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Government Relations

September 14, 2007

Dr. Gerald L. Zahorchak, Secretary
PA Department of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126

Dear Secretary Zahorchak:

I am writing to express my concern regarding the Special Education for Gifted Students regulations contained in Chapter 16, Title 22 of the PA Code. Specifically, the proposed change to gifted teacher class roster increase to 25 students from 20, as contained in §16.41, part C, number 4.

I believe that the proposed increase in class size may have a detrimental effect on gifted students. These students are, obviously, in the program for a reason. The smaller class size affords them the opportunity to maximize their academic potential through the close interaction with their teachers. Expanding the class size will inevitably dilute that interaction, resulting in a disadvantage for students and a greater challenge for teachers. I realize that smaller mandatory class sizes mean more teachers will be needed, but I feel strongly that we need to make this investment to maximize the potential of these exceptional children just as we do for special education students.

Thank you for your kind consideration of this letter. I look forward to hearing from you on this issue as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Phyllis Mundy

Rep. Phyllis Mundy
120th Legislative District
PA House of Representatives

cc: Karl R. Girton, Chairperson - PA Board of Education

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