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From: Independent Regulatory Review Commission [No-Reply@irrc.state.pa.us]
Sent: Sunday, September 14, 2008 9:43 AM
To: Help
Subject: IRRC Website - New Message



IRRC

Independent Regulatory Review Commission

A new message has arrived from the IRRC Website

First Name: Kimm

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Subject: IRRC #2635 Oppose

Message:

Dear Commissioners; I am the parent of four gifted learners, a teacher holding PA certification in elementary education pursuing a Master's degree in educational psychology of gifted and talented learners, and the President of Radnor PAGE. I write today to urge you and the Commission not to support the final form regulations for gifted learners. Of particular concern to all gifted learners and their parents is vagueness of critical terms like "present levels of educational performance" and "meaningful benefit" in the regulation. The notion that these terms are "a term of art" represents a faulty and elitist statement. Including in regulations ill-defined language that is understood by educators, but which educators cannot define for others, suggests that in fact those educators do not share a common understanding of the term, making it unlikely that parents, students, or even hearing officers will clearly interpret that language. The IRRC should ensure that all stakeholders can interpret the regulations with clarity. By way of illustration, I have had the experience of attending an IEP meeting in which the team used SRI data to celebrate the fact that my dyslexic/gifted son had finally reached grade level performance. They were very clear that his score illustrated competence with his grade level peers. Later, I attended a GIEP meeting for his sister, 2 years younger. The team presented her SRI score, which was higher than my son's had been, and explained that it couldn't be used to support above level reading needs. Present level determinations are not an art which cannot be defined for ordinary parents. Rather, as an educator, I find school districts like mine use the vague language in the regulations to avoid addressing advanced learners with above level needs. Testing can be used to determine levels and monitor progress as it is under IDEA. The regulated community would benefit from more clarity of interpretation regarding present levels. The proposed regulations do not represent an improvement over the current form. All parties should expect clarity and protection for the interests of exceptional students. This form suffers from most of the flaws of the current form. Confusion exists among stakeholders regarding the term meaningful benefit, measurable goals and objectives, the need for graduation planning, and the implementation of differentiated instruction. In light of the significant flaws in the final form regulations, I urge the IRRC to oppose the regulations and give the Board of Education more time to draft clearer language to benefit the community of gifted learners in PA. Sincerely, Kimm Doherty 792 Fawnhill Rd. Broomall, PA 19008

9/16/2008