

January 11, 2008

Hon. Anthony Portantino
State Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

AB 497: OPPOSE
Assembly Education Committee
January 16, 2008

Dear Assembly Member Portantino:

The California Association of School Psychologists (CASP) has reviewed your AB 497 and must respectfully take a position of opposition to the bill.

AB 497 will shorten the timeline (from 60 to 30 days) for a pupil who is placed in a level 12, 13, 14, or 15 classification in a group home or community treatment facility to complete their Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and to determine eligibility.

CASP must oppose this bill for several reasons. First, this legislation goes beyond the requirements of the federal IDEA requirements 2004. Making this change would require a much shorter timeline that is reasonable. While CASP would like to see all students assessed as early as possible, given the current level of resources at the district and SELPA level, shortening this timeline is not reasonable. Additionally, the language of the bill seems to eliminate the current grace period allowed in the summer. If this is the case, it means that districts would have to pay for staff to be available in the summer months in case a new facility is created.

Respectfully, CASP must oppose AB 497 because of the mandated costs and that fact that the bill exceeds federal law. Given the current budget shortfall California is facing adding this level of new cost is something we must oppose.

If you would like to discuss this issue further please contact our legislative advocate, Jeff Frost, at (916) 447-8420.

Sincerely,



Suzanne Fisher
CASP Executive Director

cc: Assembly Education Committee members

