



## Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals

*Service, Support and Advocacy  
for Maryland Principals*

May 18, 2009

Board of Educational Affairs and Model Licensure Act Task Force  
American Psychological Association  
750 First Street, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002

To Whom It May Concern:

In my position as president of the Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals (MAESP) and as an elementary school principal for eighteen years, I have had the privilege of working with a number of outstanding school psychologists. On behalf of MAESP, we are strongly opposed to the Model Act for State Licensure of Psychologists revision that is being proposed by the American Psychological Association.

School psychologists serve a vital function in public schools and to eliminate the school psychologist exemption would be detrimental in how they are perceived by parents and advocates of parents. I have had the pleasure of working with school psychologists that have a doctorate as well as those with a specialist/master's degree. While it is admirable to have a doctorate, there was no distinction in the professionalism and quality of work completed by my psychologists as a result of having a doctorate. Being credentialed by the State Education Agency is more important in having school psychologists trained to meet the demands in a school setting. The combined graduate coursework in psychology and education enables the person to better meet the needs of students and their parents. A clinical psychologist often lacks the training and understanding of the school setting and will provide recommendations that are not relevant or impractical.

The school psychologist is the critical link in providing the evaluations and services to our students. The number of students with mental health issues continues to grow exponentially and the school psychologist is the one person that can effectively make recommendations and provide services in the school setting. Their expertise or area of specialization is unique and should be valued by all professions.

I implore your organization to reinstate the exemption for special level and non-doctoral level school psychologists in the Model Licensure Act. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter on such an important issue.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Wagner  
President of MAESP

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