

2635

Gelnett, Wanda B.

From: Schalles, Scott R.
Sent: Friday, October 05, 2007 9:42 AM
To: Gelnett, Wanda B.
Subject: FW: Comments on Proposed Changes to Chapter 16 - Gifted Education

RECEIVED

2007 OCT - 5 AM 9:41

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Public comment on 2635

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

From: lstevens@swimusa.com [mailto:lstevens@swimusa.com]
Sent: Friday, October 05, 2007 9:33 AM
To: jbuckheit@state.pa.us; lbaker@pasen.gov; info@phyllismundy.com; Schalles, Scott R.; musto@pasenate.com; jyudichak@pa.house.net
Cc: nicolesap@msn.com
Subject: Comments on Proposed Changes to Chapter 16 - Gifted Education

Dear Governor Rendell, Members of the IRRRC, Mr. Buckheit, Mr. Schalles, Senate Education Committee, State Senator Baker, State Senator Musto, State Representative Yudichak and State Representative Mundy;

I am writing to you to voice my concerns about the proposed changes in Chapter 16 Regulations regarding Gifted Children in Pennsylvania. My relatives attend the Wyoming Valley West School District. I have serious concerns that gifted education would be negatively affected if the proposed changes to Chapter 16 are implemented.

A recent Time Magazine article stated the United States "is wasting its most precious commodity - gifted students". These are the children who will be part of the generation that will potentially find a cure for cancer and save the planet from global warming. In order for these milestones to happen, our state and federal offices must encourage and support enriched gifted programs that allow students to reach their full potential.

The following details my viewpoint of the proposed changes:

1. Class Size (16.41) should be limited to 20 students. The gifted elementary program at WVW (Grades 1-5) is a magnet school with a full-day program with 100+ students. Since meeting the needs of gifted students requires an individualized plan, an increase to 25 would be detrimental to the gifted program in my district as a whole and to the individual students in the program.

2. Compliance Monitoring: Currently, the minimal amount of compliance monitoring that is available for us not enough. Chapter 16 should be updated to embed compliance monitoring

language and procedures to be followed. There should also be a process by which parental complaints can be filed and investigated by the PDE.

3. I support the Case Load (16.41) being limited to 60 students. This should be the maximum allowed on a full-time gifted teacher's roster.

4. Criteria used for Identification should not focus solely on IQ. The wording in section 16.21 should be changed to:

...includes a person who has an IQ of 130 or higher OR when multiple criteria as set forth in this chapter and in Department Guidelines indicate gifted ability...

5. Graduation Planning should also be implemented in Chapter 16. A student should receive credit for high school classes taken at the Middle School level. It is the responsibility of the school districts to meet the gifted students' needs at every level.

In summary, I am asking that these comments be presented to the IRRC, the State Board of Education, the Senate Education Committee and any others involved in the proposed changes to Chapter 16. I also urge you to make decisions that are in the best interest of the students.

I look forward to your response of the above concerns.

Sincerely,

Leslie E. Stevens

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