CAPSEF Founded in 1974

Connecticut Association of Private Special Education Facilities
Member of the National Association of Private Special Education Centers and the Council of Affiliated State Associations

To: Georgette Nemr
    Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification
    P.O. Box 950471- Room 243
    Hartford, Ct. 06115- 0471

From: John Mattas
      Legislative Chairperson, CAPSEF
      350 Main St. - 3rd floor
      Hartford, Ct. 06106

RE: Proposed Changes in Certification for the Special Education Teacher
    and Intervention Specialist

On behalf of CAPSEF members I respectfully submit the following concerns, questions, and recommendations regarding the proposed certification changes.

First we wish to commend the State Department of Education for their work. We believe including the many stakeholders in the process was extremely beneficial.

Change is an adventure for most of us; especially when the pressures around us seem to be at an all time high. We as CAPSEF members welcome changes that will enhance the quality of our teachers and result in improved learning for our students.

The following are points of concern. We feel the following changes may discourage one from enrolling in a special education program:

a) requiring a master's degree for intial certification
b) increasing costs for initial certificate and the time to prepare special educators
c) preparation programs seem too broad; more depth needed in specific areas
d) small programs / alternative programs will not be able to support / afford the number of "qualified teachers" that may be required

The following are recommendations:

a) enhance teacher programs through more in depth training and mentoring with highly skilled master teachers
b) create various levels of special education teachers to concentrate on critical areas of need
c) consider a "residency program" for teachers in our state; some teacher-training colleges in our country are finding success; the Boston Teacher Residency Program is an excellent example

Thank you for your consideration.