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Wissahickon School District

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December 5, 2006

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PA STATE BOARD
OF EDUCATION

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

Dear Mr. Buckheit:

I am writing to oppose the proposed amendments to the State Board of Education's teacher certification regulations (Chapter 49-2) that are now before the Independent Regulatory Review Commission.

The regulations, if finally adopted, would make it more difficult for school districts to appropriately staff their schools, particularly in the face of a nation-wide shortage of teachers. Further, they will narrow the preparation of elementary certificate holders at a time when teachers are expected to work with a broader range of performance in their classes and to meet the needs of each student. They will lead to departmentalizing disciplines at lower grade levels at a time when many curriculum experts are suggesting greater and more natural integration of content. They will result in substantially less flexibility to staff elementary schools, and they may lead to the exacerbation of the teacher shortage issue particularly with regard to upper elementary certified and special education certified teachers.

I find this proposal to be particularly ironic and ill-advised given the funding constraints that have been imposed on school districts with the passage of Act 1. The recruitment and retention of top-quality teachers will be even more difficult than ever before because of these fiscal constraints.

For these reasons, I urge you to disapprove the Chapter 49-2 regulations.
Thank you.

Sincerely,

Stanley J. Durtan, Jr., Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

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