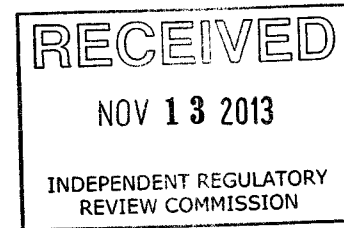


November 11, 2013

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The Honorable Silvan B. Lutkewitte, III  
Chairman  
Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC)  
333 Market Street, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17101



**Re: Final-Form Regulations #6-326 – Academic Standards and Assessments**

Dear Chairman Lutkewitte:

Having served this great nation for over 35 years in the United States Army and as a public school teacher, administrator and retired Superintendent of Schools at Wayne Highlands School District in Wayne County, Pennsylvania, I am writing to express my strong support for the final-form regulation 6-326 related to academic standards and assessments. I urge the Independent Regulatory Review Commission's approval. The regulation adopts the Pennsylvania Core Standards in English and math, along with aligned assessments, including Keystone Exams.

Pennsylvania's Core Standards will make English language arts and math education more rigorous and relevant to success in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. They challenge students on critical thinking, complex problem solving and effective communication—all essential skills for today's and tomorrow's military. These efforts will also help level the playing field for children from military connected families.

I was recently appointed by Governor Corbett as the Pennsylvania State Commissioner for the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission. Pennsylvania is one of 45 states that has adopted this Compact. The mission of the Compact is to guarantee a level playing field for the children of military families who move so often in the k-12 period.

A special concern for our nation's approximately 2 million children from military families is student mobility. On average, a military child will move six to nine times during their Pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade education. This can be a frustrating experience as these students often find themselves either ahead or behind their new school peers because of the lack of consistency between different states' education standards.

Defense Department officials support the Compact's goal of enabling cooperation between states and allowing for the uniform treatment of military children transferring between school districts and states. The unification of states in the Compact helps ensure that military children have the educational opportunities they deserve within and across state borders.

Pennsylvania's Core Standards will go even further in maintaining consistency and expanding educational opportunities for military children and other children who relocate in the midst of their education. In doing so, all students, no matter where they live, or how often they move to a new school, will be better prepared for success in postsecondary education, the workforce and the military, if they choose to serve.

Sincerely,

Major General (Ret.) Daniel J. O'Neill, U.S. Army  
Pennsylvania State Commissioner, Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission