

August 1, 2009

Governor Edward G. Rendell
225 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Rendell:

I want to tell you about the wonderful sight that I witnessed today: seventy-six teenagers wearing tee-shirts that said "It's a Gov Story, Eddie Just Say Yes. PSGE '09."

Today was the final day of the 2009 Pennsylvania School for Global Entrepreneurship at Lehigh University, Iacocca Institute, formerly the Pennsylvania Governor's School of Excellence. Through the absolutely extraordinary efforts of Trisha Alexy and Richard Brandt, these young men and women were able to participate in the PA School for Global Entrepreneurship, even after the Governor's Schools were cancelled in 2009 for budgetary reasons.

The phrase from the tee-shirts was actually from a song parody of Taylor Swift's "Love Story" which was performed at the School's student talent show. Picture 25 teenage boys singing earnestly about the challenging application process, the sense of loss when the program was cancelled, and the determination to make it special when they were able to attend after all, and the memories thus far of the program and experience.

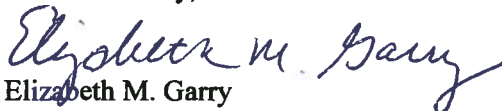
"Eddie Just Say Yes" means that these young men and women are begging to have the funding of the Governor's Schools restored. In just a few short weeks, these students attended classes and seminars, had field trips to businesses in the community, developed real business plans and solutions which were presented to the businesses and to the Dept. for Community and Economic Development in Harrisburg, and developed friendships that they expect will last forever.

My daughter, Nora, was among the very fortunate students who participated in this program. My family was able to scrape together the funds necessary to pay to attend the program (a challenge in this fiscal atmosphere) because of the opportunities that the program offered. Nora is an outstanding student who is driven in her quest for academic success. What she found among the similar-minded students at PSGE was a revelation – that developing friendships and bonds and interpersonal skills can be just as or even more important than getting an A on a test.

At the Closing Ceremonies on Friday night, about a dozen students spoke with passion and eloquence of their experiences during the 5-week program. My daughter Nora gave the introductory speech. She is not an emotional person – she rarely cries – and yet she broke down during her speech because she was heartbroken at the thought of leaving her dear friends who were strangers just five weeks ago.

I implore you to restore the Governor's Schools to the Pennsylvania budget. Educational and life-experience opportunities such as these are rare. These students are the Pennsylvania Business Leaders of the future. They will use their enthusiasm, expertise, acumen and intellect to start new companies or to bring fresh ideas to existing businesses. In 20 or 30 years, some of them might just be in Pennsylvania Government. Just as a business needs capital to run, the Governor's Schools need funding to ensure the success of Pennsylvania's future.

Yours sincerely,



Elizabeth M. Garry
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cc: Trisha Alexy and Richard Brandt, PSGE
PA State Sen. Charles T. McIlhinney, Jr.
PA State Rep. John T. Galloway
Mayor Thomas Wisnosky, Morrisville