

# Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists

2010

## INTRODUCTION

The mission of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) is to represent school psychology and support school psychologists to enhance the learning and mental health of all children and youth. NASP's mission is accomplished through identification of appropriate evidence-based education and mental health services for all children; implementation of professional practices that are empirically supported, data driven, and culturally competent; promotion of professional competence of school psychologists; recognition of the essential components of high-quality graduate education and professional development in school psychology; preparation of school psychologists to deliver a continuum of services for children, youth, families, and schools; and advocacy for the value of school psychological services, among other important initiatives.

*School psychologists* provide effective services to help children and youth succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally. School psychologists provide direct educational and mental health services for children and youth, as well as work with parents, educators, and other professionals to create supportive learning and social environments for all children. School psychologists apply their knowledge of both psychology and education during consultation and collaboration with others. They conduct effective decision making using a foundation of assessment and data collection. School psychologists engage in specific services for students, such as direct and indirect interventions that focus on academic skills, learning, socialization, and

mental health. School psychologists provide services to schools and families that enhance the competence and well-being of children, including promotion of effective and safe learning environments, prevention of academic and behavior problems, response to crises, and improvement of family–school collaboration. The key foundations for all services by school psychologists are understanding of diversity in development and learning; research and program evaluation; and legal, ethical, and professional practice. All of these components and their relationships are depicted in Appendix A, a graphic representation of a national model for comprehensive and integrated services by school psychologists. School psychologists are credentialed by state education agencies or other similar state entities that have the statutory authority to regulate and establish credentialing requirements for professional practice within a state. School psychologists typically work in public or private schools or other educational contexts.

The NASP *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists* are designed to be used with the NASP *Standards for the Credentialing of School Psychologists*, *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services*, and *Principles for Professional Ethics* to provide a unified set of national principles that guide graduate education, credentialing, professional practices, and ethical behavior of effective school psychologists. These NASP policy documents are intended to define contemporary school psychology; promote school psychologists' services for children, families, and schools; and provide a foundation for the future of school psychology. These NASP policy documents are used to communicate NASP's positions and advocate for qualifications and practices of school

psychologists with stakeholders, policy makers, and other professional groups at the national, state, and local levels.

The NASP *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists* contribute to the development of effective school psychology services by identifying critical graduate education experiences and competencies needed by candidates preparing for careers as school psychologists. *Graduate education of school psychologists occurs through specialist level or doctoral level programs of study in school psychology, as defined in these standards.* In addition to providing guidance to graduate programs, the NASP graduate preparation standards are intended to serve as a national model that assists state education agencies and other state and national agencies for establishing standards for school psychologists' graduate education. It is important to note that the NASP graduate preparation standards are official *policy* documents of the association and, as national guiding principles for graduate preparation, provide statements about program structure and content that reflect NASP's expectations for high quality in *all* graduate education programs in school psychology.<sup>1</sup>

## **NASP STANDARDS FOR GRADUATE PREPARATION OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS**

### **I. School Psychology Program Context/Structure**

Graduate education in school psychology is delivered within the context of a comprehensive program framework based on clear goals and objectives and a

sequential, integrated course of study in which human diversity is emphasized. Graduate education develops candidates' strong affiliation with school psychology, is delivered by qualified faculty, and includes substantial coursework and supervised field experiences necessary for the preparation of competent school psychologists whose services positively impact children, families, schools, and other consumers. In addition to specialist- and/or doctoral-level programs of study, a school psychology program that offers opportunities for respecialization, retraining, and other alternative approaches to credentialing as a school psychologist ensures that program requirements are consistent with NASP graduate preparation standards.

The following elements are apparent in the school psychology program:

- 1.1 The school psychology program is composed of integrated and comprehensive philosophy/mission, goals, objectives, program of study, and supervised practice, as reflected in the following:
  - Clear identification as a “school psychology program” and communication of a program framework or model, in which its philosophy/mission is represented in explicit goals and objectives for school psychology competencies that candidates are expected to attain and in which human diversity is emphasized
  - An integrated, sequential program of study and supervised field experiences that are based on the program's philosophy/mission, goals, and objectives and consistent across candidates<sup>2 3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The NASP *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists* also will be a foundation for NASP's program review and approval/national recognition procedures for specialist and doctoral level programs in school psychology. However, a separate document, *NASP Criteria for Graduate Program Review and Approval* (in preparation), will outline the framework for program review and approval, requirements for materials submitted by school psychology programs for NASP review, and criteria for evaluation. For those programs in units accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), NASP serves as one of the specialized professional associations (SPAs) that conducts program reviews as a part of the NCATE process. NCATE accredits units (e.g., schools of education), not programs, but does provide “national recognition” status (full or with conditions) to approved programs in NCATE-accredited units. As such, the *NASP Criteria for Graduate Program Review and Approval* document will be applied in NCATE reviews 18 months after the document is approved by NCATE (pending approval by NCATE; approval tentatively scheduled for October 2010). In order to provide all school psychology programs with access to the NASP review process and potentially to national approval/national recognition, NASP also conducts reviews of specialist and doctoral level school psychology programs that are not in NCATE units and that submit materials for review by NASP on a voluntary basis. The *NASP Criteria for Graduate Program Review and Approval* document will be found on the NASP website at <http://www.nasponline.org/>.

<sup>2</sup>If the school psychology program grants recognition of prior graduate courses and/or field experiences taken by candidates before entry into the program, the program applies systematic evaluation procedures and criteria to ensure *equivalency* between prior courses/field experiences and program requirements and *consistency* across required program coursework and field experiences for candidates.

<sup>3</sup>An integrated, sequential program of study and supervised practice in school psychology is a planned sequence of related courses and field experiences designed according to the program's philosophy/mission, goals, and objectives. Course prerequisites, a required program sequence, and/or similar methods ensure that all candidates complete the program in a consistent, systematic, sequential manner. In addition to requiring a program of study for candidate attainment of primary knowledge and skill areas, the program may offer options for specializations or electives in specific competencies.

