) of the Regulatory Review Act (71 P.S. § 745.5a(j)) requires us to forward to you any documents we receive during the 48-hour blackout preceding our public meeting, upon receipt. **Please distribute this material to the appropriate regulatory staff as soon as possible.**

EMBARGOED MATERIAL

Cooper, Kathy

From: Mike Salmanson <msalmans@salmangold.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2013 10:16 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Keystone Exams

Please allow me to join in the chorus of those objecting to the current proposed regulation requiring Keystone Exam passage as a requirement for graduation.

I have actively been involved in educational issues for many years, and currently serve on the Committee for Special Education and on the elementary school curriculum committee in the Lower Merion School District. While I am generally in favor of the adoption of Common Core as a guideline for the education of our children in the 21st Century, I have grave concerns about tying the achievement of those standards to a single battery of test.

I'm sure others have spoken generally about how teaching to the test has become incredibly disruptive to the educational process; about the excessive costs involved and the unfunded mandates which will result. I agree with those comments generally. I write separately because I want to bring a slightly different perspective

No one can really explain to you the emotional toll these tests can have on our children, especially those in the special needs community.

I am the parent of two children with 2 504's and two GIEP's between them. Although my middle school son is "gifted," and surely will do well in high school, as he has up to now, he also suffers from a serious anxiety disorder. While he otherwise loves school, the weeks leading up to the PSSA's are, for lack of a better term, a nightmare. You cannot imagine how these tests -- which in theory, have no immediate impact on him directly -- cause his stress levels to go through the roof. While the school is required to make some accommodations, we can only "opt out" for religious reasons and have not done so.

As I read the regulations, there will be no "opt out" at all for the Keystone graduation requirements, except for the alternative assignment in the event of failure.

Can you imagine the emotional toll the Keystones will have on my son if he knows he must pass them to graduate? Putting aside the test itself, the underlying fear throughout his high school experience leading up to those tests is reasonably likely to interfere with his overall educational experience. In our case, the harm in the Keystone requirement to our son's mental health is predictable, real and serious and is more than likely to harm, rather than enhance, his educational needs.

Respectfully,

--
Michael J. Salmanson
Salmanson Goldshaw, PC
2 Penn Center, Suite 1230
1500 JFK Boulevard
Philadelphia, PA 19102
215-640-0594 (direct)

EMBARGOED MATERIAL

Cooper, Kathy

From: Bert Melli <bertaum33@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2013 10:51 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: IRRC No. 2976

Dear Mr. Sumner: I apologize for getting to you so late. I must inform you of my fears about the Common Core and hope you are able to delay or quash it. Part of my fears are financial. I am 81 years old and seem to be faced with increasing education taxes. My fear is that this program will mimic other federal programs and be cost-prohibitive containing unfunded mandates and increased local taxes with nothing to show for it but a more complex educational system which will bankrupt our Township schools with no good result. My other and main fear is that it will give the federal government more control over the schools, pupils and families of the district. Our present Federal government has shown a lack of credibility and transparency and a view of values which can only cause great financial and social harm to the people. Please quash this program if possible. Thanks for your time and consideration. Very truly yours, Albert Melli, D.D.S.

EMBARGOED MATERIAL

Cooper, Kathy

RECEIVED

From: Heidi Hayes <heidilhayes@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2013 10:02 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Opposed

Dear Mr. Sumner,

I am opposed to the proposal to have the Keystone examination as a requirement for high school graduation in the state of Pennsylvania.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Heidi Hayes
Lower Merion School District
Bryn Mawr, PA
www.creatavita.blogspot.com

EMBARGOED MATERIAL

Cooper, Kathy

From: Jones, Meg M <JONESMEG@email.chop.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2013 10:43 AM
To: David Sumner
Subject: Opposition to Keystone Exams

Dear Mr. Sumner,

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

Very truly yours,
Margaret M. Jones

EVP & Chief Administrative Officer
The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
34th Street & Civic Center Boulevard
ABR 1422
Philadelphia, PA 19104
jonesmeg@email.chop.edu
267-426-6906 office
215-834-6353 cell
267-426-6125 fax

EMBARGOED MATERIAL

Cooper, Kathy

From: ContactForm@state.pa.us
Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2013 10:14 AM
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

Subject: IRRC #2976

Message:

RE: IRRC No. 2976 Those Common Core cheerleaders who think CCS is a state-led effort might change their minds if they knew about S-1094 a bill proposed in the U.S. Senate by Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) in June 2013. Our own Senator Robert Casey is one of 11 co-sponsors! S.1094, the "Strengthening America's Schools Act of 2013," in effect would create a NATIONAL SCHOOL BOARD. Starting out as a 1200-page bill, as of October, this proposal is up to 2294 pages chock filled with approximately 150 new reporting requirements on states relating to: • Teacher Evaluations • Learning Goals • Curriculum Standards • Standardized Testing • Annual Reporting If States felt burdened by "No Child Left Behind", they should be really worried that, if passed, Senate Bill 1094 will pile on even more unfunded mandates that ultimately strip local control of education and undermine the sovereignty of the states. Does anyone care that the 10th Amendment is bit by bit being erased? There are also several federal laws that prohibit the federal government from interfering with state/local control of education . Beware federal encroachment! Common Core is just the camel's nose under the tent - as part of a stealthily concerted effort to ultimately nationalize school systems. I have two questions: 1) Why would you want to subject our cash-strapped citizens to the grim certainty of higher taxes to pay for this unproven experiment? 2) Why should PA's students, parents and local school boards be forced to be Guinea Pigs in this educational power grab? They, and surprisingly our legislators, had no voice during the creation and CCS implementation of the CCS process. Now that Harrisburg and the IRRC has witnessed such strong opposition, it is incumbent on them to listen to our voices and put the brakes on Common Core in Pennsylvania.

From: Mary Martin <maryeau01@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2013 10:14 AM
To: IRRC
Subject: Testimony re: State Standards for Hearing Nov 21

IN 2011 only 34% of students passed the Keystone Exams, with 60,000 students failing. My son was one of those students, and he is an AP student. The cost to retake the standardized test for students like my son was \$1 million.

He is on track to graduate this year and is pursuing a career in physics. He is currently weighing options and scholarships from universities.

With the Keystone Exams and alternative state generated project based alternative, local authority for graduation is removed from the school. Regardless of a student's GPA throughout high school, and the quality daily work demonstrated over the 4 years of high school, Chapter 4 ties the hands of the local school system to graduate deserving seniors.

What will be the cost to each district? Do we as parents and taxpayers have any say as to the additional expenses that our schools will incur to implement this unproven, unfunded mandate? To submit Pennsylvania citizens to this expense, the state should at the very least allow it to come to a vote by the people your decisions affect.

Over the summer, I had the opportunity to ask several teachers, "If you were given the opportunity to improve just ONE THING about the education of our schools without regard to expense, what would it be."

Not surprisingly, none of them answered Keystones, or Common Core standards. In fact, some of them asked to lessen the burden that goes along with testing such as breaking up class time for strategy meetings, eliminating the time tutorials and computer drills take away from real learning. Each teacher had solid and practical ideas that could be implemented with little or no cost. It would serve us well to ask them their opinion. They are very perceptive about what the students need to succeed, and what will help them teach in the classroom.

I am blessed to have children that do often struggle with their grades. When they do have an issue, it is generally rectified with extra practice and attention at home. What provision is being made for children that do struggle and need extra time, or children with special education needs? Will they have their own test? One size fits all education

is unrealistic. A common standard sounds logical on paper, but it just doesn't work practically in the class room. The "No Child Left Behind Act" was proof that some things that work in theory, do not work in the classroom.

Who can judge a student's capability and needs better than parents and teachers? By wrapping our schools in political red tape, schools and districts are only burdened by higher expenses, and require more support staff such as new data technicians. As a parent and tax payer, I would much rather see those funds in the classroom meeting the needs of students and teachers, and have my child's privacy protected.

Thank you for your time,
Mary Martin
New Columbia, PA

EMBARGOED MATERIAL

Cooper, Kathy

From: Scavello, Mary <Mary.Scavello@vishay.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2013 10:08 AM
To: IRRC
Subject: Opposition to Keystone Graduation Exams

We are joining the 58 school district superintendents and all four intermediate unit directors serving students and taxpayers in Chester, Montgomery, Delaware, and Bucks counties in opposition to the Keystone Graduation Exams.

It is our firm belief that students need to learn how to think and reason analytically, not by rote memorization

Further the conservatively estimated cost of this unfunded mandate, more than \$300 million a year, is uncalled for when so many of our citizens are unemployed, uninsured and hungry.

Angelo Scavello, West Chester, Pa.
Mary Scavello, West Chester, Pa.
e-mail: maryscavello@comcast.net

11/19/13 10:08 AM

MR.

... MATERIAL

Cooper, Kathy

From: Daniel Harris <dharris@blisscpas.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2013 10:11 AM
To: IRRRC
Subject: Please do not vote

I oppose the Keystone graduation exam!


Daniel J. Harris, CPA
Bliss & Company, Ltd.
810 Downingtown Pike
West Chester, PA 19380
TEL (610) 343-1666 (Direct Line)
OFFICE (610) 696-1012 Ext. 129
FAX (610) 696-2291
dharris@blisscpas.com

IRS CIRCULAR 230 DISCLOSURE:

Pursuant to Treasury Regulations, any tax advice contained in this communication (including any attachments) is not intended or written to be used, and cannot be used or relied upon by you or any other person, for the purpose of (i) avoiding penalties under the Internal Revenue Code, or (ii) promoting, marketing or recommending to another party any tax advice addressed herein.

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:

This electronic mail transmission, including any attachment, is intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed and may contain confidential information belonging to the sender or recipient. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, copying, distribution or the taking of any action in reliance on the contents of this information is strictly prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please notify the sender immediately by email and delete the original message.

 Be Green! Please don't print this e-mail unless absolutely necessary

EMBARGOED MATERIAL

Cooper, Kathy

From: Charles Gaffney <cgaffney53@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2013 3:36 PM
To: IRRC

We are highly opposed to the Keystone exams and do not want them to be required. We don't need them, and it is a waste of a time. Ask the teachers what works....not teaching to tests. They are stressed out and are passing it on to the students. There are more effective and less costly ways to ensure that our students are learning. Please don't approve the keystone exams.

Kindly,
Karen Gaffney

NOV 19 2013
11:36 AM

EMBARGOED MATERIAL

Cooper, Kathy

RECEIVED
IRRC

From: Diana Barnes <diana.barnes@ntiogasd.org>
Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2013 11:54 AM
To: IRRC
Subject: Re: Final-Form Regulations #6-326 - Academic Standards and Assessments

Dear Chairman Lutkewitte:

On behalf of the Northern Tioga School District, I am writing to express the District's strong support for the final-form regulation 6-326 related to academic standards and assessments. I urge the Independent Regulatory Review Commission's approval.

The regulation adopts the Pennsylvania Core Standards in English and math, along with aligned assessments, including Keystone Exams.

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

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

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

Again, the Northern Tioga School District strongly supports the regulations and urges IRRC's approval.

Sincerely,

Diana Barnes, Ph.D.

Superintendent

Northern Tioga School District
110 Ellison Road
Elkland, Pa. 16920
1-814-258-5612
diana.barnes@ntiogasd.org