

SPECIALIZED INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL

A K-12 COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION SUPPORT TOOL



School Psychology

School psychology is a specialized area within the field of psychology that includes advanced training in mental health, data analysis and interpretation as related to academic and behavioral functioning at both the group- and individual student level. As vital members of a school's education team, school psychologists apply strategies for positive academic and behavioral outcomes for children within the context of the academic learning environment. School psychologists often assist in developing **system level improvements** intended to reach all students in addition to providing **direct, targeted academic and behavioral health services** to identified students/student groups in need of additional support. School psychologists are trained to deliver services at both the system- and student-level to ensure that all students have access to services, based on need. The proportion of time that school psychologists engage in each area of service is dependent on contextual factors, including the needs of the school, students, families, and community served. Additionally, due to their training in IDEA evaluation and identification, shortages in providers may result in school psychologists having to prioritize certain services types over others to meet federal and state special education requirements. Within a comprehensive model of service delivery, school psychological services include: System level services include:

- Lead teams in designing and implementing school-wide universal screening systems and using data to guide core (academic and behavioral) instruction and to help identify students at-risk
- Lead efforts to implement school-wide progress monitoring practices (routine checks of student proficiency to verify growth)
- Collaborate with family members and other professionals who support students at all levels
- Assist school teams in selecting evidence-based interventions and progress monitoring tools matched to student need (including crisis prevention/response protocols)
- Support regular progress monitoring and data reviews, including reviews of treatment integrity
- Consult with school staff to boost understanding and interpretation of progress data to determine if students are making adequate progress and whether intervention changes are needed

Student level services include:

- Develop/deliver small-group interventions to support students' social skills and behavioral health
- Conduct functional behavioral and academic assessments; develop individual support plans for students
- Lead teams that frequently review/interpret data to determine whether individual students should be referred for an evaluation
- Provide individualized IDEA evaluation services, including reporting and interpreting the instructional implications of evaluation results to parents and school staff
- Provide individualized counseling for students with intensive behavioral health needs

PRACTICE MODEL/PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS

Provision of a multi-tiered continuum of prevention and intervention services that are evidence-based, data-driven, and culturally responsive is consistent with the [Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services](#), also known as the NASP Practice Model. It is through this model of practice that the NC Professional School Psychology Standards are derived. The *North Carolina Professional School Psychology Standards, Policy EVAL-025*, serve as a guide for school psychologists as they continually improve their effectiveness. It is imperative for school psychologists to provide services as part of a comprehensive, multidisciplinary team with complementary knowledge, skills, and experiences. The NC School Psychology standards were developed to:

- Guide the development of skills and knowledge inherent to the school psychology profession in the 21st century;
- Provide the focus for schools and districts as they employ, support, monitor, and evaluate their school psychologists; and
- Assist higher education programs in aligning content and requirements of school psychology education curricula with expectations for practice.

One must complete an approved school psychology training program at the advanced level to be a licensed school psychologist in NC. School psychologists are licensed through the NC Department of Public Instruction. Many are also eligible to apply for licensure with the NC Psychology Board to practice psychology in other settings. Those with degrees in another area of psychology must also complete courses required for school psychology specialization to be licensed as a school psychologist.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION AND GROWTH PLANNING

The evaluation process ([NCEES](#)) for evaluating school psychologist implementation of the North Carolina Professional School Psychology Standards is similar to that of other licensed school personnel. The evaluation rubric is based on the professional school psychology standards and designed to encourage professional growth. Tools to assist administrators with school psychologist evaluation can be found on the [NCEES Information and Resource page](#).

**Recommended School
Psychologist-to-Student Ratio
1:500**



**You can find the NCDPI School
Psychology web pages at:**
<https://ncschoolpsychology.med.unc.edu/>

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