

History of the PSSA:

Since the 1970's, there has always been a state developed state assessment which has been modified over the past thirty years reflecting the changes in the political winds of various governors and their administrations. Education reforms, as well as, education regulations by the Pennsylvania State Board of Education have also greatly influenced the way testing was conducted of schools and students by what the State has chosen to mandate and test. In the 1980's the Thornburg administration had mandated (through Chapter 5) 21 credits for student graduation requirements utilizing an assessment called the Educational Quality Assessment or EQA. In 1984 the EQA was eliminated in lieu of the TELLS Test or Testing for Essential Learning and Literacy Skills, to reflect eliminating the clock-hour rule for defining high school credits in favor of the newest reform of Outcome Based Education with the coordination of revising Chapter 5 through Governor Bob Casey.

With the statewide battle of OBE in the mid-nineties, the conversion of the Casey-Ridge administration eliminated student outcomes by combining Chapters 3, 5, & 6 into one chapter, which is now known as Chapter 4 education regulations. Chapter 4 established performance based academic standards with the stated purpose of connecting student skills with those skills critical to success in life. It was at that time Governor Ridge announced that "OBE was dead", to an unsuspecting public demanding its death and took his word. Little did they know that OBE to this point in time has never been dead or sunsetted? In fact, OBE is now known as Goals 2000 and has been a constant and gradual agenda that is very much alive and well throughout our state, as well as, entire country.

Simultaneously, education was gradually being restructured and went from a local affair to a federal affair. Up until that point in time, education had always been a local affair of those closest to the students capable of making the best decisions in their best interests pertaining to education.