- Full-time, part-time, and/or alternative types of enrollment that provide multiple and systematic opportunities through coursework, supervised practice, and other comprehensive program activities for candidates to establish professional identity as school psychologists and develop an affiliation with colleagues and faculty<sup>4</sup>
  - Use of systematic, performance-based evaluation and accountability procedures to improve the quality of the program
- 1.2 Graduate preparation in the school psychology program is designed, delivered, and assessed by highly qualified faculty members who primarily are school psychologists,<sup>5 6</sup> as demonstrated by the following:
- Faculty who are designated specifically as school psychology program faculty members and total at least three full-time equivalents (FTEs)
  - At least two school psychology program faculty members (including the program administrator) who hold doctoral degrees with specialization in school psychology and are actively engaged in school psychology (e.g., possess state and/or national credentials as school psychologists; have experience as school psychologists; participate in professional associations of school psychologists; contribute to research, scholarly publications, and presentations in school psychology)
- Other school psychology program faculty members, as relevant for the program, who hold doctoral degrees in psychology, education, or closely related disciplines with specializations supportive of their graduate preparation responsibilities in the program
- 1.3 SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY SPECIALIST-LEVEL PROGRAMS ONLY: The specialist-level program of study in school psychology consists of the following:
- A minimum of 3 years of full-time study at the graduate level, or the equivalent if part-time
  - At least 60 graduate semester hours or the equivalent, with at least 54 hours exclusive of credit for the supervised specialist-level internship experience<sup>7</sup>
  - Institutional documentation of school psychology specialist-level program completion provided to graduates<sup>8 9</sup>
- 1.4 SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY DOCTORAL-LEVEL PROGRAMS ONLY: The doctoral level

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<sup>4</sup> Examples of program activities include candidate attendance at program/department seminars; participation with other candidates and faculty in professional organization meetings; participation in ongoing research, program development, outreach, or service activities; and similar activities in school psychology that promote candidates' professional identity as school psychologists and affiliation with colleagues and faculty.

<sup>5</sup> School psychology program faculty members are those designated for primary teaching, supervisory, and/or administrative responsibilities in the program and who participate in comprehensive program development and mentorship activities, including ongoing decision-making, planning, and evaluation processes. Program faculty may hold full-time or part-time assignments in the program, but ongoing participation in a number of comprehensive program activities is a key factor. In contrast, other faculty may contribute to the program only by teaching a course(s) or by participating in another limited activity(s), for example, on a limited adjunct, affiliated, or related basis. In addition, Standard 1.2 does not preclude candidates taking courses or participating in experiences offered by other programs or departments, as defined and limited in the school psychology program's required, sequential course of study and field experiences.

<sup>6</sup> Faculty shortages in school psychology programs have been a concern nationally. School psychology programs are encouraged to advocate with their administrators and engage in other activities to ensure that Standard 1.2 is addressed to the greatest extent possible.

<sup>7</sup> Graduate semester hours are units of graduate credit based on a semester course schedule. In cases in which a quarter schedule is used, three quarter hours equals two semester hours. Thus, 90 quarter hours of credit are essentially equivalent to 60 semester hours. Programs that utilize other credit system (e.g., trimester credits, unit credits) provide candidates with institution policy regarding their equivalency to a semester hour system.

<sup>8</sup> Institutional documentation of program completion is "official" documentation provided by the higher education institution (or by a unit of the institution) that an individual has completed the *entire required course of study in the school psychology program at the specialist or doctoral level, including the internship*. Institutional documentation is typically in the form of a degree or diploma, certificate of advanced graduate studies, transcript notation indicating program completion, or similar official documentation of completion of the entire school psychology program.

<sup>9</sup> Various types of institutional documentation may be used to recognize "specialist level" program completion in school psychology, defined as a program consisting of a minimum of 60 graduate semester hours or the equivalent and including the internship. The following are examples of institutional documentation of specialist level program completion: master's degree requiring 60+ semester hours; master's degree plus certificate of advanced study (e.g., CAS, CAGS) totaling 60+ semester hours; Educational Specialist (EdS) or Psychology Specialist (PsyS) degree requiring 60+ semester hours, etc.

program of study in school psychology<sup>10</sup> consists of the following:

- Greater depth in one or more school psychology competencies identified by the program in its philosophy/mission of doctoral-level preparation and reflected in program goals, objectives, and sequential program of study and supervised practice. (Doctoral programs typically are characterized by advanced competencies in research, and the program may identify additional competencies that address the specific philosophy/mission, goals, and objectives of its doctoral program of study, e.g., greater depth in one or more domains described in Standards 2.1 to 2.10, a practice specialization, supervision or leadership competency, preparation for specialized roles or settings such as research or graduate instruction)
- A minimum of 4 years of full-time study at the graduate level, or the equivalent if part-time
- At least 90 graduate semester hours or the equivalent, with at least 78 hours exclusive of credit for the supervised doctoral internship experience and any terminal doctoral project (e.g., dissertation)<sup>7</sup>
- Institutional documentation of school psychology doctoral-level program completion provided to graduates<sup>8</sup>

1.5 If the school psychology program provides opportunities for respecialization, retraining, or other alternative approaches to prepare candidates for credentialing as school psychologists (e.g., for candidates who hold graduate degrees in related fields and are seeking graduate preparation and credentialing as school psychologists), the program ensures that its requirements for respecialization, retraining, or alternative credentialing approaches are consistent with these NASP graduate preparation standards. The program applies systematic evaluation procedures and criteria to grant recognition of candidates' prior courses/field experiences and to identify additional graduate courses and experiences necessary for candidates to meet school psychology program requirements.<sup>2</sup>

## II. Domains of School Psychology Graduate Education and Practice

School psychologists provide comprehensive and integrated services across 10 general domains of school psychology, as illustrated in Appendix A. The school psychology program ensures that all candidates demonstrate basic professional competencies, including both *knowledge* and *skills*, in the 10 domains of school psychology as a result of their graduate preparation in the program. The 10 domains of school psychology reflect the following principles:

