



CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

AFFILIATED WITH THE  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS



Written Testimony of

Jennifer Mitchell Robinson, M.S. Ed, NCSP  
Certified School Psychologist

Legislative Committee Chair, Connecticut Association of School Psychologists

March 8, 2010  
Education Committee

Good afternoon, Senator Gaffey, Representative Fleischmann and the distinguished members of the Education Committee my name is Jennifer Mitchell Robinson and I am submitting the following testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Association of School Psychologists (CASP).

CASP supports Section 2 of HB 5425, in regards to the provision of applied behavioral analysis services for students on the autism spectrum. However we support the recommendation in the Attorney General's report dated January 13, 2010, that these services should not be limited solely to students on the autism spectrum, but any student receiving behavior analyst supports are recommended through their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Behavioral analyst services provide support to students who experience difficulties in the school environment and are important factors when planning their Individualized Education Plan or 504 Plan. It is important to note, that these services should only be provided by individuals qualified to do so. Under current law, there are many personnel already employed by school systems that have the training and qualifications to provide such services, including, but not limited to, school psychologists, school social workers, and speech and language pathologists.

However, as the bill is currently written, CASP has concerns regarding how subsection (b) is written. It states that:

"the Commissioner of Education may authorize the provisions of such services by persons who: (1) Hold a bachelor's degree in a related field; (2) have completed (A) a minimum of nine credit hours of coursework from a course sequence approved by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board or (B) coursework that meets the eligibility requirement to sit for the board certified behavior analyst examination and (3) are supervised by a board certified behavior analyst."

Nothing in this subsection requires the "person" to have experience working in a school setting, which is just as important as having the appropriate job qualifications. As reported in section I, subsection E, the Attorney General's office recommends "that any licensure or certification requirement specifically state that local school districts need to review the credentials of behavior analysts to ensure that each analyst is appropriate for the particular intervention recommended in the Individualized Education Plan." CASP strongly recommends that anyone working with students in a school should have experience working in a school environment.

Therefore, CASP would urge the members of the Education Committee to amend subsection (b) to require that they receive the necessary training to work in the school setting. It will further protect the students of Connecticut who receive these services.