

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Howard County Education Association (HCEA), I am writing to strongly urge the Board of Educational Affairs of the American Psychological Association (APA) to continue the exemption for non-doctoral school psychologists, as currently included in the Model Act for State Licensure (MLA) of Psychologists. HCEA represents over 5,000 public school educators in Howard County, MD. Each educator is dedicated to the educational success and well-being of over 48,000 students. School psychologists play a critical role in assisting these students and over 7,000 educators. Any action which significantly limits their services in Howard County would have a detrimental effect on our students, families, education professionals, and the school community.

There are less than sixty (60) school psychologists to respond to the needs of over 50,000 students and educators in Howard County schools. These advocates play a critical role in addressing the academic, behavioral, and social needs of students. The day-to-day support to educators covers such areas as: Consultation, Assessment, Therapy, Intervention, Program Evaluation, and Education.

The school psychologists possess unique skills, obtained through school psychology graduate training programs and extensive field-based experiences. This training specifically addresses such critical issues as: special education, crisis prevention and intervention, instruction, classroom management, learning and behavior, and mental health.

When a school community experiences the death of a student or colleague, the school psychologist is there to console and counsel. When a family needs resources for program continuity, the school psychologist provides referrals. When the system needs to determine the appropriate level of resources essential to student learning, the school psychologist administers assessments, observes behavior, and interprets results.

The delivery of essential educational, behavioral, emotional, and social services to students will be impeded if MLA enacts the proposed changes. For many students, mental health services provided by the school psychologist present the only access to counseling and behavioral consultation available to them. For these reasons, HCEA urges the APA Board of Educational Affairs to maintain the exemption in Section J of the MLA for all school psychologists.

Sincerely,

Ann DeLacy  
HCEA President