

APA MODEL LICENSURE ACT UPDATE

We want update everyone on the status of the APA Model Licensure Act. As you may already know, APA's current MLA (1987) includes an exemption for school psychologists certified by state education agencies, allowing them to use the term 'psychologist' in their title as long as they are practicing in public schools. **The new language removes this exemption for non-doctoral school psychologists, who will no longer be able to use the title "school psychologist."** This change will affect more than two-thirds of all school psychologists, create extensive complications in policy and regulatory provisions, and cause public confusion. **Both NASP and NJASP strongly oppose a number of the proposed changes and the language that would seriously undermine services to children, families, and schools, as well as school psychologists' professional identity and practice.**

NASP has been expending considerable time in developing resources and materials that states will be able to utilize to prepare for the impact the MLA may have in their state. At the same time NJASP has formed an ad hoc committee to monitor the MLA process and develop an action plan should this impact NJ. We are in close contact with the NASP leadership so that we will be ready to act as new information and resources become available. NJASP is also planning to reach out to members of the state legislature, officials of the State Department of Education, and other stakeholder groups to enlist their support in opposing the MLA. We have a meeting scheduled with the Chairman of the NJ State Assembly Education committee, and more such meetings are planned.

So what can individual members do right now? APA has established a 90-day comment period in which the public can respond to these changes. This means you can now voice your opposition to this act. **Sending your response is easy.** Simply [click here](#) and follow the brief instructions. It is important that you fill out the APA form correctly or your response will not be counted. You can use the resources provided by NASP, adapt and personalize these, or draft your own response. Another important step you can take is to speak to your school administrators, teachers, counselors, and parents. Educate them as to the impact of the proposed MLA and its impact on the delivery of services to children, family, and school staff. Ask them to write to the APA as well.

Please be assured that NJASP *is* and *will be* actively involved in insuring that the high quality services that school psychologists have been delivering to the children, families and schools in New Jersey will continue. We will keep you abreast of any developments as this process continues.

John Lestino
President, NJASP

Janet Burdsall
President Elect, NJASP

Barbara Williams
Chairperson, Training Programs/Ethical and Professional Standards

Barry Barbarasch
Chairperson, NJASP Government and Professional Relations Committee