- ◆ School psychologists have a foundation in the knowledge bases for both psychology and education, including theories, models, research, empirical findings, and techniques in the domains, and the ability to explain important principles and concepts.
- ◆ School psychologists use effective strategies and skills in the domains to help students succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally.
- ◆ School psychologists apply their knowledge and skills by creating and maintaining safe, supportive, fair, and effective learning environments and enhancing family–school collaboration for *all* students.
- ◆ School psychologists demonstrate knowledge and skills relevant for professional practices and work characteristics in their field.
- ◆ School psychologists ensure that their knowledge, skills, and professional practices reflect understanding and respect for human diversity and promote effective services, advocacy, and social justice for all children, families, and schools.
- ◆ School psychologists integrate knowledge and professional skills across the 10 domains of school psychology in delivering a comprehensive range of services in professional practice that result in direct, measurable outcomes for children, families, schools, and/or other consumers.

The domains below are highly interrelated and not mutually exclusive and should be reflected across the school psychology program of study and supervised practice. The brief descriptions of domains provided below outline major areas of knowledge and skill, but are not intended to reflect the possible full range of competencies of school psychologists. Appendix A

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<sup>10</sup> Programs are encouraged to provide opportunities for doctoral study for practicing school psychologists and, to the greatest extent possible within the program's objectives and course of study, credit for prior graduate preparation.

represents the 10 domains within a model of comprehensive and integrated services by school psychologists, and Appendix B provides an expanded list of sample areas of knowledge and skills in each domain that the program may find useful in defining expected candidate competencies, consistent with its own goals and objectives. In addition, the NASP (2010) *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services* presents specific school psychology practices and provides more detail about the integrated and comprehensive nature of the 10 domains below.

The 10 domains provide a *general frame of reference for basic competencies* that program graduates should possess when beginning practice as school psychologists. A program is expected to prepare candidates in the 10 domains through coursework and supervised practice and to determine that candidates attain primary competencies in integrating knowledge and skills across the domains. However, graduate preparation in a general foundation of knowledge and skills in the domains does not preclude the program emphasizing specific knowledge and skill areas within domains or preparing candidates in specialized competencies, depending on the program goals and objectives for specialist- and/or doctoral-level education. (As noted in Standard 1.9, doctoral programs in school psychology provide greater depth in one or more school psychology competencies, consistent with the program's philosophy/mission, goals, and objectives). It is emphasized that the *program's own identification of specific candidate competencies in the domains* is necessary and must be relevant for the program's philosophy/mission, goal and objectives, level of graduate preparation (specialist or doctoral level), and expected outcomes in the roles and functions for which candidates are being prepared. Further, it is expected that program graduates will continue to expand their knowledge and skills in the domains through practice, experience, and continuing professional development as school psychologists.

The school psychology program requires courses and other program activities to *address* the knowledge and skills determined by the program to be relevant for the domains. It is not expected that the school psychology program will require a specific course to correspond to each individual domain below. However, it is important that the program implement its own goals and objectives to demonstrate that primary areas of knowledge and skills

in the domains are sufficiently addressed in the required course of study and other activities. The program ensures that graduates are competent to begin professional practice in the roles and functions for which they are being prepared and for which they will be credentialed by state education agencies or other similar state entities.

Further, the school psychology program implements well-designed, valid methods to *assess* the knowledge and skills of candidates and collects assessment data to determine that candidates *attain* adequate competencies in the domains and integrate competencies across domains in delivering a comprehensive range of services.<sup>11</sup> The brief descriptions of knowledge and skill identified below, as well as the examples in Appendix B, are intended to serve only as general guides for the school psychology program. Although the program assesses all candidates' attainment of basic knowledge and skills in the domains and integrated competencies across a range of services, the content of program assessment methods and nature of candidates' attainment of competencies may vary, depending on program goals and objectives, areas of specialization, specialist- or doctoral-level preparation, etc.

The following elements are apparent in the school psychology program:

#### 2.1 Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability

- School psychologists have knowledge of varied 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.

#### 2.2 Consultation and Collaboration

- School psychologists have knowledge of varied methods of consultation, collaboration, and communication applicable to individuals,

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<sup>11</sup> Further guidance regarding the assessment of candidate knowledge and skills is provided in the document, *Guidelines for Performance-Based Assessment and Program Accountability and Development*, located on the NASP website.

families, groups, and systems and used 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 with others during design, implementation, and evaluation of services and programs.

### 2.3 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 curriculum 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.

### 2.4 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.

### 2.5 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 practices that promote academic outcomes, learning, social development, 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.

### 2.6 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 multi-tiered 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.

### 2.7 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, socialization, and mental health; and methods to develop collaboration between families and schools.
- School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to design, implement, and evaluate services that respond to culture and context and facilitate family and school partnership/ interactions with community agencies for enhancement of academic and social-behavioral outcomes for children.

### 2.8 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 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 of all aspects of service delivery.

## 2.9 Research and Program Evaluation

- School psychologists have knowledge of research design, statistics, measurement, varied data collection and analysis techniques, and program evaluation methods 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, analysis, and program evaluation to support effective practices at the individual, group, and/or systems levels.

## 2.10 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 school psychologists.
- 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 school psychologists, including respect for human diversity and social justice, communication skills, effective interpersonal skills, responsibility, adaptability, initiative, dependability, and technology skills.

### III. Practica and Internships in School Psychology

During systematic, comprehensive practica and internship experiences consistent with its goals and objectives, the school psychology program ensures that all candi-

dates demonstrate application of knowledge and professional skills in relevant settings and under conditions of appropriate supervision, evaluation, and support. The school psychology program's practica and internship develop and enhance candidates' skills and professional characteristics needed for effective school psychology service delivery; integration of competencies across the 10 domains of professional preparation and practice outlined in Standards 2.1 to 2.10; and direct, measurable, positive impact on children, families, schools, and other consumers.

