National Association of School Psychologists

Professional Growth Committee

Procedures and Implementation Guidelines for the NASP-Approved Provider System

Revised March, 2017

A. NASP's Professional Development Program

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), founded in 1969 as a not-for-profit organization, is the world's largest professional association of school psychologists. NASP's guidelines for professional development for school psychologists were first adopted by the Executive Council in January 1992 and published in the booklet, *Continuing Professional Development Program*. Subsequently, the guidelines have been revised numerous times leading to the most current version. For those holding the NCSP credential, the guidelines address approved activity categories, credit allowances, and required documentation for the triennial renewal of the NCSP. Although the title now emphasizes the necessity of professional development for NCSPs, the publication continues to assert NASP's guidelines on professional development for *all* school psychologists regardless of NCSP status.

NASP recognizes all school psychologists have an obligation to grow professionally. School psychologists seek to remain current regarding developments in research, graduate preparation, and professional practices that benefit children, families, and schools. Each school psychologist must participate in professional development activities as required by the credentialing agency of the state in which he or she practices. Each Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) must also attain 75 hours of continuing professional development (CPD) every three years in order to maintain NCSP status. Continuing professional development hours can be earned through a variety of activities, including workshops, conferences, inservice training, college or university courses, authorship, leadership activities and self-study programs.

In April 2005, NASP's professional development guidelines were further defined with the establishment of the NASP-Approved Provider program. The purpose of the NASP-Approved Provider program is to promote NASP's professional standards, to assist school psychologists in accessing high-quality professional development activities that will enhance their professional growth, and to recognize other organizations that adopt NASP guidelines for the provision of professional development activities. By seeking professional development from NASP-Approved Providers, school psychologists will be assured the activities meet NASP standards for professional development. The approved provider application and two-year renewal processes help ensure appropriate instructional level, content, documentation, and administrative practices. However, it is the responsibility of the individual school psychologist to evaluate whether a given activity is appropriate for meeting his or her own professional development needs.

B. Types of NASP-Approved Providers

NASP itself and NASP-approved graduate education programs are regarded as de facto approved providers of continuing professional development. In addition, the following types of organizations may apply to become NASP-Approved Providers:

1. International, state, regional, and local associations of school psychologists
2. School psychology graduate education programs that are not yet NASP approved
3. School districts, colleges, and universities
4. Related national professional associations and organizations
5. Public agencies, private organizations, and qualified individuals

These five types of approved providers must submit an initial application for approval (see Section D below) and then submit an Update Form and supporting documentation every two years to document continued compliance with APS guidelines. NASP-Approved graduate programs need not submit an application form, though must follow the procedural guidelines

described below in order to provide NASP-Approved CPD for any sponsored activity.

C. Responsibilities of the NASP-Approved Provider

Providing high-quality professional development for school psychologists requires effective administrative support and program management. When applying to become a NASP-Approved Provider, organizations or individuals must document that they:

1. Have designated an individual to coordinate their professional development program and be responsible for compliance with NASP professional development standards and Approved Provider System procedures

2. Involve school psychologists in needs assessment and all other aspects of their program planning for school psychologists

3. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, provide accommodations to program participants who have physical disabilities or sensory impairments

4. Make available to participants a written procedure for addressing any participant complaints in a timely and responsive manner and a cancellation and refund policy

5. Accurately describe in promotional materials the nature of the professional development activity with regard to target audience, learning objectives, schedule, instructional format, instructor credentials, contact hours, and fees

6. Disclose to potential participants any commercial support for professional development activities and any potential conflicts of interest on the part of the provider or its presenters, including any commercial interest in tests, instructional materials, or other products to be discussed

7. Utilize a cosponsorship agreement when appropriate

D. Application Process

Applications for the Approved Provider System may be submitted at any time. As described in the instructions, applications may be submitted electronically. In order to be considered, the application must be complete and include the nonrefundable application fee (if applicable). Applicants should be certain that they meet all criteria for becoming approved providers before submitting their application (see Section C, above). *Efforts will be made to provide a response within 6–8 weeks following receipt of the application.*

When reviews have been completed, applications can be:

Approved: When approved, a provider will receive a NASP-Approved Provider identification number, which must appear on the attendance verification forms that are issued to participants. Approved providers will be listed on the NASP website along with links to their webpages.

