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Rachel Riedel

Composition H

K. Cowart

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If one was to ask any high school student if they think proficiency testing should be required for graduation, more than likely one would get the answer "no." Most high school students do not realize that proficiency testing will only help them when living in society. Without a test to prove knowledge, why should one receive a diploma without something else to prove they are worthy? Proficiency exams should be required because students could cheat through high school, may not be proficient in society, and the test makes a diploma mean more to an employer.

During students' twelve years of schooling, many get credit for something they may not know. Primarily, many students cheat in high school classes on daily assignments. Cheating causes a letter grade to mean merely nothing. At any given time, one can walk into a class, compare the work of the students, and find that at least one person cheated off another. The purpose of high school is to gain knowledge. The test then helps to prove students' knowledge.

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ASSEMBLY EDUCATION

DATE: 3/17/03 ROOM: 3143 EXHIBIT

SUBMITTED BY: RACHEL RIEDEL

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Any person can cheat through high school and pass a class, which gives them credit towards graduation. A credit is earned by completing a required course that is known to help you succeed in life. As students cheat, it defeats the purpose of required courses. Therefore, a credit doesn't prove one knows the material of a required course. The security on testing is higher than everyday class work that gives you a credit towards graduation. As in an every day class, depending on the teachers level of security, it is easier to cheat through the material assigned. Most people agree that proficiency tests serve a good purpose. Educators think if a person honestly received their credits, the test shouldn't be a problem. Some students, who slack off in high school do not pass the test. Those same students want to protest the proficiency test when they fail. It is not an issue of intelligence; it is an issue of having basic knowledge.

A proficiency exam consists of common knowledge one should have to be proficient. For example, high school is designed to help educate the next generation. If the next generation does not include the knowledge needed to run a decent society, students should not receive a diploma. A diploma proves basic education. If students knowledge cannot help them pass a basic test, they should not receive

a diploma. Society depends on the younger generations to take over in the future. If large portions of students aren't educated, society is doomed. There are three tests students are expected to pass: reading, writing, and math. Students should be able to read a short story and comprehend the material, write an organized, opinionated five-paragraph essay, and be able to perform simple mathematical tasks. Testing with proficiency tests should be a small step if students earned their credits honestly.

Finally, a high school diploma will mean more to an employer when he knows they took a proficiency test to receive it. It is extremely hard to get a job in modern times without a diploma. A person cannot get a decent job in the "real world" without a diploma. A diploma will open doors to opportunity. If a large amount of people cannot pass an indispensable proficiency exam to receive a diploma, then there will be many open jobs with no qualified recipients. An employer sees a diploma as an achievement. Working through high school and passing a proficiency test is looked upon as one of few lifetime achievements. When an employer sees that one has studied and passed his or her proficiency to receive a diploma, it shows hard work and dedication. Those are two vital skills in the working world.

People who oppose proficiency testing say that some might be having a "bad day" the day of the test; therefore, they're not able to do their best. In fact, if a student fails the test, they have seven chances to retake the test. The a chance of the same student having another "bad day" on the day of their second, third, or fourth chance, is less than likely. Having a "bad day" should not be an excuse to not be able to prove your knowledge.

In conclusion, proficiency tests are used for the common good. A proficiency test helps keep students at the same level of education, making each diploma worth an equal amount of respect. Proficiency exams should be required because students could cheat through high school, may not be proficient in society, and the test makes a diploma mean more to an employer. If diplomas are distributed based on only credits, soon a diploma could mean any height of education.