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House of Representatives
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg

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September 8, 2014

The Honorable Paul Clymer
Chairman of the House Education Committee
216 Ryan Office Building
Harrisburg, PA 17102

Dear Chairman Clymer,

We wish to thank you for your leadership and work towards improving education in Pennsylvania. Since our joining the General Assembly we, like you, have been consistent supporters of sensible efforts to improve the quality and effectiveness of our education system in Pennsylvania. In particular, we have strongly supported the efforts of the Corbett Administration to improve student academic outcomes. Specifically, we championed the effort of the Administration to increase the rigor of our state's academic standards while protecting local school district control over curriculum decisions.

As you are aware Mr. Chairman, in 2010 Governor Rendell spearheaded the adoption of the national Common Core academic standards. In this most recent session, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives appropriately adopted legislation which ensured that the Common Core standards were replaced with Pennsylvania Core Academic Standards. The new standards, put in place after the adoption of House Resolution 338, better reflect the needs of Pennsylvania's students and teachers. Another reform within our new standards protects the privacy of students from additional data collection by the federal government. In addition, the Pennsylvania Core Academic Standards now ensure state oversight versus federal oversight of school standards and assessments. Finally, adoption of these Standards ensured that academic curriculums remain locally designed and implemented.

Although these reforms to Chapter 4 ended Common Core in Pennsylvania, there are many who receive misinformation about the new standards. The result of this misinformation has led many to wrongly believe that our Commonwealth continues to educate its students under Common Core. On August 28, 2014, the Administration invited us to a meeting with Secretary Dumerasq and other Administration officials concerning this issue. After this meeting we left encouraged, believing that the Administration understood the importance of reviewing just the eligible content. By reviewing eligible content the Administration would be able to inform parents how they

worked with the legislature to end Common Core and replace it with standards tailored for Pennsylvania's students and teachers.

We were surprised and extremely disappointed to learn that the Corbett Administration has now reversed their own policy, a policy which they earlier had championed. Lacking any tangible rationale for this policy change and occurring just two months prior to a General Election, this decision seems to have been made for what appears to be purely political purposes. Good policy should always come before good politics, which in this instance the Corbett Administration seems to have forgotten. As a result, we have lost total confidence in this administration's ability to manage the process to implement our new academic standards.

We believe it is the General Assembly which must now take the lead to thoroughly evaluate the process by which the Pennsylvania Core Academic Standards were adopted. Our request to you, Mr. Chairman, is that you hold hearings to thoughtfully consider the process which established the Pennsylvania Core Academic Standards. In particular, we believe these hearings should examine the process by which the standards were adopted when he advocated for them in 2013. In addition we believe the hearings should examine the process leading the Governor to reverse his own policy which has caused chaos and untold expenses to our public schools. Mr. Chairman, we thank you for your leadership on this issue in light of the Administration's abdication of their duty to lead in implementing the new standards.

Sincerely,



Seth Grove
State Representative
196th Legislative District



Ryan Aument
State Representative
41st Legislative District

SG:jg

CC: Honorable Sam Smith
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Honorable Mike Turzai
Majority Leader of the House of Representatives