Conditionally Approved: Providers receiving conditional approval will be asked to submit a status update describing how they have addressed issues that resulted in conditional status within six (6) months of notification of conditional approval. Upon receiving approval, these providers would complete the Update Form based on the date of their *initial* review. Providers receiving conditional approval will also receive a NASP-Approved Provider identification number.

Not Approved: Applicants denied approval may appeal the decision as described below (Section E).

E. Appeal Process

Decisions to deny approval of an application will be explained in a letter. Applicants have 30 days from the postmark on the notification letter to submit an appeal to the Chair of the NASP Professional Growth Committee. The appeal should include additional documentation addressing the issues raised by the review committee in its letter denying approval. *Applicants will be notified of the results of their appeal within six weeks of its receipt.* If, following this review, the Chair upholds the previous decision, the applicant may make an appeal to the NASP Board of Directors by contacting the NASP President.

F. Maintenance of Approved Provider Status

Following initial approval, NASP-Approved Providers submit an Update Form electronically along with a maintenance fee of $100 every two years. Continued approval is contingent on approval by the NASP Professional Growth Committee through a formal renewal process. Providers may choose to discontinue approved provider status at any time by providing written notice to the NASP Professional Growth Chair.

Each approved provider will be placed into a specified renewal cycle, with either April 1st or October 1st as the submission dates. The renewal cycle and year assigned to each provider will be based upon the date of initial approval. For example, if a provider submits an application February 5, 2017, they would be asked to submit an Update Form by April 1, 2019.

Beginning April, 2017, providers that have had *two (2) consecutive successful renewals* may request in writing to extend their renewal period to every three (3) years. The request can *only be made following a forthcoming successful renewal* after April, 2017.

The Update Form will be e-mailed at least 6 weeks prior to the renewal date. Providers should complete and return the form with the required documentation and the $100 maintenance fee before their renewal date. Providers that do not submit Update Forms by the assigned deadline will be considered as expired until the Update Forms are received and reviewed. Required documentation will include:

1. A list of all activities presented in the previous year with date, title, and number of attendees, along with the number of [domains](#) (see Section I) corresponding to program content
2. A description of any anticipated changes in the professional development program since the date of last approval (administrative and/or content related)
3. Documents associated with professional development activities (e.g., program announcements and registration forms, program brochures, evaluation forms, summary of evaluations, and how you intend to use evaluations to plan future professional development activities)
4. Response to issues or recommendations related to a prior application review

Providers will be notified of any concerns raised by their Update Form and asked to address those concerns. A time line for addressing concerns will be determined on a case-by-case basis. *Efforts will be made to provide a response to the Update Form within 4–6 weeks following receipt.*

Because of their accountability to the NASP Program Approval Board, NASP-approved graduate education programs are *not* required to submit the Update Form or maintenance fee.

G. Fees

Initial Application fee: This $400 fee is paid at the time of initial application. *This fee is waived for NASP-affiliated state associations only* and not required from NASP-approved graduate education programs. Regional or local school psychology associations and affiliates of state associations must pay the fee for initial review.

Maintenance fee: The maintenance fee for NASP-Approved Providers is $100 and is due every two years with the Update Form. This fee is not required from NASP-approved graduate education programs, though is required for all other providers, including NASP-affiliated state associations.

The NASP Professional Growth Committee reserves the right to change these fees at any time, and will provide timely written notice to all approved providers if a fee change becomes necessary.

H. NASP Guidelines for CPD Activities

NASP-Approved Providers do not require approval from NASP for each activity they offer to school psychologists. Providers must determine which activities offered by their organization or institution meet the current guidelines. All of the following guidelines *must be met* to grant approved CPD credit to school psychologists for a particular activity:

1. The activity must fall within an approved content area (See Section I).
2. The activity's instructional level must be appropriate for credentialed school psychologists.
3. The activity must enhance school psychologists' professional knowledge, competencies, and/or skills.
4. The activity must have stated learning objectives related to one or more of the approved content areas.
5. The activity must be one hour or more in duration.
6. Instructors must have training and/or experience that qualifies them to be considered experts in the subject matter being taught.
7. The provider and instructors comply with guidelines regarding financial conflict of interest disclosure. (see Section C-6)
8. The provider must verify attendance and provide documentation of attendance. Attendees must attend the activity in its entirety to receive documentation of attendance. Partial credit is not given.[1] A post-test for asynchronous online sessions is required, but is not sufficient to verify attendance.
9. The provider requires participants to complete evaluations of the activity, including the extent to which learning objectives are met.
10. The activity is not a business meeting, professional committee meeting, administrative meeting, or a presentation intended primarily for a lay audience.
11. The activity is conducted in compliance with NASP *Principles for Professional Ethics*

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[1] Approved providers should exercise professional judgement in granting flexibility to this particular requirement.

