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1060 Timberwood Drive  
Beaver Falls, PA. 15010-1614  
January 29, 2007

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JAN 31 2007  
PA. STATE BOARD  
OF EDUCATION

State Board of Education  
Jim, Buckheit, Executive Director  
333 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA. 17126-0333

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

Dear Director Buckheit:

I have spent more than three decades engaged in the education profession- as a teacher and administrator in public education and currently in higher education as an adjunct professor supervising student teachers. I am very concerned about the significant changes that will result if Chapter 49-2 goes into effect as currently written.

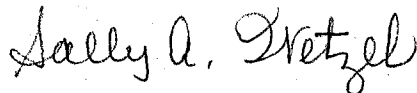
The elimination of the K-6 elementary certificate will create far reaching consequences for students, teachers, principals, superintendents, and school boards. There will be limited flexibility when it comes to teacher assignment and teachers will not have the background/preparation to address the varied academic needs of elementary children because of their narrow knowledge base.

In addition, I am concerned that Chapter 49-2 will result in an abundance of teachers certified in early childhood and a shortage of those with upper elementary certification. Content knowledge is important but emphasis similar to what is expected for secondary teachers will discourage would-be educators to seek the middle level certification. Middle level students deserve the "best and brightest" teachers also!

The suggested mandates for the preparation of special education teachers (especially for secondary) will result in a shortage of potential teachers who will seek this area of certification. The stringent academic standards combined with the financial reasons will cause potential teachers to avoid this path because it will require them to spend additional semesters in their preparation.

Many new PA. teacher education graduates seek employment outside Pennsylvania. The proposed changes in elementary certification will make our graduates less mobile. Most states have a K-6 or K-5 certification in addition to the specializations in early childhood and middle level. Since Pennsylvania does not plan to have this option, our novice educators will be less employable.

Sincerely,



Sally A. Wetzel