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TO: News Editor/Education Reporter

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RELEASE: UPON RECEIPT

PA Principals Association Supports Legislation Which Provides Alternatives for Graduation Requirements

(Summerdale, PA)The Pennsylvania Principals Association supports legislation introduced today by Senators Thomas McGarrigle (R-Chester/Delaware) and Thomas Killion (R-Chester/Delaware) that provides alternatives for demonstrating readiness for graduation in addition to passing Keystone Exams.

“The PA Principals Association is pleased to support this proposed legislation that allows for multiple, relevant pathways toward high school graduation. Tailoring graduation requirements based on individual student strengths and needs is sound and equitable educational practice,” said PA Principals Association Executive Director Paul M. Healey, Ph.D.

Senate Bill 1095 is the result of recommendations from the Department of Education and extensive discussion and collaboration with state education leaders, including the PA Principals Association. The bill revises the current requirement that calls for students to pass the state-developed Keystone Exams in Literature, Algebra I and Biology in order to graduate. Although the graduation requirement was intended to begin in the 2016-17 school year, the General Assembly has delayed the effective date twice, with the mandate now set to be effective in the 2019-20 school year unless a new plan can be enacted.

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Our mission is to ensure a quality education for every child by comprehensively supporting the educational leaders of our schools.

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*Affiliate of the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals
Serving and Supporting Principals, Assistant Principals and Other Educational Leaders*

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Senate Bill 1095 offers the following options:

- Meet or exceed a composite score across Keystone exams in algebra I, biology, and literature, and at least “basic” performance on each of the three exams;
- Meet or exceed local grade requirements in subjects tested by the Keystone exams and completion of a subject-specific advanced placement or international baccalaureate exam, armed services vocational aptitude test, acceptance in a registered apprenticeship program, or attainment of a career readiness certificate;
- Meet or exceed local grade requirements in subjects tested by the Keystone exams and present at least three pieces of evidence from the student’s career portfolio, which is required for federal accountability under the Every Student Succeeds Act.

The proposed legislation also builds a system with multiple pathways for students to demonstrate graduation readiness beyond simply passing each Keystone Exam. The bill further provides for the elimination of project-based assessments, places common-sense parameters on supplemental instruction relating to Keystone Exams and prioritizes student college and career planning while tying that to the graduation requirement options.

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About the PA Principals Association: The PA Principals Association membership of approximately 3,800 is comprised of elementary, middle level and secondary school principals, assistant principals and other educational leaders and is affiliated with the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

The Mission of the Pennsylvania Principals Association: *To ensure a quality education for every child by comprehensively supporting the educational leaders of our schools.*

The Vision of the Pennsylvania Principals Association: *To be the best service organization of its kind in the United States.*