

Kathy Cooper

From: Betty McVeigh [mcveighb@neumann.edu]
Sent: Sunday, December 10, 2006 2:53 PM
To: j buckheit@state.pa.us
Cc: IRRRC
Subject: Chapter 49.2 Proposed Changes

To Whom It May Concern:

I am deeply grateful to all those involved in the process of updating Chapter 49.2. I can only imagine the time, talent, and effort put into this process over the past several years. I am also thankful for your request for comments. At the same time, I respectfully share my professional frustration of having the same questions and concerns un- answered as I (and many PAC-TE members) had over two years ago.

I want to express my strong support of strengthening programs for Early Childhood, Special Education, and English Language Learners. I realize the proposed changes to Chapter 49.2 are meant to improve these areas of teaching/learning. However, the proposed changes in reality may be the "death" of outstanding teacher education programs across our state.

There are several issues I want to highlight:

A. Timing of Implementation: To redesign or to add programs at the college level entails many steps in order to implement changes e.g Curriculum Proposal committee, Faculty Senate structure, budgetary process, advertizing and interviewing new faculty. Moving the date up to January 1, 2012 would afford us the time to implement needed changes

B. Portability Issues: The proposed changes will negatively impact the portability of PA certified elementary teachers and may encourage more future teachers to go out of state for their teacher preparation.

C. Staffing Concerns for school administrators: As a former elementary school principal for 19 years, I actually FEAR the staffing problems which will occur because of decreased certification flexibility in the public and private sectors. It also seems to limit the continued growth of teachers as human beings who may desire change for personal challenge and development.

D. Last - but actually first in my heart - is the "narrowing" of teacher preparation programs and its impact on our students. As coordinator of our First Year Students, coordinator of Field Experience from EDU 101 through EDU 461, and instructor of EDU 101: Teaching as a Profession at the beginning level as well as EDU 390: Math Methods at Neumann College in Aston, PA, I have witnessed over and over again how the students are SURE they know which grade or subject they want to teach only to see them change their perspective as they experience the breadth of school placements we offer our students e.g. Public, Private, Catholic, Charter, Special Ed classes and the various grade levels e.g. pre-school, primary, and middle. I believe that our students need BOTH breadth and depth in order to become outstanding teachers in today's inclusive classrooms. I am very concerned that we will be forcing our students to choose a "specialty" before they even know what options there are for them to focus on as they continue their professional development.

In advance, I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
 Sister Betty McVeigh, SSJ

Sister Betty McVeigh, SSJ
 Instructor
 Division of Education and Human Services
 Neumann College
 One Neumann Drive
 Aston, PA 19014-1298
 Phone: 610-358-4518
 Fax: 610-361-5443
 email: mcveighb@neumann.edu
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