



# Twin Valley School District

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www.tvsd.org

*Twin Valley School District*  
*"A Learning Community"*

April 20, 2015

Letter also mailed to:

Senator John Rafferty

Senator Judith Schwank

Rep. Mark Gillen

Rep. Stan Saylor

Rep. Tim Hennessey

Governor Tom Wolf

Pedro Rivera, Acting Sec. of  
Education

Senator Lloyd Smucker  
Chair, Senate Education Committee  
Senate Box 203013  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3013

Re: Amended Child Protective Services Law

Dear Senator Smucker:

We, the School Directors of Twin Valley School District, are writing to inform you that the 2014 Act 153 amendments to the Child Protective Services Law (CPSL), and indirectly to the PA School Code, are creating an undue burden on our district. While we appreciate your continued efforts to ensure the safety of all students in the Commonwealth, we have some concerns on the application of this latest legislation regarding clearances and background checks for staff and volunteers. Listed below are a few of our concerns:

1. As a district we cannot confirm online the accuracy of an FBI Clearance that is older than one year. The law states that it is the employer's responsibility to verify the information, but the FBI system does not allow us that capability.
2. The increased clearances and regularity of them are a financial hardship to employees and volunteers alike. Financially, the clearance requirement is especially burdensome to our volunteers. If a parent, guardian, grandparent or community member wants to read to their child's class, under the new law they now need clearances, for a cost of about \$50. This is irrespective of the professional supervision that person would have in the classroom.
3. Additionally, these stringent clearance requirements will hinder school districts' ability to have community volunteers in the classroom; therefore denying students the opportunity to hear from various community members who can enhance their learning. For example, many schools host Veteran's Day celebrations and invite local Veterans into the student's classrooms to discuss their experiences, without proper clearances.
4. As a district, Twin Valley strives to provide students with a wide range of opportunities prior to graduation. We send many students out to internships in the local community and will be very limited by these new requirements on where we can send students. Due to these new regulations, there is concern that all employees of a local business where a student is interning would be required to have full clearances and background checks complete before a student can work with them. We feel this will cause an undue burden of time and a financial hardship to the employers and will cause many of them to decline participation in our robust intern program.

As a school district we ask you to reconsider the inflexible requirements of this new legislation and its implications to districts on the local level. Many districts, like Twin Valley, had already implemented increased clearance requirements in the case of field trip chaperones to ensure the safety of our students. Please reconsider the December legislation and allow us to continue to utilize the resources of the local community to enhance the educational experience.

Sincerely,

Thomas Legel  
School Board President

Robert Pleis  
Superintendent