

Cherokee County School District

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SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

May 29, 2009

APA Model Licensure Revision Task Force
Attention: Practice Directorate, Omar Rehman
750 1st Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002-4242

Dear Mr. Rehman:

It is with great urgency that I write to the American Psychological Association (APA) regarding the proposal to change its *Model Act for State Licensure*...resulting in elimination of the exemption of school psychologists from state licensure. The Cherokee School District and its representatives are strongly opposed to this proposal.

It is clear and undeniable that such an action would not only negatively impact Georgia school children; but, it would also effectively undermine the training, experience and confidence of a well-respected and wholly necessary group of trained educational specialists. As districts throughout the United States struggle to meet the demands of federal and state regulation of the nation's neediest school population, such an action would seriously jeopardize their ability to continue providing timely and effective services.

The Georgia Professional Standards Commission, which provides credentialing for all professionals in education, has demonstrated its ability to provide extensive credentialing to our school psychologists. Their duties, assignments and challenges are often unique to academic settings and bear little resemblance to those of independent practitioners, who are appropriately regulated by the Psychology Licensing Board. It should also be noted that school psychologists are funded entirely by public funds, which often include providing financial support for their training and supervision and in their certificate renewal. To suggest that they need to be regulated by a state board which supervises private practice licenses clearly oversteps agency boundaries.

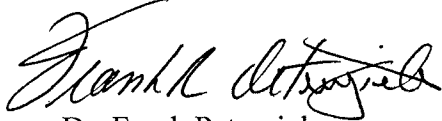
Local school districts predict an immediate and critical shortage of vital personnel to carry out the important work school psychologists do if these individuals suddenly find themselves "unlicensed" due to new requirements that are far removed from the actual work they do. If districts suddenly become dependent on private licensed psychologists to simply administer necessary testing, our work and the services currently provided to students would be critically impacted. The personnel demand and financial impact alone would be extraordinary for many school systems, particularly in such difficult economic times.

Education Today For A Better Tomorrow

Suggesting that there is currently confusion in the mind of the public as to the role and responsibilities of school psychologists does not give the public appropriate credit for its powers of discernment. School psychologists and psychometrists have been fixtures in our schools for several decades; and most parents are very aware of their roles as support personnel and of the important contributions they make to students' overall academic and social success.

We hope that you will heed the request of the Georgia Association of School Psychologists (GASP) and its 750 school psychologists and reconsider this ill-advised, proposed action. The Model Act for State Licensure has always provided the needed exemption; and we urge you to reinstate the exemption for the benefit of the school children and families we serve!

Sincerely,



Dr. Frank Petruzielo
Superintendent of Schools

FRP/CDC/PC

cc: School Board Members
School Board Attorney
Agenda Preparation Group (APG)
Principals
Cathy McKenzie, Lead Psychologist
Peggy Corbett, Teacher on Special Assignment, RTI Strategies
Kelly Henson, Executive Secretary, Georgia Professional Standards Commission
Phil Blackwell, Director of Certification, Georgia Professional Standards
Commission
Kathy Cox, State Superintendent of Schools
Cherokee County Legislative Delegation