I. Approved Content Areas

NASP-Approved Providers' professional development activities should address one or more of the following professional practices. Comprehensive descriptions and examples of these professional practices are included in the NASP *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services (2010)*.

Practices That Permeate All Aspects of Service Delivery

Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability

School psychologists have knowledge of varied models and methods of assessment and data collection methods for identifying strengths and needs, developing effective services and programs, and measuring progress and outcomes. As part of a systematic and comprehensive process of effective decision making and problem solving that permeates all aspects of service delivery, school psychologists demonstrate skills to use psychological and educational assessment, data collection strategies, and technology resources and apply results to design, implement, and evaluate response to services and programs.

Consultation and Collaboration

School psychologists have knowledge of varied models and strategies of consultation, collaboration, and communication applicable to individuals, families, groups, and systems and methods to promote effective implementation of services. As part of a systematic and comprehensive process of effective decision making and problem solving that permeates all aspects of service delivery, school psychologists demonstrate skills to consult, collaborate, and communicate effectively with others.

Direct and Indirect Services for Children, Families, and Schools: Student-Level Services

Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills

School psychologists have knowledge of biological, cultural, and social influences on academic skills; human learning, cognitive, and developmental processes; and evidence-based curricula and instructional strategies. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to use assessment and data collection methods and to implement and evaluate services that support cognitive and academic skills.

Interventions and Mental Health Services to Develop Social and Life Skills

School psychologists have knowledge of biological, cultural, developmental, and social influences on behavior and mental health, behavioral and emotional impacts on learning and life skills, and evidence-based strategies to promote social–emotional functioning and mental health. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to use assessment and data-collection methods and to implement and evaluate services that support socialization, learning, and mental health.

Direct and Indirect Services for Children, Families, and Schools: Systems-Level Services

School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning

School psychologists have knowledge of school and systems structure, organization, and theory; general and special education; technology resources; and evidence-based school

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practices that promote learning and mental health. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to develop and implement practices and strategies to create and maintain effective and supportive learning environments for children and others.

Preventive and Responsive Services

School psychologists have knowledge of principles and research related to resilience and risk factors in learning and mental health, services in schools and communities to support multitiered prevention, and evidence-based strategies for effective crisis response. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to promote services that enhance learning, mental health, safety, and physical well-being through protective and adaptive factors and to implement effective crisis preparation, response, and recovery.

Family–School Collaboration Services

School psychologists have knowledge of principles and research related to family systems, strengths, needs, and culture; evidence-based strategies to support family influences on children's learning and mental health; and strategies to develop collaboration between families and schools. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to design, implement, and evaluate services that promote family and school partnerships, as well as interactions with community agencies, to enhance academic and social–behavioral outcomes for children.

Foundations of School Psychological Service Delivery

Diversity in Development and Learning

School psychologists have knowledge of individual differences, abilities, disabilities, and other diverse characteristics; principles and research related to diversity factors for children, families, and schools, including factors related to culture, context, and individual and role differences; and evidence-based strategies to enhance services and address potential influences related to diversity. School psychologists demonstrate skills to provide effective professional services that promote effective functioning for individuals, families, and schools with diverse characteristics, cultures, and backgrounds and across multiple contexts, with recognition that an understanding and respect for diversity in development and learning and advocacy for social justice are foundations for all aspects of service delivery.

Research and Program Evaluation

School psychologists have knowledge of research design, statistics, measurement, varied data collection and analysis techniques, and program evaluation sufficient for understanding research and interpreting data in applied settings. School psychologists demonstrate skills to evaluate and apply research as a foundation for service delivery and, in collaboration with others, use various techniques and technology resources for data collection, measurement, and analysis to support effective practices at the individual, group, and/or systems levels.

Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice

School psychologists have knowledge of the history and foundations of school psychology; multiple service models and methods; ethical, legal, and professional standards; and other factors related to professional identity and effective practice as a school psychologist. School psychologists demonstrate skills to provide services consistent with ethical, legal, and professional standards; engage in responsive ethical and professional decision-making; collaborate with other professionals; and apply professional work characteristics needed for effective practice as a school psychologist, including respect for human diversity and social justice, communication skills, effective interpersonal skills, responsibility, adaptability,

initiative, dependability, and technology skills.

