

RAPHAEL MUSTO

14TH DISTRICT

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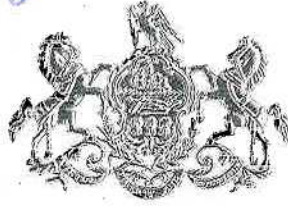
DISTRICT OFFICE

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PLEASE RESPOND TO THE ADDRESS
OF THE BOX CHECKED.

E-MAIL: musto@pasenate.com
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Senate of Pennsylvania

COMMITTEES

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- STATE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT BOARD

December 1, 2006

James Buckheit, Executive Director
State Board of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126

DEC 04 2006

RECEIVED
2006 DEC -7 AM 10:52
INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Re: Chapter 49-2 regulations

Dear Jim:

I enclose for Dr. Fogarty's review copies of three letters we received from various Superintendents (none from schools in Senator's District) concerning the Chapter 49-2 regulations. As you will see, concerns continue to be raised about these regs, from these writers, because of their alleged impact on the district's ability to staff its schools.

I also enclose a copy of a letter we received from a 6th grade teacher in Pittsburgh, which follows the same form as the Superintendents' letters. I would appreciate your transmittal of this letter also.

I believe you received a letter From Michael Carbone, Chair of the Education Department at Muhlenberg College. Senator received a copy of this letter.

I believe it is clear that hearings will have to be held on these regulations before either the House or the Senate is willing to approve/disapprove.

Thank you for your attention and your cooperative in forwarding this correspondence to Dr. Fogarty.

Very truly yours,

Marilyn C. Zili, Esq., Executive Director
Democratic Senate Education Committee

Enclosures

Jim Buckheit, Executive Director
State Board of Education
333 Market Street

MUHLENBERG
COLLEGE

November 28, 2006

Dear Mr. Buckheit:

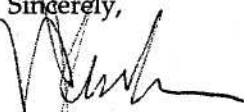
We write to respond to the proposed changes to Chapter 49-2, specifically regarding the substitution of the current Elementary Certificate (K-6) with Early Childhood (Pre K-3) and Elementary/Middle (4-8) Certificates. It is our opinion that these are fundamental and sweeping changes for public education in Pennsylvania, and as such, deserve the widest possible debate among the varied constituencies including higher education institutions, K-12 public schools, and tax payers of the Commonwealth.

As a higher education institution, Muhlenberg College strongly opposes these changes for the following reasons:

1. The elementary certification split is arbitrary and without solid basis in educational research. The emphasis on *Learning to Read vs. Reading to Learn* seems insufficient in providing a rationale for the split. We believe that teachers in grades K-6 should be knowledgeable in both approaches to reading.
2. We are concerned about the viability of educating teachers for appropriate and effective classroom practice from grades 4 to 8 under one certificate preparation program. Grade 4 is developmentally very different from Grade 8.
3. The split will require 18 year-olds to commit to a teaching certificate/career before they have had the opportunity to experience the realities of teaching a range of age groups. Within the current K-6 program, students are able to identify grade level(s) of choice after a series of concrete practicum experiences. We believe the current K-6 certificate provides career choice flexibility for students.
4. The split will create an uneven pool of qualified teachers for our schools in Pennsylvania. We suspect that changes to Chapter 49-2 will result in a shortage of educators prepared to teach in grades 4-6.
5. The split will result in staffing problems for districts that need K-6 flexibility.
6. This split may require most students to complete both certificates in order to be fully employable in Pennsylvania and in other states.
7. The split poses problems in portability of PA certificates with other states since so few states have certification structures that mirror the proposed certificates in PA.
8. This split is inconsistent with the goal of preparing highly qualified teachers as outlined in NCLB mandate.

We highly recommend keeping the current Elementary Certificate (K-6) and adding a legitimate middle school certificate (6-8).

Sincerely,



Michael J. Carbone
Chair, Education Department



Cathy Y. Kim
Coordinator of Professional Programs

cc: Kim Kaufman, Independent Regulatory Review Commission
Senators Patrick Browne, James Rhoades, Raphael J. Musto
Representatives Karen Beyer, Richard Grucela, Jennifer Mann, Jess Stairs, James Roebuck, Jr.,

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

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Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

December 5, 2006

Ms. Marilyn Zilli, Esq.
Executive Director
Democratic Senate Education Committee
17C East Wing - Main Capitol
Harrisburg, PA 17120

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

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Dear Ms. Zilli:

Thank you for your letter received by the State Board of Education on December 4, 2006 regarding the proposed Chapter 49 Certification of Professional Personnel regulations.

Your letter is considered official public comment. As such copies are shared with each member of the State Board of Education, the Chairs of the House and Senate Education Committees and also with the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC). Your letter is also considered a public document that may be publicly released upon request.

The Regulatory Review Act provides that notice regarding final regulations be provided to those who make official comment if requested. If you would like to receive a copy of the final-form regulation when it is submitted for final approval by the legislative committees and IRRC, please submit a written request to me at the address listed below.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Buckheit".

Jim Buckheit
Executive Director

Cc: Members of the State Board
Senator James Rhoades
Senator Raphael Musto
Representative Jess Stairs
Representative James Roebuck, Jr.
IRRC