

Buckheit, James

From: John Fisher [jff2@desales.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2006 12:10 PM
To: jbuckheit@state.pa.us
Subject: c49-2



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DEC 5 2006
**PA. STATE BOARD
OF EDUCATION**

Jim,

Attached is a letter from the Education faculty at DeSales University in Center Valley, PA. regarding the proposed Chapter 49-2 legislation. A hard copy has been mailed to your attention. Thank you!

Sincerely,

John

John Fisher, OSFS
DeSales University
Education Department, Chair
Director of Secondary Education
1-610-282-1100 (x1323)
Dooling Hall 120D

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REVIEW COMMISSION

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November 29, 2006

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

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
COMMISSION

Dear Jim,

I am writing to express my concerns and those of my colleagues at DeSales University regarding the proposed Chapter 49-2 guidelines. As you know well, many of the smaller, private and independent liberal arts colleges have had numerous meetings over this anticipated legislation in the past year. I believe we are in agreement that more needs to be done with respect to the dissemination of information regarding the needs and learning styles of those with special disabilities and limited language proficiency especially with the ever increasing amount of "full inclusion" classes. To not instruct our students and future teachers with respect to alternative instruction for the needs and learning styles of all would be unconscionable. However, with respect to the proposed changes, there are many concerns to which most of the universities agreed and others which various universities owned for themselves. Please allow me to address the concerns of DeSales University.

- Our Curriculum and Instruction classes at the elementary level serve the needs of the K-6 learner. This includes such classes as Teaching the Math Content, Science Content, or Literacy. Dividing these courses for the PK-3 and then grades 4-8 would double our efforts and teaching faculty, which would be cost prohibitive. A connected concern is how such specialization will tie the hands of elementary principals limiting their flexibility in personnel placements within their own building. In addition, it will make our students less marketable. It seems that some novice teachers need experiences at different levels to find their most effective placement. Others prefer to change for variety and to refresh themselves. Principals need flexibility to meet the needs of their students as they move up in the grades.

- Some universities do not have an early childhood program or are struggling to build one. The new proposed certification configuration will make it almost impossible for our students to complete a dual major and be able to graduate within four years. Adding a fifth year is unattractive to prospective students, as well as costly. This is a considerable admissions/enrollment concern for our university.
- The new configuration, severely limiting the ability to double-major, will decrease those with special education certification allowing fewer teachers for the many students for whom this intended legislation attempts to positively impact.
- Given the demands of a liberal arts college with core courses in one's major and selected electives in other fields, the addition of four more courses requires that an education student overloads often unless the university is willing to lessen its requirements. The latter seems unlikely. The smaller universities who train and place many excellent educators fear the addition of more courses could spell certain demise for us as a department impacting the number of teachers entering the profession.
- Those seeking certification at the graduate level would see an entire year added to their degree program and would most likely be deterred from a career change thereby further reducing the potential for recruiting good people to the profession.
- We are currently struggling with keeping talented special education professors. The dramatic changes in the proposed special education certification will require us to find additional faculty members for whom there is a limited selection pool. Our concern is ironically there will be fewer students studying special education while this is the group this new proposal is attempting to better serve.
- The members of the education department at DeSales University are in agreement with concerns raised by Dr. Clythera Hornung speaking on behalf of PAC-TE. In addition, we wish to make the Department of Education sensitive to the fact that the changes will most severely impact and hinder the smaller private universities who already do more than imaginable given limited or inadequate budgets. We would like to suggest the addition of two courses be mandated that would incorporate the concerns this new proposal aims at meeting.

Sincerely,

Education Department
DeSales University

(Rev.) John J. Fisher, OSFS (chair)
Dr. Patricia Coughlin
Dr. Robert Legutko

Dr. Lujean Baab
Mr. Christopher Heery
Dr. Monica Miller Marsh

2583



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

December 5, 2006

Rev. John Fisher
Chair, Education Department
Dolling Hall 120D
DeSales University
2755 Station Ave.
Center Valley, PA 18034 9568

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Dear Rev. Fisher:

Thank you for your letter received by the State Board of Education on December 5, 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 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