The following elements are apparent in the school psychology program:

3.1 The school psychology program requires supervised practica experiences<sup>12</sup> that include the following:

- Completion of practica, for academic credit or otherwise documented by the institution, that are distinct from, precede, and prepare candidates for the school psychology internship
- Specific, required activities and systematic development and evaluation of skills (see Standards 2.1 to 2.10) that are consistent with goals of the program, emphasize human diversity, and are completed in settings relevant to program objectives for development of candidate skills
- Direct oversight by the program to ensure appropriateness of the placement, activities, supervision, and collaboration with the placement sites and practicum supervisors
- Close supervision of candidates by program faculty and qualified practicum supervisors, including appropriate performance-based evaluation, to ensure that candidates are developing professional work characteristics and designated competencies

3.2 The school psychology program requires a comprehensive, supervised, and carefully evaluated internship in school psychology<sup>13 14</sup> that includes the following:

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<sup>12</sup> School psychology practica are closely supervised on-campus and/or field-based activities designed to develop and evaluate school psychology candidates' mastery of specific professional skills consistent with program goals and objectives. Practica activities may be completed as part of separate courses focusing on distinct skills or as part of a more extensive practicum field experience that covers a range of skills. Candidate skill and competency *development*, rather than delivery of professional services, is a primary purpose of practica.

<sup>13</sup> The school psychology internship is a supervised, culminating, comprehensive field experience that is completed prior to the awarding of the degree or other institutional documentation of completion of the specialist or doctoral level program. The internship ensures that school psychology candidates have the opportunity to integrate and apply professional knowledge and skills acquired in program coursework and practica, as well as to acquire enhanced competencies consistent with the school psychology program's goals and objectives.

<sup>14</sup> See NASP's *Best Practice Guidelines for School Psychology Internship*, available on the NASP website, for an additional resource for graduate programs and internship sites.

- A culminating experience in the program's course of study that is completed for academic credit or otherwise documented by the institution
- A primary emphasis on providing breadth and quality of experiences, attainment of comprehensive school psychology competencies, and integration and application of the full range of domains of school psychology (see Standards 2.1 to 2.10)
- Completion of activities and attainment of school psychology competencies that are consistent with the goals and objectives of the program and emphasize human diversity, and provision of professional school psychology services that result in direct, measurable, and positive impact on children, families, schools, and/or other consumers
- Inclusion of both formative and summative performance-based evaluations of interns that are completed by both program faculty and field-based supervisors, are systematic and comprehensive, and ensure that interns demonstrate professional work characteristics and attain competencies needed for effective practice as school psychologists

3.3 The school psychology program requires that the internship be completed for a sufficient time period and in appropriate settings to achieve program objectives, as demonstrated by the following:

- A minimum of 1200 clock hours for specialist-level interns and 1500 clock hours for doctoral-level interns,<sup>15</sup> including a minimum of

600 hours of the internship completed in a *school setting*<sup>16 17</sup>

- A minimum of one academic year for internship, completed on a full-time basis over one year or at least a half-time basis over two consecutive years
- Completion in settings relevant to program objectives for candidate competencies and direct oversight by the program to ensure appropriateness of the placement, activities, supervision, and collaboration with the placement sites and intern supervisors

3.4 The school psychology program requires that each intern receive appropriate and regularly scheduled field-based supervision, including the following:

- Provision of field supervision from a school psychologist holding the appropriate state school psychologist credential for practice in a school setting (If a portion of the internship is conducted in a another setting, as noted in Standard 3.3, provision of field supervision from a psychologist holding the appropriate state psychology credential for practice in the internship setting)
- An average of at least two hours of field-based supervision per full-time week or the equivalent for part-time placements
- Preponderance of field-based supervision provided on at least a weekly, individual, face-to-face basis, with structured mentoring and evaluation that focus on the intern's attainment of competencies

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<sup>15</sup> Programs may allow up to half of the required 1500 *doctoral* internship hours to be used from a prior, appropriately supervised specialist-level internship or equivalent experience in school psychology if (a) the program determines that the specialist-level internship or equivalent experience meets program objectives and NASP standards for the school psychology internship (see Standards 3.2 to 3.6), (b) candidates have met program objectives and criteria for school psychology specialist-level internship competencies, and (c) any field experiences considered equivalent to a formal specialist level internship in school psychology are clearly articulated and systematically evaluated by the program.

<sup>16</sup> A "school setting" is one in which the primary goal is the education of students of diverse backgrounds, characteristics, abilities, disabilities, and needs. Generally, a school setting includes students who are enrolled in Grades pre-K–12 and has both general education and special education services. The school setting has available an internal or external pupil services unit that includes at least one state-credentialed school psychologist and provides a full range of school psychology services. Other internship settings, if allowed by the program beyond the 600 hours in a school setting, are consistent with program objectives and may include relevant school psychology activities in other educational contexts within, for example, hospitals, juvenile justice institutions, and community agencies that provide collaborative services for schools.

<sup>17</sup> Programs may allow doctoral candidates who have met the internship requirement of at least 600 hours in a school setting through a prior, appropriately supervised, specialist-level internship or equivalent experience in school psychology to complete the entire 1500+ hour doctoral school psychology internship in another internship setting that includes appropriately supervised and relevant school psychology activities in other educational contexts, as consistent with the school psychology program's goals and policies. Program policy specifically defines methods for determining if a doctoral candidate's prior specialist-level internship or equivalent experience in a school setting meets program criteria and NASP Standards 3.2 to 3.6.

