

SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Office of the Superintendent
Karen-Lee N. Brofee, Ed. D.

May 15, 2009

Dr. James H. Bray
Assistant Executive Director
Practice Research and Policy, Practice Directorate
American Psychological Association
750 First Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 2002

Dear Dr. Bray:

I am writing to you as a: the Superintendent of Somerset County Public Schools in Maryland.

It has come to my attention that the American Psychological Association is proposing to change its Model Licensure Act by eliminating the exemption from licensure for specialist level/specialist level School Psychology Practitioners. This letter is to voice strong opposition to such an action. This proposal is not in the best interests of children and families for three reasons:

1. The proposal would reduce the work force in our schools by eliminating the positions of the majority of the current School Psychologists, all of whom are specialist level/specialist-level practitioners certified by the Maryland State Department of Education. The level of service delivery to our students with disabilities would be severely impacted. This would mean that even less crisis intervention and prevention services would be available for the general education population. This is simply not acceptable in these difficult times.
2. In addition to the fiscal limitations of Somerset--there is no room in our already reduced school budgets to hire doctoral-level School Psychologists, we could not obtain them. We have already reduced staff positions through attrition and are struggling to hold on to our current psychologists.
3. The removal of specialist level/specialist-level School Psychology Practitioners from the landscape of public education in Maryland and around the country would be catastrophic at the State Education Department level. At the local building level, administrators would simply not be able to effectively respond to the immediate needs of large numbers of parents and students. This would create a state of chaos that could easily cause irreparable damage to our students, not to mention the increased liability that local educational agencies would be faced with in the absence of adequate staffing levels.

Please rethink your position placing students' needs first and foremost. In doing so you can only conclude that you must withdraw this proposal immediately.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Karen-Lee N. Brofee".

Karen-Lee N. Brofee, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools

2009