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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Pennsylvania State Board of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Dear Jim Buckheit, Executive Director

I approve of the language that allows the local entity the ability to decide on the parental visit guidelines. In those situations where there are real concerns the school board can determine what is reasonable in their community.

Consider reversing the decision to make 2 years or more of post secondary education a part of the requirement for hiring new paraprofessionals. I understand the intention of the State Board but we must be aware of the practical side of this issue. The pool of candidates who are eligible and interested in the vacancies will greatly be reduced. We need to meet the needs of the students we serve but no needs are being met if the position is not filled.

Allow for hearing interpreters to receive their training during the school day and at no cost. PaTTAN offers trainings but it is critical that the State Board include in written language so it is clearly understood that it is free and offered during the work day. These are currently not high salaried positions and we do not want to negatively impact the availability of hearing interpreters.

Maintain transition at age 14, evaluations at 60 school days and parent oral requests for evaluations because these all help to serve children.

Caseloads for Level 2 should be at a maximum of 20 because of all of the requirements that are being placed on the special education teacher's time. All you need is one or two students with significant needs who have parents who are very involved and it can impact the services to the rest of the 25 students on your caseload. Also we must consider that this is the caseload and not the number of students you are assigned to teach.

Speech caseloads should be 50 with the current language. If the number were to be higher than 50 then there should be language to impact the number of student contacts per week.

I appreciate your consideration in these matters.

Sincerely,


Gail Chiles