

# Standards for the Credentialing 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 Credentialing of School Psychologists* are designed to be used in conjunction with the NASP *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists*, NASP *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services*, and NASP *Principles for Professional Ethics* to provide a unified set of national principles that guide graduate education, credentialing, professional practice and services, 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 purpose of this document is to provide guidance to state education agencies and other state and national agencies for credentialing school psychologists and regulating the practice of school psychology. These

credentialing standards were developed and approved by NASP pursuant to its mission to support school psychologists, to enhance the learning and mental health of children and youth, and to advance the standards of the school psychology profession.

Credentialing is a process by which a state agency authorizes—and reauthorizes—the use of the title “school psychologist” (or related titles) and practice of school psychology by individuals who initially meet established standards of graduate education and then later comply with standards for continuing professional development, ethical behavior, and experience. These credentialing standards relate to both the use of the title “school psychologist” and to the practice of school psychology, which is defined by the National Association of School Psychologists’s (NASP) *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services* (2010).

The *Standards for the Credentialing of School Psychologists* are intended as a model for state education agencies or other state or local entities that employ school psychologists and have the statutory authority to establish and regulate credentialing for school psychologists’ title and practice. Included are recommended criteria for initial credentialing (consisting of graduate coursework, practica, and internship requirements) as well as recommendations for credential renewal (i.e., supervision, mentoring, and professional development). These criteria are most applicable to the credentialing of persons employed as school psychologists in public or private schools. Such employment settings typically have a primary responsibility for the safety and welfare of clients served by their employees. For example, state education agencies and local school boards that employ school psychologists and other professionals have a legal responsibility for ensuring that their employees are qualified and act in accordance with various legal and regulatory mandates in their professional relationships with students and parents served by those schools. Similar responsibilities are fulfilled by the administration of other organizations with education programs in which school psychologists might work, such as hospitals or juvenile justice institutions.

NASP recognizes that states vary in the operation of their credentialing systems. Most states conduct their own initial credentialing of school psychologists but may delegate some of their regulatory responsibilities to local education agencies and/or other entities. In addition, multiple state education agency departments are typically involved in the regulation of school psychology with regard to employment, job descriptions, funding, performance evaluation, professional development, ser-

vice provision, etc. Some aspects of credentialing may be embodied in state laws; most are incorporated in regulations. However, the *Standards* are intended to provide guidance regarding credentialing and regulation of school psychology regardless of a state’s organizational and legal structure.

The *Standards* also include a description of the *Nationally Certified School Psychologist* (NCSP) credential, a model implementation of these standards as administered by the National School Psychology Certification Board. The NCSP is a national certification system for school psychologists based upon recognized standards for advanced preparation, performance-based assessment of competency and demonstration of positive outcomes for consumers of school psychological services. The National School Psychology Certification System (NSPCS) was created by NASP to establish a nationally recognized standard for credentialing school psychologists. The *Standards for the Credentialing of School Psychologists* are used by the NSPCS, and the NCSP is bestowed upon individuals in recognition of meeting national standards. The *Standards for the Credentialing of School Psychologists* are also considered to be appropriate for states to use in executing their authority in credentialing school psychologists. As a result, the NCSP credential is widely recognized by state education agencies as a valid approach for credentialing school psychologists. These *Standards* are not intended to supplant a state’s authority to implement equivalent credentialing processes for school psychologists. The purposes of this national credentialing system are to promote uniform credentialing standards across states, agencies, and training institutions, and to facilitate the credentialing of school psychologists across states through the use of equivalency. The National Association of School Psychologists’s designation for persons who meet these standards is *Nationally Certified School Psychologist*, or NCSP. Persons who hold the NCSP are considered to have met rigorous standards of training and competency based upon the assessment and demonstration of effective services and positive impact on students, families, and learning environments.

## THE STRUCTURE OF THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST CREDENTIAL

### 1.0 State Credentialing Authority

1.1 Credentialing for school psychologists (i.e., licensure or certification) is the process whereby a state authorizes individuals to use the title “school

psychologist” and provide school psychological services. Credentialing in school psychology is granted to individuals meeting established standards of graduate education and experience. A state’s credentialing authority, found in statute and/or regulations, should require all providers of school psychological services and all users of the title “school psychologist” to hold a current credential, and provide for legal sanctions and sanctioning procedures for violators.

- 1.2 When a state empowers one or more organizational entities to administer the credentialing (certification and/or licensure) process for school psychologists, administrative codes and regulations adopted by such bodies should be consistent with the *Standards for the Credentialing of School Psychologists* and carry the weight of law.

