



Date

RE: College Equity Act (H.R.2006)/ OR your own state's proposed bill

Dear (Legislator),

The recent college admissions scandal has caused many of us in the college admissions consulting profession to take a closer look at how we self-regulate our industry. The many membership organizations to which independent educational consultants belong all vet their applicants by requiring them to visit a minimum number of colleges and provide guidance in placing a minimum number of students in college. Upon documentation and verification of these criteria, the applicant is accepted as a member of these organizations.

However, none of these associations require an applicant to demonstrate their knowledge of colleges or their ability to advise students. It is because of this lack of ability to accurately assess the quality of educational consultant that the American Institute of Certified Educational Planners (AICEP), the only certifying body for educational consultants, was created.

Twenty years ago, the field of educational consulting was in its infancy. Yet, a small group of conscientious independent educational consultants and school-based counselors recognized the need to self-regulate this growing profession. Criteria were developed to assess a person's knowledge of colleges and how they apply their understanding of a student's needs and desires to finding "right fit" colleges for a student.

Stringent requirements for certification were developed, and becoming a Certified Educational Planner (CEP) through AICEP has become the industry standard for demonstrating the highest level of competence in the profession. To attain this certification, applicants must pass a rigorous Board Certified examination that requires the applicant to "show what you know." Eligibility requirements for the examination include:

- Possession of a master's degree or higher in a relevant field (or demonstrate extensive comparable experience)
- Have substantial experience in the profession (typically 5-7 years)
- Have continued their professional development through conferences, workshops, webinars, and institutes
- Demonstrate professional commitment through membership and leadership in relevant associations
- Contribute to the profession through mentoring, speaking engagements, articles, and volunteer commitments
- Have conducted evaluative visits to a minimum of 30 appropriate educational institutions in the last few years
- Pledge adherence to the AICEP Principles of Good Practice

To retain the credential, the CEP must be recertified every five years by:

- Conducting a minimum of 75 evaluative visits to appropriate educational institutions during those five years
- Participating in a minimum of 75 hours of continuing professional development during those five years
- Continuing to adhere to the AICEP Principles of Good Practice

AICEP is governed by a host of professionals who serve as Commissioners and who work with students and families. Many currently hold or have held leadership positions in membership organizations and colleges. Among this prestigious group are: Richard Shaw, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid at Stanford University; Keith White and Patrick J. O'Conner, Past-Presidents of the National Association of College Admission Counseling (NACAC); Joseph Bernard, Past-President of the Higher Education Consultants Association (HECA); Michael Spence, Past-President of the Independent Educational Consultants Association (IECA); Steve Syverson, Director of Admissions and Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management at the University of Washington, Bothell; and Steven R. Antonoff, former Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid at the University of Denver and renowned author.

A CEP is an experienced professional who is committed to providing the highest quality of service to students and families. The CEP's primary obligation is to serve each student and client appropriately based upon a professional evaluation of the circumstances and requirements of each individual situation. *The Principles of Good Practice (PGP)* to which all CEPs adhere are designed to promote and maintain the highest standards of professional service and personal conduct among its practitioners. Attestation to the PGP is required for initial and continued certification.

The CEP designation is currently offered to all professionals providing educational planning for students and families in several areas. These include college counselors in the school setting, Independent Educational Consultants (IECs) focusing on college and graduate school admission, IECs focusing on admission to boarding or day schools, and IECs focusing on placement into therapeutic schools and programs.

For additional information, please visit the AICEP website at www.AICEP.org.

Respectfully,

(Name and contact info of Certified Educational Planner)