3.5 The school psychology internship represents a collaboration between the school psychology program and internship placement agency that is consistent with program goals and assures attainment of competencies by interns, as demonstrated by the following:

- A written plan specifying collaborative responsibilities of the school psychology program and internship site in providing supervision and support and ensuring that internship objectives are achieved
- Formative and summative performance-based evaluation of intern performance by program faculty and field-based supervisors and systematic, clearly articulated methods by which concerns about intern performance and attainment of competencies may be addressed
- Provision of appropriate support for the internship by the placement agency, including (a) commitment to the internship as a diversified *learning* experience for a candidate in a graduate school psychology program and opportunities for the intern to attain professional competencies through carefully supervised activities; (b) a written agreement that specifies the period of appointment and any terms of compensation for the intern and released time for the field based supervisor; (c) expense reimbursement, a safe and secure work environment, adequate office space, and support services for the intern consistent with that afforded agency school psychologists; and (d) provision for the intern's participation in continuing professional development activities

3.6 The school psychology program employs a systematic, valid process in which program faculty ensure that interns, during their culminating internship experience, demonstrate competencies to begin effective practice as school psychologists, including the following:

- Integration of domains of knowledge and application of professional skills in school

psychology for delivering a comprehensive range of services

- Effective school psychology service delivery evidenced by direct, measurable, positive impact on children, families, schools, and other consumers

#### **IV. School Psychology Program Support/ Resources<sup>18</sup>**

Adequate resources are available to support the school psychology program and its faculty and candidates. Such resources are needed to ensure accomplishment of program goals and objectives and candidates' attainment of competencies needed for effective school psychology services that positively impact children, families, schools, and other consumers.

The following elements are apparent in the school psychology program:

4.1 The school psychology program faculty members are assured adequate professional time for program responsibilities, including the following:

- Faculty loads that take into account instruction, program administration, supervision, research/scholarship, service, candidate assessment, and other activities associated with graduate-level school psychology program faculty responsibilities
- Faculty loads that allow flexibility to meet department and institution responsibilities (e.g., teaching undergraduate courses, service, research) while maintaining faculty responsibilities to the school psychology program
- Faculty teaching and supervision loads that typically are no greater than 75% of that typically assigned to faculty who teach primarily undergraduate courses
- Awarding of at least 25% reassigned or released time for the program administrator for administrative duties

4.2 The school psychology program ensures adequate candidate support from and interaction with

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<sup>18</sup>NOTE: Although standards in section IV reflect NASP's principles for high quality in all school psychology programs, programs in units/institutions accredited or undergoing review by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) do not need to provide a response to the standards in section IV as part of the NASP program review and approval/national recognition process.

school psychology program faculty members<sup>19</sup> through the following:

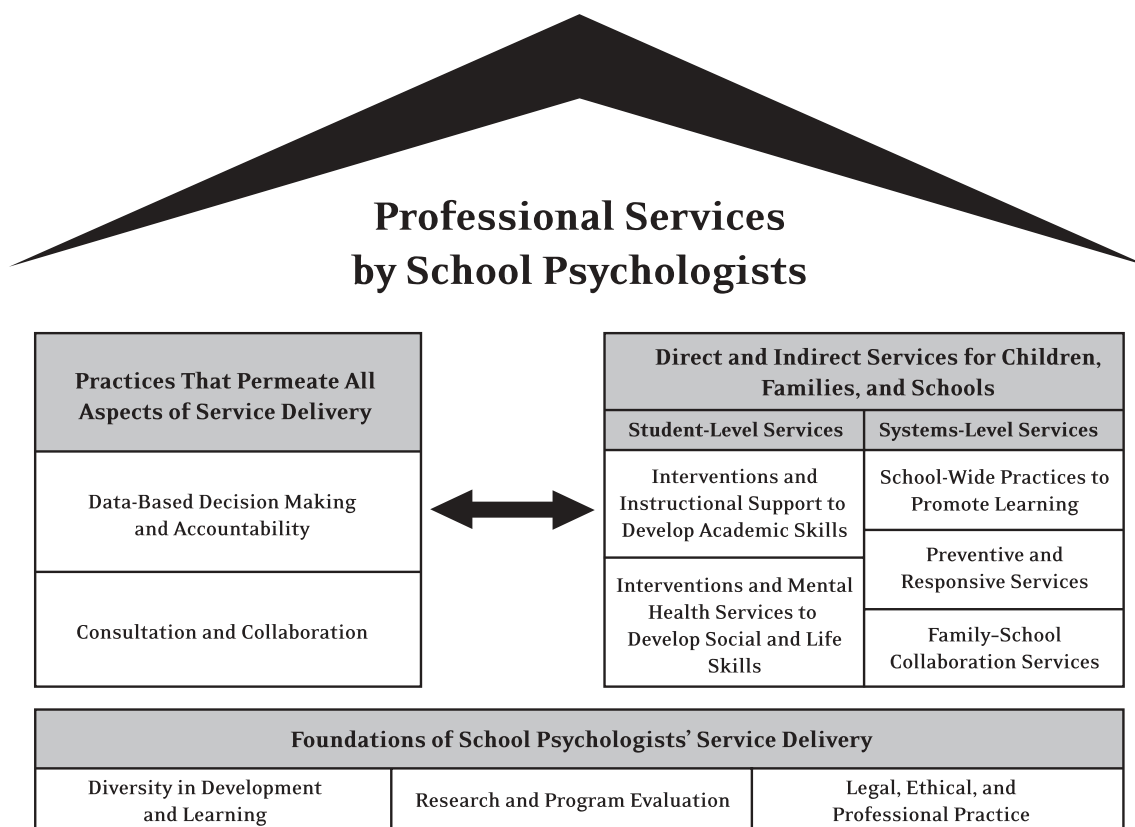
- Extensive, intensive, and individualized faculty advisement, supervision, and mentoring of candidates during all components of coursework, practica, internships, and other program activities that are available from and provided primarily by school psychology program faculty members, as defined in Standard 1.2
  - Ongoing and comprehensive program development and evaluation, instruction, candidate assessment, and other program activities that are available from and provided primarily by school psychology program faculty members, as defined in Standard 1.2
  - A ratio of no greater than 1:12 school psychology faculty FTE to school psychology candidate FTE in the overall program, including candidates participating in coursework, practica, internships, and other program activities<sup>20</sup>
- 4.3 The school psychology program faculty receive support for ongoing learning and professional experiences relevant to assigned graduate preparation responsibilities, including the following:
- Support for involvement in school psychology, including with professional organizations, research/scholarship, and/or professional service activities
  - Support for continuing professional development and related activities important to maintaining and enhancing knowledge, skills, and contributions to school psychology
- 4.4 Candidates in the school psychology program receive ongoing support from the institution, or a unit of the institution, during graduate preparation, including the following:
- Availability of university and/or program support services (e.g., career centers, health services, student associations, advisement about state credentialing procedures)
- Opportunities for funding or related assistance needed to attain educational goals (e.g., assistantships, scholarships, fellowships, traineeships, internship stipends, college financial aid programs)
- 4.5 Adequate physical resources are available to support faculty and candidates in the school psychology program, including the following:
- Office space for faculty
  - Field-based, clinical, and/or laboratory resources
  - Instructional and technology resources
- 4.6 For qualified candidates and faculty with disabilities, the school psychology program provides the following:
- Reasonable accommodations for special needs
  - Accessible academic programs and field experiences
  - Equal opportunities for development and demonstration of competencies
- 4.7 The institution provides adequate library resources to support instruction, independent study, and research relevant to the school psychology program, including the following:
- Comprehensive library and information resources and services
  - Major publications and periodicals in the field
- 4.8 The school psychology program provides for, collaborates in, or contributes to relevant continuing professional development opportunities for practicing school psychologists.
- 4.9 The school psychology program is located in an institution that is accredited, without probation or an equivalent status, by the appropriate institutional regional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

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<sup>19</sup>The school psychology program may employ other faculty who do not participate in ongoing and comprehensive program activities and who contribute to the program only by teaching a course(s) or by participating in another specific activity(s), for example, on an adjunct, affiliated, or related basis. The number of these faculty members should be limited and their specific activities in the program should be well-defined and systematically coordinated and supervised. However, the program should ensure that comprehensive program activities, outlined in Standard 4.2, are available from and provided primarily by school psychology program faculty members.

<sup>20</sup>The ratio of FTE faculty to FTE candidates consists of full-time program faculty to candidates enrolled full-time in the school psychology program and/or a prorated FTE proportion of part-time program faculty and/or part-time candidates. Interns, as well as candidates working exclusively on research, theses, or dissertations, may be prorated based on the semester hours enrolled and the amount of supervision provided by program faculty.

## APPENDIX A. MODEL OF COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED SERVICES BY SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS



## APPENDIX B. EXPANDED DESCRIPTION OF DOMAINS OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATE EDUCATION AND PRACTICE WITHIN A MODEL OF COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED SERVICES BY SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

Within the model of comprehensive and integrated services, illustrated in Appendix A, school psychologists apply knowledge and skills across 10 domains of school psychology. The domains are highly interrelated and not mutually exclusive, and should be reflected across the school psychology program of study. As noted in Standards 2.1 to 2.10, the school psychology program ensures that all candidates demonstrate basic competencies in 10 broad domains of school psychology. Further, the school psychology program determines that candidates integrate knowledge and professional skills across the 10 domains of school psychology in delivering a comprehensive range of services in professional practice that result in direct, measurable outcomes for children, families, schools, and/or other consumers. The

NASP (2010) *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services* presents specific school psychology practices and provides more detail about the integrated and comprehensive nature of the 10 domains.

Below, an expanded list of *sample areas of knowledge and skills in the domains* is provided, and programs may find the examples useful in defining expected candidate competencies. The examples in the descriptions below are not intended to reflect the possible full range of competencies for school psychologists, but instead identify examples of knowledge and skills that school psychology graduate programs may consider when identifying their own goals and objectives for their candidates. The examples of knowledge and skills below are intended to serve only as *general guides* for the school psychology program. The program may elect to emphasize specific knowledge and skill areas outlined in the descriptions below or may elect to identify additional knowledge and skills areas, depending on program goals and objectives, areas of specialization, specialist- or doctoral-level preparation, roles and functions for which candidates are being prepared, etc.

## 2.1 Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability

Examples of areas in which school psychologists have *knowledge* include the following:

- Assessment and data collection methods relevant to a comprehensive, systematic process of effective decision making and problem solving for particular situations, contexts, and diverse characteristics
- Varied methods of assessment and data collection in psychology and education (e.g., norm-referenced, curriculum-based, direct behavior analysis, ecological) and their psychometric properties
- Assessment and data collection methods useful in identifying strengths and needs and in documenting problems of children, families, and schools
- Strategies for translating assessment and data collection to development of effective instruction, interventions, and educational and mental health services
- Assessment and data collection methods to measure response to, progress in, and effective outcomes of services

Examples of areas in which school psychologists demonstrate *skills* include the following:

- Use psychological and educational assessment, data collection strategies, and technology resources as part of a comprehensive process of effective decision making and problem solving that permeates all aspects of service delivery
- Systematically collect data and other information about individuals, groups, and environments as key components of professional school psychology practice
- Translate assessment and data collection results into design, implementation, and accountability for evidence-based instruction, interventions, and educational and mental health services effective for particular situations, contexts, and diverse characteristics
- Use assessment and data collection methods to evaluate response to, progress in, and outcomes for services in order to promote improvement and effectiveness
- Access information and technology resources to enhance data collection and decision making
- Measure and document effectiveness of their own services for children, families, and schools

## 2.2 Consultation and Collaboration

Examples of areas in which school psychologists have *knowledge* include the following:

- Varied methods of consultation in psychology and education (e.g., behavioral, problem solving, mental health, organizational, instructional) applicable to individuals, families, groups, and systems
- Strategies to promote collaborative, effective decision making and implementation of services among professionals, families, and others
- Consultation, collaboration, and communication strategies effective across situations, contexts, and diverse characteristics
- Methods for effective consultation and collaboration that link home, school, and community settings

