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PA. STATE BOARD
OF EDUCATION

December 21, 2006

Jim Buckheit, Director
State Board of Education
1st Floor,
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126

Dear Mr. Buckheit:

Success By 6® United Way of Lancaster County supports the changes in Teacher Certification under consideration for Chapter 49-2 changes in teacher certification. Please give strong consideration to endorsing the both the proposed changes to the Early Childhood Education and the Middle Level certificates. These changes will better prepare teachers at those for all developmental levels, improving educational quality for all children.


The specialization of teacher preparation in the proposed Pre K- 3 and Middle Level certificates are supported by current research and professional best practices. Recent brain research shows childhood brain development is most dramatic and rapid in the first 4 – 5 years of life. Success By 6 is a community initiative aimed at supporting children's needs in their earliest years.

Both The American Association of College for Teacher Education (the national organization of the PAC-TE) and The Foundation for Child Development Research support specialized certification in early education and middle grades. These beliefs are based on the following:
Current K-6 certification 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.

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.

If we can provide additional information or you have questions, please feel free to contact Success By 6 United Way of Lancaster County. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,


Andrea L. Brown
Assistant Director, Success By 6

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

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