

PA Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
PASCD Opposes Revised Keystone Proposal
July 10, 2009

PASCD has reviewed the revised Keystone Exams Proposal that will be acted upon by the State Board of Education and cannot support these proposed regulations at this time. PASCD appreciates the dialogue that the state Board and the Pennsylvania Department of Education has initiated and accepts that this revision includes several significant compromises on the part of the State Board and PDE.

However, PASCD has serious concerns with three significant parts of the Proposed Keystone Exams.

1. Students scoring below basic will receive no points on the exam. The possible result for some students is that they might have an 85% average for the course, score below basic on the final and receive a grade of 57% $((85+85+0)/3=57)$ and fail the course. The students will have to retake the test or the modules they failed.
2. The exams will count 33% of the course. Most high school final exams count 10% to 20% of a course.
3. Wealthy and larger districts will be more able to design and locally validate alternative local assessments. Although PDE is required to pay one half the cost of validation many smaller or poorer districts will not have the expertise or money to develop locally validated assessments.

PASCD believes that these major parts of the Keystone Exam Program will result in a negative impact on students who do not respond well to standardized tests, on students identified as needing special support and students who do not have access to an equitable and adequate education.

PASCD members are willing to continue a dialogue that will result in improving the achievement of all children.