



June 18, 2026

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the Michigan Behavior Analysis Providers Association (MiBAP), I write to respectfully urge your support for House Bill 5044, sponsored by Representative Wendzel. MiBAP represents behavior analysis providers across Michigan committed to ensuring individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities have access to medically necessary, evidence-based care.

HB 5044 is a commonsense, family-centered proposal that addresses a longstanding challenge facing Michigan families: inconsistent access to medically necessary healthcare services during the school day. Across our state, school policies vary widely regarding whether students may receive Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and other prescribed healthcare services while attending school. As a result, families are often forced to choose between their child's education and medically necessary treatment.

No child should have to forgo healthcare to attend school, nor should parents be required to remove their child from the classroom to access treatment prescribed by a licensed healthcare professional.

HB 5044 establishes a clear and reasonable framework that allows schools, families, and healthcare providers to collaborate in supporting student success while maintaining educational integrity. Specifically, the legislation:

- Ensures students can access medically necessary treatment without sacrificing instructional time or participation in school activities.
- Creates statewide consistency so access to healthcare is not dependent on a student's school district or geographic location.
- Supports inclusion by allowing students to receive services in the least restrictive environment alongside their peers.
- Encourages collaboration and communication between schools, families, and licensed healthcare providers.
- Establishes transparent processes for requests, approvals, denials, and appeals.
- Helps reduce unnecessary school absences, family hardship, and costly out-of-district placements.
- Requires no additional state funding and does not mandate schools provide or pay for medical treatment.
- Preserves existing special education responsibilities and does not alter obligations under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

As discussion of HB 5044 continues, we have heard several concerns raised by opponents. We believe these concerns are based largely on misunderstandings regarding the role of medically necessary ABA services in educational settings.

ABA Supports Educational Access Rather Than Interferes

ABA is an evidence-based healthcare service prescribed to address communication, behavior regulation, safety, social functioning, and other barriers that can prevent students from meaningfully participating in school. When students cannot safely or effectively access instruction, educational outcomes suffer. ABA helps remove those barriers and supports student participation, engagement, and success.

ABA Providers Do Not Replace Teachers

Teachers remain the instructional leaders in their classrooms. Licensed behavior analysts and their supervised staff work collaboratively with school personnel, following district policies and classroom expectations. Their role is to support student access and participation—not direct educational programming.

Access Is Not Consistent Across Michigan

While some districts have developed collaborative approaches, many families continue to experience denials, delays, and inconsistent treatment regarding medically necessary services. A student's access to healthcare should not depend on where they live or the policies of an individual district.

HB 5044 Does Not Create New Financial Obligations for Schools

The bill does not require schools to fund, deliver, or reimburse ABA services. Instead, it establishes a process for considering requests for medically necessary treatment and requires approval unless doing so would create an undue burden or fundamentally alter school operations. In many cases, supporting students in their educational environment may reduce long-term costs associated with absenteeism, crisis interventions, and more restrictive placements.

Educational Supports and Medical Treatment Serve Different Purposes

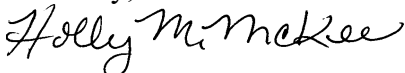
School-based supports such as PBIS, MTSS, IEP services, and behavioral interventions are valuable educational tools. However, they are not medical treatment. ABA prescribed by a healthcare provider addresses clinical needs associated with a medical diagnosis and complements not replaces educational services.

At its core, HB 5044 is about ensuring that Michigan students have equitable access to both education and healthcare. The bill promotes collaboration rather than conflict, consistency rather than uncertainty, and inclusion rather than exclusion.

MiBAP respectfully requests your support and a YES vote on HB 5044. We welcome the opportunity to serve as a resource as this legislation moves through the process and would be pleased to discuss how this proposal can improve outcomes for Michigan students and families.

Thank you for your consideration and your commitment to Michigan's children and families.

Sincerely,



Holly McKee, PhD

Director

MiBAP Office

208 N. Capitol Ave., 3rd Floor

Lansing, MI 48933

269.460.0517

membership@mibap.org