

# KAPS

## Kentucky Association for Psychology in the Schools

4 December 1985

Dr. Cecilia Arbuckle, Executive Director  
Kentucky Association for Retarded Citizens  
Frankfort, KY 40601

Dear Cecilia,

As you may know, there has been considerable discussion of late regarding the appropriateness of guidance counselors conducting intellectual/psychological assessments of children for the purpose of determining eligibility for special education and related services. On September 10, 1985, the State Board revised 707 KAR 7:020 to formally sanction this activity (prior to this time, this practice occurred based on a determination by former Superintendent Graham that the qualifications for intellectual/psychological assessment by counselors were one 3-hour course in testing and a determination by the local Superintendent that the counselor was qualified).

Under the new regulation, for the next two years all individuals currently engaged in the practice will be allowed to continue. After that time, counselors wishing to perform this function in a school district must conform to requirements established by the Council for Teacher Education and Certification. These guidelines are now being developed by a subcommittee of the Council comprised almost entirely of counselors.

The Kentucky Association for Psychology in the Schools (KAPS) is opposed to counselors conducting these evaluations for a number of reasons, most of which relate to the lack of training which counselors have in special education, child exceptionality, cognitive and behavioral assessment, developmental psychology, psychoeducational intervention, consultation, legal and ethical issues in special education, and a range of related areas. Our full position is summarized in an attached document in the form of testimony given at a hearing in March of 1985.

Unfortunately, KAPS has experienced much criticism for speaking out on this issue. On the surface, it appears that school psychologists and psychometrists are engaged in self-serving opposition designed to enhance their status and prestige, and take over roles and functions formerly held by counselors, especially at the elementary level. We have sought to affirm our belief that school counselors are critically needed in the schools of Kentucky, particularly in light of recent educational reform efforts. We support the need for more counselors. We believe that school counselors and school psychologists have much in common, and that the roles can be complementary, without overlapping. Nevertheless, "professional turf" has emerged as the issue, severely limiting our ability to comment credibly.

Letter to Cecilia Arbuckle  
Page Two  
4 December 1985

I believe that the special education community needs to make its views known on this central issue. Assessment and eligibility for special education is a pervasive problem statewide, and organizations such as KARC are in the best position to articulate the nature of this problem.

Please find attached the KAPS testimony I mentioned, the proposed regulation (707 KAR:020), and a recent letter on the issue from the Bowling Green/Warren County Association for Children with Learning Disabilities. Please review this material and consider the position that KARC may have on this matter. I am hopeful that you will take a position similar to KAPS' perspective.

The Department of Education has scheduled a hearing on this issue for 12/27/85 at 10:00 AM in the State Board Room (a rather unfortunate date). Please consider testifying at this hearing, or sending a position statement to Mr. Laurel True at the KDE. Additionally, the Council for Teacher Certification subcommittee is currently considering the matter and I understand will hold a public forum on the matter at some point. I will keep in touch on this, and inform you of the date, hoping that KARC will be able to give testimony here as well.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this important matter.

Sincerely,



ROBERT J. ILLBACK, PSY.D.  
PRESIDENT



BOWLING GREEN/WARREN CO. ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDREN AND  
ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

P.O. Box 20152  
Bowling Green, KY 42102-6152  
November 15, 1985

TO: THE KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, STATE SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS,  
STATE LEGISLATORS, KENTUCKY U.S. SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES:

RE: 707 KENTUCKY ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION 7:020  
(Related to Exceptional Children)

As parents of children with learning disabilities, who receive special education services within the state of Kentucky, we want to express our concerns and objections regarding the changes made by 707 KAR 7:020, adopted September 10, 1985, concerning the duties of guidance counselors in the area of testing and evaluation.

We are aware of the problems with over and under identification, as well as the problem of mis-identification, of special needs children in some of Kentucky's school districts. It is our contention that many of these problems stem from evaluations being performed by unqualified and untrained school personnel, such as counselors and teachers.

The complexity of the problems that special needs children exhibit, necessitate and demand that their evaluations be administered by highly qualified and trained specialists, such as psychologist and psychometrists.

In addition, Public Law 94-142, Section 121.532, mandates that:

- a) tests be administered by trained personnel in conformance with the instructions provided by their producer;
- b) the evaluation is made by a multi-disciplinary team or group of person including at least one teacher or other specialist with knowledge in the area of suspected disability;
- c) the child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, where appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligenc, academic performance, communicative status, and motor abilities.

We recognize that many years (4 to 6) of training and education are required to enable an individual to be qualified for administrating tests and evaluation procedures. We know that the current guidelines, which are in 707 KAR 7:020, are not sufficient or adequate, a minimum of 3 hours of graduate course work, to prepare school counselors for such critical and complex responsibilities as being able to understand and identify all the various handicaps that he or she would be dealing with on a routine basis. A guidance counselors' credentials are not equal to those of a certified psychologists or psychometrists.

We recommend that the Kentucky State Department of Education, the State School Board and all Kentucky legislators take a serious look at the implications which could arise from the implementation of the change made by 707 KAR 7:020.

We acknowledge that the change in these regulations was brought about by the fact that numerous school districts in the state of Kentucky have been using untrained and unqualified personnel to do assessments because of a lack of funding for the hiring of appropriate school psychologists and psychometrists. However, changing the regulations, so that these school districts are in compliance, does not make this practice ethical or in the best interest of our special needs population.

Since we serve as a parent advocacy and support group, it will be our policy to advise parents not to accept evaluation performed by school counselors under the guidelines set forth in 707 KAR 7:020. We will continue to recommend that our parents ask for and demand a multi-disciplinary assessment for their child....which is their right under PL 94-142.

Sincerely,

*Alice Kummer*

Alice Kummer, President  
B.G./W.C. ACLD

*Christine Chafon*

Christine Chafon, Secretary  
B.G./W.C. ACLD

copies to:

Madeline Will  
United States Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave. S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20202

Gayla Peach, Director  
Dept. of Public Advocacy  
State Office Building Annex  
3rd Floor  
Frankfort, KY 40601

Jean Peterson, Executive Director  
Association For Children and Adults  
With Learning Disabilities  
4156 Library Road  
Pittsburgh, PA 15234