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2400 Reach Road
P.O. Box 3609
Williamsport, PA 17701
570-323-8561 Fax: 570-323-1738

BLaST IU 17
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Canton, PA 17724
570-673-6001 Fax: 570-673-6007

www.iu17.org

November 18, 2013

The Honorable Silvan B. Lutkewitte, III
Chairman
Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC)
333 Market Street, 14th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101
Email: irrc@irrc.state.pa.us

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

Dear Chairman Lutkewitte:

On behalf of Intermediate Unit #17 I am writing to express our support for the final-form regulation 6-326 related to academic standards and assessments. I urge the Independent Regulatory Review Commission's approval of Chapter 4.

I understand that the regulation adopts the Pennsylvania Core Standards in English and math, along with aligned assessments, including Keystone Exams. I also am aware of the concern, expressed by some Commonwealth educators, that these changes and assessments may create an undue burden on students.

That said, Chapter 4 as proposed will create rigorous, internationally benchmarked academic standards to prepare our students to be successful in postsecondary education and 21st century careers while providing a strong system of supports for students. The aligned assessments, including Keystone Exams, provide a practical accountability system for measuring student achievement and ensuring students have met the standards by the time they graduate from high school.

The Intermediate Unit works to support our local school districts as they seek to implement the Commonwealth's educational priorities on behalf of its students. We strongly support the regulations and urge the IRRC's approval.

Sincerely,

William Martens
Executive Director