In addition to demonstrating that they provide content within these broad domains of graduate education and practice, applicants for NASP-Approved Provider status may be asked to justify the appropriateness of any specific program content.

J. Types of Professional Development Activities

NASP recognizes [many types of activities](#) as appropriate for school psychologists' professional development including, for example, supervision of graduate students and professional organization leadership. However, NASP-Approved Providers may *only* grant approved CPD credit for:

- Workshops, conferences, and convention sessions

- Real-time, online activities such as "Webinars" or "Live Webcasts" which permit interaction with the presenter or other participants

- Asynchronous (i.e., not live or in real time),multimedia or online self-study, which typically features audio and/or video presentations, synchronized PowerPoint slides, downloadable handouts, links to supplemental information, and opportunities to interact with the presenter via e-mail or other means. Online self-study *must have a posttest to assess learning* (See Section K, Program Evaluation). Additionally, providers must ensure full participation, similar to monitoring live presentations, in order for asynchronous offerings to be eligible for NASP CPD (see Section H, item 8).

Providers are responsible for ensuring that all activities for which approved CPD credit is granted, regardless of delivery format, meet *all* program guidelines included in this document, especially those listed in Section H, with particular attention to item 8. Questions regarding the appropriateness of an activity or product for approved CPD credit should be directed to the Chair of the Professional Growth Committee.

K. Program Evaluation

NASP-Approved Providers evaluate *all* professional development activities to determine participant satisfaction and the extent to which learning objectives are met. Evaluation results should be used to improve the professional development program, guide future planning, and provide feedback to the facilitator. Evaluations of participant satisfaction should, at a minimum, include questions about the setting and the instructor's knowledge and teaching effectiveness. Assessments of participants' learning typically comprise questions on evaluation forms regarding learning objectives. Providers may use additional assessment methods, including posttests when appropriate.

Asynchronous professional development activities (i.e., not in real time or without opportunity for immediate interaction) are considered as "self-study." These activities (e.g., pre-recorded webinar) require completion of a posttest by the participant to assess learning, in addition to an evaluation of the activity. The posttest should be of sufficient detail and depth (*minimum* of 8 questions for a one hour session; 16 questions for 3 hours or more) to assess participants' level of learning. Approved providers must specify a passing grade criterion for these posttests (suggested minimum 75% accuracy). **Use of a post-test is *not* considered sufficient as a method of participation or attendance for asynchronous CPD** *(see section H.8)*. Section J. outlines the types of activities that qualify for NASP-approved CPD. Again, all other procedural guidelines must also be met to issue NASP-approved CPD, including methods to ensure full participation and engagement.

When approved CPD credit is offered for selected sessions at a convention or conference, each session must be evaluated separately.

For conferences that have multiple workshops and presentations, please identify which meet criteria for NASP-approved CPD hours. Providers wishing to offer documentation of attendance for an entire conference may use the Convention Form.

Approved providers must maintain evidence of the evaluation results (e.g., sample evaluation forms, summary of evaluation data) for a four-year period.

L. Documentation of Participation in CPD Activities

NASP-Approved Providers are required to provide documentation of participation to each participant in a timely manner, but are not expected to send such documentation to NASP. Participants should be reminded to keep the original documentation for use in renewing the NCSP and state credentials. Approved providers are expected to keep a roster of participants for a four-year period to be able to verify a school psychologist's participation in an activity.

Documentation of approved CPD credit for most activities should be in the form of a letter on the approved provider's letterhead that includes the following information: title of the activity, presenter, date, credit hours awarded, and approved provider statement (with the provider's number). *NASP-approved programs do not have provider numbers, and therefore do not need to include a provider number.* Documentation should *not* use the term "certificate" designating competence in specific skill areas unless the provider actually evaluates and intends to document competence.[2]

M. Awarding Approved CPD Credit

One hour of approved CPD credit is granted for each contact hour of participation. Contact hours are defined as the actual number of clock hours spent as a learner in direct participation in a structured educational format.[3] When calculating CPD credit, time spent in breaks and social activities should be deducted. Total actual contact time for the activity must be one hour or more in duration to receive credit. Assuming activities are at least one hour in total, providers can include portions of a full hour, rounding to the nearest quarter of an hour. Approved CPD credit should be awarded only to those participants who attend the *entire* activity and complete an evaluation form.

