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Kathy Cooper

From: Chrisman, J. Kent [JKChri@ship.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, December 19, 2006 8:44 AM
To: IRRC
Subject: Chapter 49-2 letter of support

Attached please find a letter of support for the proposed changes in teacher certification (Chapter 49-2).

Thank you.

Kent Chrisman, Ed.D.
Early Childhood Program
Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania

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December 18, 2006

To: Independent Regulatory Review Commission:

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. In a position statement from the American Association of College for Teacher Education (the national organization of the PAC-TE) 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.”

And in a list of recommendations states:

- 1 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 that “many teacher education programs have no focus on early education.” It further states that “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; and
- Distinctive middle grades licensure should be mandatory in all states.

2. The current certification K-6 allows graduates to teach in early childhood classrooms with no specialization in content areas (reading, writing, math, science). The proposed Pre K-3 certificate and the middle level certificate create specialized content at each age level.

3. The effect of the changes in the teacher education are designed to benefit children at all grade levels. Undergraduate students will need to be carefully advised about grade level specializations. Careful advising will lead to candidates who are well matched to the grade level and content area in which they choose to teach.

I would appreciate your support of these proposals.

Sincerely,

Kent Chrisman, President-Elect
PA Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators