

VALUE

Vision and Leadership Uniting Education

July 20, 2007

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

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVENUE COMMISSION

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Dear Mr. Buckheit:

As we entered the course of the roundtables and public hearings on Chapter 14, we introduced the VALUE Coalition as an influential force in effecting policy and legislative change for the protection and benefit of children with disabilities and their families. Subsequent to our submission of comments to the State Board, the IRRC, and other key governmental leaders earlier this week, we realized that now would be an opportune time to offer a reminder of just who we are.

VALUE, Vision and Leadership Uniting Education, is a coalition of children's disability advocacy organizations in Pennsylvania who first united in 1989 to promote better educational opportunities and outcomes for Pennsylvania's children with disabilities. To that end, we have welcomed into the Coalition any children's advocacy group that has expressed an interest in belonging to VALUE. VALUE and its members, collectively and individually, have been active in Pennsylvania public education policies that impact children with disabilities, including the revision of Pennsylvania special education law, policies, and regulations. As circumstances have warranted and necessity dictated, VALUE has reorganized itself in response to the educational needs of children with disabilities at different times—and, of course, now is such a time.

The VALUE Coalition represents an impressive collective effort: **ACHIEVA, The Arc of Pennsylvania; the Disability Rights Network; the Early Intervention Coalition of Advocates; the Education Law Center; Kids Together; the Mental Health Association in Pennsylvania; The Mentor Parent Program, Inc.; Pennsylvania's Education for All Coalition; the PEAL Center; Parents Involved Network; Pennsylvania Parents and Caregivers Resource Network; Pennsylvania TASH; and the Western Pennsylvania Coalition of Education Advocates.**

Together, we pride ourselves on representing the interests of thousands of children with disabilities and their families statewide. And on behalf of those children and families, we once again thank you for your most earnest consideration of our proposals and concerns to date.

Sincerely,

Sallie Lynagh

Contact VALUE:

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for the VALUE Coalition

CC: Arthur Coccodrilli, Chair, Independent Regulatory Review Commission
The Honorable James J. Rhoades, Senate Education Committee
The Honorable Jeffrey E. Piccola, Senate Education Committee
The Honorable James R. Roebuck, Jr., House Education Committee
The Honorable Jess M. Stairs, House Education Committee
The Honorable Dennis O'Brien, Speaker, House of Representatives
The Honorable Barbara McIlvaine Smith, Chair, Subcommittee on Special Education