

COUNCIL OF DIRECTORS *of School Psychology Programs*

September 17, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Council of Directors of School Psychology Training Programs, I wish to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft of the Assessment of Competencies Benchmarks document. The Executive Committee requested comments from our colleagues in the field and discussed the current draft of the Benchmarks document. We fully support the idea of operationalizing these critical areas of practice and developing rubrics for examining students' competency. There is some concern, however, about whether this document may ultimately increase reporting requirements for APA accredited programs beyond a level that is achievable and sustainable, given all the demands programs are currently operating under for assessment activities, aligning curricula with requirements of professional associations, and assuring high quality field experiences for our students.

At this time, there are two areas in which CDSPP would like to see revisions and refinements. First, the document heavily emphasizes individual therapy and psychodiagnostic practices. We are concerned that it does not adequately reflect practice related to family, group and system level interventions and prevention, crisis management, and alternative forms of assessment school psychologists engage in (e.g., assessment for intervention). The limited focus of the document also is visible in the definition of scientific knowledge-methods, which fails to include ecological, contextual, and organizational influences on human behavior. Furthermore, the scientific knowledge-methods section does not express a need for students to learn *how to do* research (as opposed to simply being consumers of it), which is a critical foundation for our field, the second area where we feel the document needs to be refined.

I hope that the committee considers these comments in the constructive spirit in which they are offered. This is indeed a very large task! My colleagues and I sincerely appreciate the effort that has been put into this document and believe it has significant potential for shaping how we operationalize and assess student competencies.

Sincerely,

Jean A. Baker, Chair

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