

Wilde Lake Middle School

10481 Cross Fox Lane Columbia, Maryland 21044 (410) 313-6957 FAX (410) 313-6963



To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing as a special education teacher at the Wilde Lake Middle in Maryland.

It has come to my attention that the APA is proposing to change its Model Licensure Act by eliminating the exemption from licensure for 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.

Due to the demands on the time of building-level School Psychology staff, there is already an insufficient level of mental health consulting services to the average classroom teacher. Teachers are being asked to teach and to manage the behavior of an increasingly challenging population, an increased number of children "at risk", and are given little in our formal teacher education training that helps us on the front lines each day when we walk into our classrooms. School psychologists frequently promote the social-emotional well being of students directly and indirectly (by supporting teachers).

School psychologists frequently bridge the gap between student struggles and achievement by consulting with teachers from an educational perspective. School psychologists can offer consultation on interventions and data collection on a regular basis to help struggling students achieve academic success. Often these supports help teachers with not just the target child, but their entire class.

Finally, to think that school districts who are struggling to maintain their own economic survival would be forced to replace specialist level School Psychology practitioners with all doctoral-level School Psychologists is unrealistic at best and destructive at its worst to the entire teaching profession.

We value and appreciate the services we have received from both our specialist level and doctoral level School Psychology colleagues. Any risk to their support in the classrooms and school buildings of Maryland will be a detriment to our students and teachers alike.

We suggest that the proposed elimination of the exemption for School Psychologists be withdrawn immediately.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ann Hackeling".

Ann Hackeling
Special Education Teacher
Wilde Lake Middle School

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Sincerely,

Carol A Tortella

Special Education Teacher
Wilde Lake Middle School