Examples of areas in which school psychologists demonstrate *skills* include the following:

- Apply consultation methods, collaborate, and communicate effectively with others as part of a comprehensive process that permeates all aspects of service delivery
- Consult and collaborate in planning, problem solving, and decision-making processes and to design, implement, and evaluate instruction, interventions, and educational and mental health services across particular situations, contexts, and diverse characteristics
- Consult and collaborate at the individual, family, group, and systems levels
- Facilitate collaboration and communication among diverse school personnel, families, community professionals, and others
- Effectively communicate information for diverse audiences, for example, parents, teachers, other school personnel, policy makers, community leaders, and/or others
- Promote application of psychological and educational principles to enhance collaboration and achieve effectiveness in provision of services

## 2.3 Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills

Examples of areas in which school psychologists have *knowledge* include the following:

- Biological, cultural, and social influences on cognitive and academic skills

- Human learning, cognitive, and developmental processes, including processes of typical development, as well as those related to learning and cognitive difficulties, across diverse situations, contexts, and characteristics
- Evidence-based methods in psychology and education to promote cognitive and academic skills, including those related to needs of children with diverse backgrounds and characteristics
- Curriculum and instructional strategies that facilitate children's academic achievement, including, for example, teacher-directed instruction, literacy instruction, peer tutoring, interventions for self-regulation and planning/organization, etc.
- Techniques to assess learning and instruction and methods and technology resources for using data in decision making, planning, and progress monitoring
- Information and assistive technology resources to enhance children's cognitive and academic skills

Examples of areas in which school psychologists demonstrate *skills*, in collaboration with others, include the following:

- Use assessment and data collection methods to develop appropriate academic goals for children with diverse abilities, disabilities, backgrounds, strengths, and needs
- Implement services to achieve academic outcomes, including classroom instructional support, literacy strategies, home-school collaboration, instructional consultation, and other evidence-based practices
- Use evidence-based strategies to develop and implement services at the individual, group, and systems levels and to enhance classroom, school, home, and community factors related to children's cognitive and academic skills
- Implement methods to promote intervention acceptability and fidelity and appropriate data-based decision making procedures, monitor responses of children to instruction and intervention, and evaluate the effectiveness of services

## **2.4 Interventions and Mental Health Services to Develop Social and Life Skills**

Examples of areas in which school psychologists have *knowledge* include the following:

- Biological, cultural, social, and situational influences on behavior and mental health and behavioral and

emotional impacts on learning, achievement, and life skills

- Human developmental processes related to social-emotional skills and mental health, including processes of typical development, as well as those related to psychopathology and behavioral issues, across diverse situations, contexts, and characteristics
- Evidence-based strategies to promote social-emotional functioning and mental health
- Strategies in social-emotional, behavioral, and mental health services that promote children's learning, academic, and life skills, including, for example, counseling, behavioral intervention, social skills interventions, instruction for self-monitoring, etc.
- Techniques to assess socialization, mental health, and life skills and methods and technology resources for using data in decision making, planning, and progress monitoring

Examples of areas in which school psychologists demonstrate *skills*, in collaboration with others, include the following:

- Use assessment and data collection methods to develop appropriate social-emotional, behavioral, and mental health goals for children with diverse abilities, disabilities, backgrounds, strengths, and needs
- Implement services to achieve outcomes related to socialization, learning, and mental health, including, for example, counseling, consultation, behavioral intervention, home-school collaboration, and other evidence-based practices
- Integrate behavioral supports and mental health services with academic and learning goals for children
- Use evidence-based strategies to develop and implement services at the individual, group, and/or systems levels and to enhance classroom, school, home, and community factors related to children's mental health, socialization, and learning
- Implement methods to promote intervention acceptability and fidelity and appropriate data-based decision making procedures, monitor responses of children to behavioral and mental health services, and evaluate the effectiveness of services

## **2.5 School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning**

Examples of areas in which school psychologists have *knowledge* include the following:

- School and systems structure, school organization, general education, special education, and alternative educational services across diverse settings
- Psychological and educational principles and research related to organizational development and systems theory
- Issues and needs in schools, communities, and other settings, including accountability requirements; local, state, and federal policies and regulations; and technology resources
- Evidence-based school practices that promote academic outcomes, learning, social development, and mental health; prevent problems; and ensure positive and effective school organization and climate across diverse situations, contexts, and characteristics

Examples of areas in which school psychologists demonstrate *skills*, in collaboration with others, include the following:

- Design and implement evidence-based practices and policies in, for example, areas such as discipline, instructional support, staff training, school improvement activities, program evaluation, student transitions at all levels of schooling, grading, home–school partnerships, etc.
- Utilize data-based decision making and evaluation methods, problem-solving strategies, consultation, technology resources, and other services for systems-level issues, initiatives, and accountability responsibilities
- Create and maintain effective and supportive learning environments for children and others within a multitiered continuum of school-based services.
- Develop school policies, regulations, services, and accountability systems to ensure effective services for all children

## 2.6 Preventive and Responsive Services

Examples of areas in which school psychologists have *knowledge* include the following:

- Psychological and educational principles and research related to resilience and risk factors in learning and mental health
- Methods of population-based service delivery in schools and communities to support prevention and timely intervention related to learning, mental health, school climate and safety, and physical well-being across diverse situations, contexts, and characteristics

- Universal, selected, and indicated (i.e., primary, secondary, and tertiary) prevention strategies at the individual, family, group, and/or systems levels related to learning, mental health, and physical well-being
- Evidence-based strategies for effective crisis prevention, preparation, and response

Examples of areas in which school psychologists demonstrate *skills*, in collaboration with others, include the following:

