

March 16, 2009

Thomas P. Gaffey, Co-Chair  
Andrew M. Fleishmann, Co-Chair  
Education Committee  
Room 3100, Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106

**Regarding Raised Bill # 6666, Section 7**

An act requiring School Districts to utilize Board Certified Behavior Analysts when and individual education plan includes applied behavior analytic services as part of a student's special education

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a special education teacher who has been working with children with autism for more than 6 years and am in support of Raised Bill # 6666, Section 7. I support this bill because it is necessary to ensure that children with autism receive a free and appropriate education implemented by qualified personnel. In my years working with children with autism, I have had students transfer to my classroom from other schools and had to go back to basics because of lack of experience teaching children with autism. I have seen many students grow and acquire needed skills such as toileting and washing face with the proper teaching.

The Connecticut General Statute that defines special education states that the definition of "related service providers" is derived from IDEA as amended from time to time. In the most recent revision of IDEA, related service providers were defined as those professionals including "developmental, corrective, and other support services" including but not necessarily limited to those already monitored by the state, and other services "as may be required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education". Behavior Analytic services are routinely outlined on students Individual Education Plans and would therefore meet these criteria. Additionally, IDEA states that related service personnel qualifications are either "consistent with any State-approved or State-recognized certification. With this federal legislation already in place, and a national certification program already in existence, the State Department of Education should recognize the national certification program for behavior analysts, and mandate that school districts follow the existing protocols in place for related service providers, i.e., obtain and maintain a copy of each person's proof of certification, and submit an annual attestation to the state. Actually, the State of Connecticut has been requiring proof of certification of behavior analysts employed by the Connecticut Birth to Three system for years now.

The thing about children with autism is that each child is so very different and the range of functioning is also so variable. Without a trained professional who specializes in autism, a child can lose valuable time and it can be extremely detrimental to their future. I believe that autism is growing and the only way we can help is to see the need for more

professionals with this expertise and use them as a source to help capitalize on the education of children with autism to help them reach their maximum potential.

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