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RECEIVED

Buckheit, James

From: Buckheit, James
Sent: Friday, October 05, 2007 1:40 PM
To: 'Currie, Daniel'
Subject: RE: Input Letter

2007 OCT 16 PM 1:14

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Dear Mr. Currie:

I write to acknowledge receipt of your comments concerning the proposed Chapter 14 regulations of the State Board of Education that were published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin on June 30, 2007. Copies of your comments will be provided to the leadership of the House and Senate Education Committees, Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) and each member of the State Board of Education.

Members of the State Board will carefully consider your comments as they prepare the final form regulation. If you would like to be notified by mail and receive a copy of the final form regulation when it is submitted for final approval by the House and Senate Education Committees and IRRC, please send a written request to my attention at the address printed below.

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with the State Board of Education.

Sincerely,
Jim Buckheit
State Board of Education
333 Market Street, 1st floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126 0333

October 5, 2007

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

Re: Proposed changes to Chapter 14 Regulations

Dear Mr. Buckheit:

It has come to my attention that the state is moving in the direction of changing the Multidisciplinary Team Evaluation process from 60 school days to 60 calendar days and I am writing to voice my concern over such action. Take a moment to reflect on the impact that such a drastic change will inflict on the 501 school districts in Pennsylvania. As I cannot speak for the other 500 districts impacted, I can speak for the Spring-Ford Area School District where we pride ourselves on providing stellar supports and services in the area of special education. I believe that there are several factors that need to be considered and given priority before making such a decision.

In Spring-Ford Area School District, we contract with our psychologists for a total number of days for a given school year. For example, we may contract with one psychologist to work 180 days, but the psychologist can spread those days out over

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240 days. This allows the psychologists to use their time according to the rate of referrals. This also allows some flex time in order to accommodate the growing number of parent requests to have their children evaluated "before they start school" for the next school year. Sure, by law, we could simply say "no" and do no testing over the summer. However, we pride ourselves on working hard with and for the parents in our district to avoid conflicts that could cost the district thousands in litigation fees.

In order to meet the needs of the proposed timelines, one of two things would be necessary: Psychologists would need to limit their involvement in building level activities such as child study teams, SNAP teams, RTI Interventions, and consultations and focus strictly on testing or the district would need to increase the number of psychologists it retains in order to provide the necessary support to the students. Obviously, option one is not feasible because districts are required to provide these services. Option two leaves the question: Where does a district mandated to conform to Act 1 requirements secure additional funds for new staff members? Obviously there will be no significant state funding increase for special education services.

I understand that parents are claiming that 60 school days is "just too long" and part of me agrees with them. However, you need to look at the overall picture and whether we want to continue to evaluate each individual child with the quality they deserve. I encourage you to speak on behalf of the people on the front lines and do what is in the best interest of all children.

Sincerely,

Daniel C. Currie
Supervisor of Special Education
Spring-Ford Area School District

Cc: Mr. Robert Moore
Dr. Jeanmarie Mason
Dr. Kenneth Donahue
Mr. John Tommasini

Jim Buckheit
State Board of Education
717-787-3787

-----Original Message-----

From: Currie, Daniel [mailto:dcurr@spring-ford.net]

Sent: Friday, October 05, 2007 12:17 PM

To: jbuckheit@state.pa.us

Cc: Mason, Jeanmarie

Subject: Input Letter

Good afternoon Mr. Buckheit. Attached you will find a copy of my personal input regarding the proposed changes to the Chapter 14 regulations. I appreciate your time and consideration of this input. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you.

Daniel Currie
Supervisor of Special Education K-4
Spring-Ford Area School District
610-705-6221 (office)
610-705-6236 (Fax)

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