- Promote environments, contexts, and services for children that enhance learning, mental and physical well-being, and resilience through protective and adaptive factors and that prevent academic problems, bullying, violence, and other risks
- Use assessment and data collection methods to develop appropriate goals for and to evaluate outcomes of prevention and response activities and crisis services
- Contribute to, design, implement, and/or evaluate prevention programs that integrate home, school, and community resources and promote learning, mental health, school climate and safety, and physical well-being of all children and families
- Contribute to, design, implement, and/or evaluate services for crisis prevention, preparation, response, and recovery at the individual, family, and systems levels and that take into account diverse needs and characteristics
- Utilize data-based decision making methods, problem-solving strategies, consultation, collaboration, and direct and indirect services for preventive and responsive services to promote learning and mental health and for crisis services

## 2.7 Family–School Collaboration Services

Examples of areas in which school psychologists have *knowledge* include the following:

- Characteristics of families, family strengths and needs, family culture, and family–school interactions that impact children’s development
- Psychological and educational principles and research related to family systems and their influences on children’s academic, motivational, social, behavioral, mental health, and social characteristics
- Evidence-based strategies to improve outcomes for children by promoting collaboration and partnerships among parents, schools, and community agencies, and by increasing family involvement in education

- Methods that improve family functioning and promote children’s learning, social development, and mental health, including, for example, parent consultation, conjoint consultation, home–school collaboration, and other evidence-based practices.

Examples of areas in which school psychologists demonstrate *skills*, in collaboration with others, include the following:

- Design and implement evidence-based practices and policies that facilitate family–school partnerships and interactions with community agencies to enhance academic, learning, social, and mental health outcomes for all children
- Identify diverse cultural issues, situations, contexts, and other factors that have an impact on family–school interactions and address these factors when developing and providing services for families
- Utilize data-based decision making, evaluation methods, problem-solving strategies, consultation, communication, and direct and indirect services to enhance family–school–community effectiveness in addressing the needs of children
- Design, implement, and evaluate education programs and other types of services that assist parents with promoting the academic and social–behavioral success of their children and addressing issues and concerns

## 2.8 Diversity in Development and Learning

Examples of areas in which school psychologists have *knowledge* include the following:

- Individual differences, abilities, disabilities, and other diverse characteristics of people in settings in which school psychologists work
- Psychological and educational principles and research related to diversity factors for children, families, and schools, including factors related to culture, context, and individual and role differences (e.g., age, gender or gender identity, cognitive capabilities, social–emotional skills, developmental level, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual and gender orientation, disability, chronic illness, language, socioeconomic status)
- Evidence-based practices in psychology and education to enhance services for children and families and in schools and communities and effectively address potential influences related to diversity

- Strategies for addressing diversity factors in design, implementation, and evaluation of all services

Examples of areas in which school psychologists demonstrate *skills* include the following:

- Provide effective professional services in data-based decision making, consultation and collaboration, and direct and indirect services for individuals, families, and schools with diverse characteristics, cultures, and backgrounds and across multiple contexts, with recognition that an understanding of and respect for diversity and in development and learning is a foundation for all aspects of service delivery
- In collaboration with others, address individual differences, strengths, backgrounds, and needs in the design, implementation, and evaluation of services in order to improve academic, learning, social and mental health outcomes for all children across family, school, and community contexts
- In schools and other agencies, advocate for social justice and recognition that cultural, experiential, linguistic, and other areas of diversity may result in different strengths and needs; promote respect for individual differences; recognize complex interactions between individuals with diverse characteristics; and implement effective methods for all children, families, and schools to succeed
- Provide culturally competent and effective practices in all areas of school psychology service delivery and in the contexts of diverse individual, family, school, and community characteristics

## 2.9 Research and Program Evaluation

Examples of areas in which school psychologists have *knowledge* include the following:

- Research design, measurement, and varied methods of data collection techniques used in investigations of psychological and educational principles and practices
- Statistical and other data analysis techniques sufficient for understanding research and interpreting data in applied settings
- Program evaluation methods at the individual, group, and/or systems levels
- Technology and information resources applicable to research and program evaluation
- Techniques for judging research quality; synthesizing results across research relevant for services for

children, families, and schools; and applying research to evidence-based practice

Examples of areas in which school psychologists demonstrate *skills* include the following:

- Evaluate and synthesize a cumulative body of research and its findings as a foundation for effective service delivery
- Provide assistance in schools and other settings for analyzing, interpreting, and applying empirical evidence as a foundation for effective practices at the individual, group, and/or systems levels
- Incorporate various techniques and technology resources for data collection, measurement, analysis, and accountability in decision-making and in evaluation of services at the individual, group, and/or systems levels
- In collaboration with others, design, conduct analyses, and/or interpret research and/or program evaluation in applied settings

## 2.10 Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice

Examples of areas in which school psychologists have *knowledge* include the following:

- History and foundations of school psychology
- Multiple school psychology service delivery models and methods
- Ethical and professional standards for school psychology
- Legal standards and regulations relevant for practice in settings in which school psychologists work
- Factors related to professional identity and effective practice as school psychologists
- Relevant information sources and technology

- Methods for planning and engaging in continuing education

Examples of areas in which school psychologists demonstrate *skills* include the following:

- Provide services consistent with ethical and professional standards in school psychology
- Provide services consistent with legal standards and regulations relevant for practice in settings in which school psychologists work
- Engage in effective and responsive ethical and professional decision-making that reflects recognition of diverse needs and characteristics of children, families, schools, and other professionals
- Apply professional work characteristics needed for effective practice as school psychologists, including respect for human diversity and social justice, communication skills, effective interpersonal skills, responsibility, adaptability, initiative, dependability, and technology skills
- Utilize supervision and mentoring for effective school psychology practice
- Engage in effective, collaborative professional relationships and interdisciplinary partnerships
- In collaboration with other professionals (e.g., teachers, principals, library and media specialists), access, evaluate, and utilize information resources and technology in ways that enhance the quality of services for children
- Advocate for school psychologists' professional roles to provide effective services, ensure access to their services, and enhance the learning and mental health of all children and youth
- Engage in career-long self-evaluation and continuing professional development