



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

EBENSBURG STATE SCHOOL AND HOSPITAL

Ebensburg, Pennsylvania 15931

April 17, 1975

HARRY M. HERMAN
SUPERINTENDENT

TELEPHONE
AREA CODE 814, 472-7350

RECEIVED

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PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION
FOR FETTERED CITIZENS

Honorable Frank Beal
Secretary of Welfare
Department of Public Welfare
P. O. Box 2675
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

Dear Secretary Beal:

In response to Mr. Buchanan's letter, re: the construction of modular units on grounds at Ebensburg State School, I would like to clarify some of the expressed concerns.

The quote "--intermediate classes, all be held within the modular unit facility" although accurately quoted certainly does not reflect our intent. I must admit the phrasing of the last several paragraphs leads to some ambiguity of intent.

Our future utilization of said facilities would continue to be within the transitional training concept. As our school age residents decline and Intermediate Unit #08 becomes less involved, we would anticipate continuing Department of Public Welfare contracts for lease of off-grounds facilities for the ongoing education and training of the Over 21 Population, perhaps emphasizing as the need arises more sophisticated programs in domestic skills. Eventually, the modular units could be phased out completely, serve as a preplacement vocational training area, or utilized as office space.

Contrary to Mr. Buchanan's interpretation of my appeal, we do and can find additional space, to accommodate the need for community educational involvement. Currently, we have 300 young people attending the Borough School in Ebensburg. Intermediate Unit #08 is in the process of leasing a well maintained building in Vinco, Pennsylvania, which is a short distance from the school. This facility will accommodate from 100 to 150 students daily on a 5 hour, 5 day a week basis.

Our real need then, boils down to transitional training on grounds in order to prepare the profoundly retarded, multiply handicapped to participate in the community based programs safely and meaningfully. In September, we will have between 400 to 450 students participating in community education. With the modular units on grounds, we could effect immediately transitional training for 80 students, as opposed to the 20 students now cramped in a leaky, poorly ventilated, poorly lighted and poorly heated area. I am well

aware of the contents of the Consent Agreement and am satisfied the Intermediate Unit #08 has explored all seven alternatives as specified by Dr. Carroll. However, I will not pursue this avenue of on grounds construction without at least the understanding of PARC and sanction of the Department.

May I conclude with my personal commitment to deinstitutionalization. Our projections for future use of modular units are no more than speculations. Should the entire community thrust gain appreciable momentum, I would hope to see, not only the modular units, but also several living area units standing empty five years from now - or put to some use serving community needs. In no way am I supporting the concept of broadening or entrenching the institutional concept. Our only aim, ambition and desire is expeditious movement of students out of the institution. To accomplish this, we must plan carefully, move discreetly and place effectively. Mass "dumping" will not eliminate institutions and indeed, may well have adverse effects on our efforts to accomplish orderly deinstitutionalization!

Respectfully,

Harry M. Herman
Harry M. Herman
Superintendent

cc: Roger Buchanan
Stanley Meyers
Ford Thompson
Robert Vogt
L. Stewart Brown
Elsie Schmidt
Virginia Thornburg
Gary Makuch
Andrew Vaveris
Right to Education Consent Committee
Residential Services Committee
Gloria Mitchell
Earl Bonnett
Will Burrow
Donald Carroll