



P.O. Box 4069
Hamilton, NJ 08610
(908) 227-8275

May 30, 2009

Dear American Psychological Association Members and Board,

As a masters-level school psychologist, a long time practitioner in private and public schools, and as the current president of the New Jersey Association of School Psychologists [www.njasp.org], I am writing this letter to address the American Psychological Association's proposed revisions to the current practice of non-doctoral school psychologists. It has been an honor to work as a school psychologist, and it is an essential motivating factor in my life. Equally vital and important is the work performed by dedicated members of our profession, and the related fields of psychology, mental-health services, and other associated occupations. All of these psychology-based professions support the improvement of the lives of children and families, and have a constructive impact on our society. NASP, NJASP, and APA have provided many years of high quality service and their effectiveness does not the need to be diminished by disputes over title changes.

With past successes in mind, I am recommending that your organization maintain the exemption for non-doctoral school psychologists. The possible damage to students, their families, and school personnel is not worthy of your esteemed organization. Our school populations rely on credentialed school psychologists and the potentially harmful effects of the MLA proposal is worrisome and not in the best interest of those we serve. During these trying times, security and stability is at a premium. The recommended revisions to the MLA/APA proposal have the potential to de-stabilize delivery of essential services to youngsters and families who require our assistance.

I urge you to re-consider your position on this important issue; it needlessly complicates the delivery of decades-old school psychological services. I hope that you will reacquaint yourself to the effectiveness of the current model. The master-to-specialist level school psychologists are able to deliver appropriate services to our school population and the exemption status has served our constituents admirably for the past 30 years.

Sincerely,

John C. Lestino, MA LPC
President
New Jersey Association of School Psychologists