Workshops. Upon completion of the activity (and an evaluation), each participant should be given documentation of his or her participation. A separate form should be used for each activity. For example, if an activity includes a keynote session (of at least one hour duration) and two break-out sessions, separate evaluations should be completed for each session, and separate documentation would be provided for each of the three activities.

Conference and Convention Sessions. Providers are responsible for ensuring that each session for which approved CPD credit will be granted meets the guidelines in Section H. Conference participant self-documentation of attendance is not sufficient for issuing NASP-approved CPD credit.

Multimedia/Online Self-Study. Approved CPD credit is provided only for actual instructional time.

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[2] View our sample materials

[3] Providers should not use the term "Continuing Education Unit" (CEU) when referring to their programs. A CEU is sometimes considered equivalent to 10 contact hours or 10 continuing education credits.

For asynchronous online self-study, providers should have a method for determining the appropriate amount of credit. This type of activity requires a posttest (See Section K. Program Evaluation) as well as a viable method of ensuring participation and engagement. Credit must not be granted until the test is completed at a passing level and all other guidelines have been met.

N. Advertising NASP-Approved Provider Status

When providers advertise their NASP-Approved Provider status in promotional materials, they should include the following statement:

> (Provider's name) is approved by the National Association of School Psychologists to offer professional development for school psychologists. (Provider's name) maintains responsibility for the program."

Providers may adapt this statement as needed to include other organizations for which they are also an approved provider of professional development activities. NASP-Approved Providers may use the NASP Approved Provider logo (subject to NASP policies on the use of the logo) when promoting their activities as providers of professional development.

O. Graduate Education Programs

NASP-Approved school psychology graduate education programs are automatically considered NASP-Approved Providers. Other school psychology graduate education programs without NASP approval may apply for this status. These approvals, however, do not apply to the entire college or university in which the program is located. Graduate education programs may collaborate with other departments to cosponsor professional development activities for school psychologists as discussed below but must be responsible for ensuring that all such activities are in compliance with the guidelines described in this document.

School psychology graduate education programs may not "share" their NASP-Approved Provider status with organizations outside the university, but may cosponsor activities with those organizations as discussed below.

P. Cosponsorship

When cosponsoring a professional development activity, NASP-Approved Providers maintain full responsibility for the activity while collaborating with one or more organizations to provide approved CPD credit for school psychologists. Cosponsorship is appropriate when it enables organizations to share financial, administrative, instructional, and other resources in a combined effort to offer high-quality professional development.

The NASP-Approved Provider must have a prior written agreement with the cosponsor that includes:

1. Clarification of the responsibilities of each organization, including financial, administrative, instructional, and others.
2. Involvement of the approved provider in all aspects of program planning. A cosponsorship relationship must be established *prior to* the planning stages of an activity.
3. The approved provider must ensure that the NASP *Principles for Professional Ethics* are upheld.
4. In cases where each organization is NASP-approved, there must be written documentation regarding which organization will accept and maintain responsibility for various aspects of the activity.

Cosponsorship requires mutually planning an activity. Cosponsorship is not to be construed as lending or transferring approval status. It does not permit the NASP-Approved Provider to act as an "approval body" by reviewing a program or organization and then stating that it is, in turn, approved by NASP. A NASP-Approved Provider must assume the same responsibilities and liabilities when cosponsoring an activity as if they were the sole provider. Cosponsored programs must fulfill professional development objectives and meet all criteria as set forth in this document.

Q. Resolution of Issues and Problems

NASP's Professional Growth Chair may investigate any complaints made in writing by participants in programs offered by approved providers. The chair may contact the approved provider in writing for information. The identity of the complainant will not be revealed. The provider will have 30 days to respond to the inquiry letter.

If the chair determines the provider has acted in a manner not consistent with NASP's policies and procedures, the chair may place the provider on probation or terminate its approved provider status. The complainant will be notified in writing of the decision. Providers whose approved provider status has been terminated may appeal that decision to the NASP Board of Directors by contacting the NASP President.

An approved provider may be placed on probation if goals, planning, administration, evaluation, or other procedures are inconsistent with those described in the current NASP-Approved Provider policies and guidelines, or if the professional development activities fall below acceptable standards of quality. The reasons for probation, as well as the date by which the deficiency (or deficiencies) must be rectified, will be specified in a written report to the provider. The provider must produce evidence of compliance with the requirement(s) that were found to be deficient by the specified date. Failure to do so will result in the discontinuance of provider approval. If approval is withdrawn, any fees paid to NASP by the provider will be forfeited.