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IRRC

From: Brian Berry [Bberry@holyfamily.edu]
Sent: Monday, November 28, 2005 9:18 AM
To: j buckheit@state.pa.us
Cc: IRRC
Subject: Act 49

James Buckheit
Executive Director
State Board of Education

Mr. Buckheit,

As a professor in special education, I have spent the good part of my academic career teaching graduate courses in special education, attempting to upgrade the preparation of currently certified general education teachers who received initial teacher certification in Pennsylvania. Many teachers who have gone through schools of education in the Commonwealth have had precious little content and exposure to the needs of children with disabilities. They are unfamiliar with the legal requirements, unaware of their responsibilities to both students and parents and unaware of best practices in teaching students with disabilities in the general education setting. As a result, they feel ill prepared to provide adequate instruction and accommodation to the children that are invariably a part of their classroom.

As such, I support the proposals submitted to you by the Teacher Quality Coalition for improving Chapter 49. I am affirming my individual support for all teachers to become better prepared to teach diverse learners, on strengthening parent involvement, and on creating standards for the mentors of new teachers.

Thank you and I look forward to contributing feedback to you relative to the modified proposal put out by the Act 49 committee on November 18, 2005, which I feel is insufficient and a step backwards from the initial plan put forth to institute the changes necessary for personnel preparation in PA.

Thank you.

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