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State Board of Education
Dr. James Fogarty
Chapter 49-2 Chairperson
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Dear Dr. Fogarty:

PAC-TE has exerted a great deal of effort to influence potential implications for PK-12 related to Chapter 49.2. Because of the dramatic nature of the proposed certification changes, we have directed major emphasis toward efforts to radically revise elementary teacher preparation. Teacher preparation institutions are currently preparing high quality teachers following a variety of models. Dramatic changes have been made in programs in recent years: These include incorporation of a plethora of field experiences, a total revamping of content delivery that is aligned with the PA Academic Standards and skills to help students to successfully demonstrate their competence in assessments such as Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). These changes have further strengthened teacher education programs.

Helping prospective teachers understand and respond to the increase in the number and severity of student exceptionalities is one of the most difficult aspects of teacher preparation. Privacy and confidentiality issues make it difficult to provide opportunities for experiences that will promote practical knowledge and understanding of issues related to AADL (Adaptations and Accommodations for Diverse Learners).

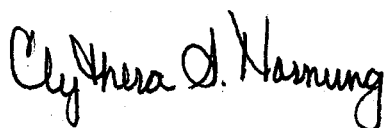
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Pedagogy is best learned in practice – after a basic understanding of theory. AADL is an attitude as much as it is specific knowledge/skills, and as such must permeate all facets of teacher preparation. PAC-TE member institutions are willing to put forth specific effort to further enhance teacher preparation in the area of AADL.

We are eager to identify measurable competencies for AADL (Adaptations and Accommodations for Diverse Learners) that are deemed essential for success in teaching at all levels and in all academic arenas. Working with all stakeholders, we strive to adopt a framework that will define the knowledge and skills that all teachers should possess relative to AADL and subsequently define how we can measure and document that these have been attained. Once this step is accomplished, institutions will seek the support of school districts, to encourage them to cooperate in providing classroom opportunities for candidates to get the kinds of experience that will support and practice what they have learned about the theories of AADL.

We commend the State Board of Education for their attention to AADL and support the infusion model that can result in a meaningful adjustment in attitude for all prospective teachers. If we are to be successful in bringing about true accommodations for all learners, it must involve all components of teacher preparation. PAC-TE looks forward to working with other members of the education profession to improve our effectiveness in working with AADL students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Clythera S. Hornung". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Clythera S. Hornung
President

cc: Mr. Jim Buckheit