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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

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PA. STATE BOARD
OF EDUCATION

Date: December 16, 2006

Dear Mr. Buckheit,

As an Early Childhood Educator, I am writing in support of Chapter 49-2 regarding the changes in teacher certification. I strongly support both the proposed Early Childhood Education and the Middle Level certificates because I believe that they will better prepare teachers at those developmental levels. To support this belief I am sending you position statements and research that provide evidence for both the early childhood and the middle level proposals.

Evidence to Support the Proposals:

1. The specialization of teacher preparation in the proposed Pre K- 3 and Middle level certificates are supported by current research and professional best practices. The American Association of College for Teacher Education (the national organization of the PAC-TE) in a July 27, 2004 states:

“Every child between 4 and 8 years of age deserves a teacher with a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education, and certification in the early childhood field.”

In addition, a list of recommendations states:

- Early childhood education should be respected as a specialized discipline, distinct from elementary education.

In *Preparing Quality Teacher for PK - 3* from the Foundation for Child Development research is presented that supports the specialized certification of early childhood teachers Pre-Kindergarten through third grade. In reviewing teacher preparation, this report states, “many teacher education programs have no focus on early education.” It further states, “Re-envisioning early childhood teacher education is a first step in aligning degree requirements with what is expected of teachers.”

The National Middle School Association strongly believes that:

- Educators in middle level schools need preparation and training specific to those grades.
- Distinctive middle grades licensure should be mandatory in all states.