



August 23, 2007

Ms. Mary Cornman
Division of District and School Improvement
Bureau of Assessment and Accountability
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126-0333

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dear Ms. Cornman:

Thank you for your responses to our questions regarding the mandate waiver. Based on your suggestions in the August 14 e-mail, our conversation on August 22, and the recommendations in the August 1 letter from Thomas Gluck, we are resubmitting our application and asking the review panel to reconsider our request. We are confident the revised application addresses the concerns of the original application.

Please contact us if additional information is needed. We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aldo R. Jackson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Aldo R. Jackson, Ph.D.
Director

MANDATE WAIVER PROGRAM APPLICATION
(revised and resubmitted)

School District/IU/AVTS: Erie County Technical School

Board Adoption Date: May 24, 2007

Superintendent/Executive Director: Aldo R. Jackson, Ph.D.

President, Board of Directors: James A. Bucksbee

Contact Person: Paul Fritz, Business Manager

Telephone Number and Fax: (814) 464-8662, (814) 464-8625 (fax)

E-mail address: pfritz@ects.org

SECTION 1 - Law/Regulation/Standard to be waived. Please provide the appropriate legal citation and specify the provision(s) from which relief is sought.

24 P.S. 7-751 (a & b): The district is requesting a waiver from competitive bidding requirements to allow for the construction of a proposed training laboratory comprised of mock hotel rooms and a fast food service counter at the Erie County Technical School (ECTS). The project would be completed by students enrolled in the Construction Trades, Drafting & Design, Electrical Engineering and Facilities Maintenance Technologies programs at the ECTS.

SECTION 2 - Specify need for waiver.

The waiver will provide real-life experiences for students enrolled in the four programs. The waiver will also allow the technical school and its participating school districts to save thousands of dollars in material and labor costs if the project were conducted through a competitive bidding process.

SECTION 3 - Explain how the waiver will enable the school district, IU or AVTS to 1) improve its instructional program and/or 2) operate in a more effective, efficient or economical manner.

By virtue of their size and unique features, the construction of the mock hotel rooms and fast food service counter will provide excellent opportunities for students to learn from the hands-on experiences in various aspects of their career paths including project management, masonry, plumbing, carpentry and electrical construction. This project will also provide construction experience in commercial aspects of construction. The students typically experience only aspects of residential construction.

Our participating school districts will save thousands of dollars in construction costs by allowing the students to construct the training laboratory. The projected cost through competitive bidding is over \$500,000. The estimated cost of construction by the students is \$150,000.

SECTION 4 - Explain benefits to be obtained by the waiver, and supply supporting data and information.

The granting of a waiver will provide excellent educational experiences for over 165 students. As noted above, cost savings gained through the waiver will amount to over \$300,000.

SECTION 5 – If the purpose of the waiver is to improve the instructional program, please explain how the program will operate under the waiver.

The waiver will allow the faculty to design instruction that involves commercial construction standards. It will reduce costs in terms of instructional supplies.

SECTION 6 – Describe the evaluation procedure that will be used to determine: 1) the effectiveness of an innovative program; 2) the effectiveness of a revised instructional program, which shall include measures of student performance; and 3) the effectiveness of changes in the operations of the school district, IU or AVTS.

The program effectiveness will be evaluated from three perspectives. First, faculty will be interviewed to determine the effectiveness of the project in terms of class operation and teaching effectiveness. Second, students will be interviewed to determine their perception of the project in terms of learning opportunities and relevance to their career goals. We will also measure student performance on the state mandated occupational competency test (NOCTI) to see if student scores improve. Lastly, a cost-benefit analysis will be conducted to ensure a project operated under this structure does result in the intended benefits.

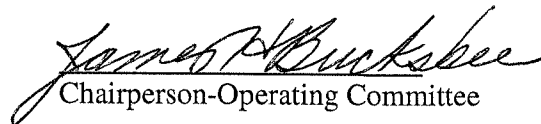
AFFIRMATION

We affirm that this application was adopted by the attached resolution of the Operating Committee at a regularly scheduled meeting. The Operating Committee solicitor has reviewed the application and has determined that in waiving PDE 3074 and Section 751 (a) of the School Code, the AVTS will not violate any court order, state law or federal law.

We acknowledge that it is the Operating Committee's responsibility to ensure that implementation of the waiver will be consistent with the terms of any court order, collective bargaining agreement or contract by which the board is bound.

Affirmed this 24th day of May, 2007

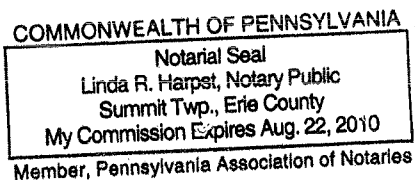

Director

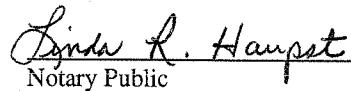

Chairperson-Operating Committee

SEAL

Taken, sworn and subscribed before me,

this 24TH day of May A.D. 2007




Notary Public

Seal:

My commission expires: 8/22/2010