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Ohio School Psychologists Association
Written Interested Party Testimony on SB 1
House Workforce and Higher Education Committee
Rachel Chilton, OSPA Executive Director

Chairman Young, Vice Chair Ritter, Ranking Member Piccolantonio and members of the House Workforce and Higher Education Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide written testimony on SB 1. My name is Rachel Chilton and I am executive director of the Ohio School Psychologists Association, which represents more than 900 school psychologists in Ohio schools and school psychology trainees in higher education institutions. We have strong concerns with SB 1 because of its impact on the multicultural competency of faculty and graduates.

In order for school psychology programs to be accredited, and thus their graduate students eligible for an Ohio school psychology license, programs must be approved by the National Association of School Psychologists. The NASP requirements for approval protect the welfare of children, youth, and families by ensuring competently trained school psychologists. Among those requirements is NASP Training Domain 8: Equitable Practices for Diverse Student Populations.

Educators are required to serve all students. We know that when school psychologists work in our schools they will encounter a multifaceted student body. It is important they are prepared to serve students from all backgrounds and of all identities to ensure those children receive the correct supports for academic achievement. Coursework covering diverse student populations is essential to prepare graduating school psychologists for this work.

NASP Domain 8 ensures school psychologists have “knowledge of individual differences, abilities, disabilities, and other diverse characteristics and of the impact they have on development and learning.” It also ensures the study of research related to diversity of religion, culture, race, socioeconomic status and other variables in children, families and communities. This allows school psychologists to utilize evidence-based strategies to enhance services in the general education classroom and in special education for students from these different backgrounds.



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To meet this Domain 8 requirement, Ohio school psychology programs require a standalone DEI course while also incorporating the concept into other coursework. By eliminating all DEI programs and trainings, Senate Bill 1 would deny university faculty the competency necessary to prepare students on this topic, thus jeopardizing program accreditation. The result would be graduates unqualified to seek a license in Ohio because their program was unaccredited.

Additionally, some school psychologists are trained at the doctoral level and these programs are accredited by the American Psychological Association, which has similar DEI requirements. The goal of those APA requirements is “essentially ensuring trainees understand and can work with individuals from various cultural identities without perpetuating bias or discrimination.” Those graduates would also be unable to obtain a license if in an unaccredited program.

Ohio is already facing a school psychologist shortage and has been for at least a decade. Losing the ability to license our own graduates would decimate the pipeline of new practitioners coming into our schools. The university programs would be unable to recruit candidates from other states, and aspiring school psychologists in Ohio would flee to programs elsewhere. Without school psychologists, Ohio schools would be unable to meet the needs of students with disabilities, leading to a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the loss of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act dollars.

We ask that you please reconsider this legislation because of the catastrophic effect it would have on any number of higher education programs, not just school psychology. Thank you for your consideration.