## 2.0 Elements of the School Psychologist Credential

- 2.1 The credential should be issued in writing and expressly authorize both the practice of school psychology as defined by NASP *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services* and the use of the title “school psychologist.”
- 2.2 The professional school psychologist credential should be issued for a minimum period of three years.
- 2.3 The minimum requirement for a professional credential as a school psychologist is the specialist-level credential in school psychology per the criteria in section 3.0.
- 2.4 The credentialing process should require at least one academic year of postdegree supervision and/

or mentoring following initial issuance of the credential. (See Section 5.5).

- 2.5 Following the completion of one year of supervision, the credential should allow school psychologists to have professional autonomy in determining the nature, scope, and extent of their specific services consistent with their training, supervised experience, and demonstrated expertise and in accordance with NASP’s *Principles for Professional Ethics* (2010).
- 2.6 It is recommended that state and local education agencies incorporate NASP’s *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services* (2010) in any performance evaluation system used to evaluate school psychologists.

## STATE CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENTS

### 3.0 Criteria for Specialist-Level Credentialing in School Psychology

- 3.1 The minimum requirement for credentialing as a school psychologist shall be a specialist-level program of study in school psychology consisting of the following: (a) a minimum of three years of full-time study at the graduate level, or the equivalent if part-time; (b) at least 60 graduate semester hours or the equivalent<sup>1</sup>, with at least 54 hours exclusive of credit for the supervised specialist level internship experience; and (c) institutional documentation of specialist-level school psychology program completion<sup>2,3</sup> provided to graduates.  
Criteria for each of the following areas will be consistent with NASP *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists*<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</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 systems (e.g. trimester credits, unit credits) provide candidates with institution policy regarding their equivalency to a semester hour system.

<sup>2</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 program of study in the school psychology program, 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 documentation of completion of the entire school psychology program.

<sup>3</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.

<sup>4</sup> The NASP *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists* are approved by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and are utilized by NASP when it conducts graduate program reviews as a part of the NCATE unit accreditation process.

3.2 Domains of Professional Practice. The credential should be based upon the completion of an integrated and sequential program of study that is explicitly designed to develop knowledge and practice competencies in each of the following Domains of Professional Practice. School psychologists provide comprehensive and integrated services across 10 general domains of school psychology, as illustrated in Appendix A. 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.

Professional preparation should reflect the ability to integrate knowledge and skills across each of the following domains. Competency requires demonstration of both knowledge and skills. The descriptions below are representative of competencies in each domain but are not intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive. Appendix A represents the 10 domains within a model of

comprehensive and integrated services by school psychologists. 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.

### **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 and data collection strategies, and technology resources, and apply results to design, implement, and evaluate response to services and programs.

### **2. Consultation and Collaboration**

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

### **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.

#### **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 evidenced-based supported 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 implement and evaluate services to support socialization, learning, and mental health.

#### **5. School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning**

- School psychologists have knowledge of school and systems structure, organization, and theory; general and special education; and empirically supported 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.

#### **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 multitiered prevention, and empirically supported 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.

#### **7. Family-School Collaboration Services**

- School psychologists have knowledge of principles and research related to family systems, strengths, needs, and culture; empirically supported 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 facilitate family and school partnerships and interactions with community agencies for enhancement of academic and social-behavioral outcomes for children.

#### **8. 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, individual, and role differences; and empirically supported 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 advocacy for social justice are foundations for all aspects of service delivery.

#### **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.

#### **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 profes-

sional 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.

3.3 Applicants for a school psychology specialist credential will have completed supervised practica experiences<sup>5</sup> that include the following:

- a. 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.
- b. Specific, required activities and systematic development and evaluation of skills, consistent with goals of the program, emphasize human diversity, and are completed in settings relevant to program objectives for development of candidate skills (See Standards 3.2 Domains of Professional Practice)
- c. Direct oversight by the program to ensure appropriateness of the placement, activities, supervision, and collaboration with the placement sites and practicum supervisors
- d. Close supervision by program faculty and qualified practicum supervisors, including appropriate performance-based evaluation by program faculty and supervisors to ensure that candidates are developing professional work characteristics and designated competencies

3.4 Applicants for a school psychology credential will have completed a comprehensive, supervised, and

carefully evaluated internship<sup>6</sup> consisting of the following<sup>7</sup>:

- a. A minimum of 1200 clock hours for specialist-level interns, including a minimum of 600 hours of the internship completed in a *school setting*<sup>8</sup>
- b. A minimum of one academic year, completed on a full-time basis or on a half-time basis over two consecutive years
- c. Completion in settings relevant to program objectives for candidate competencies and direct oversight by the program to ensure appropriateness of the placement, activities, and field supervision
- d. A culminating experience in the program's course of study that is completed for academic credit or otherwise documented by the institution
- e. 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 graduate education and practice (See Standards 2.1 to 2.10)
- f. Completion of activities and attainment of school psychology competencies consistent with the goals and objectives of the program, and which emphasize human diversity, and delivery of professional school psychology services that result in direct, measurable, and positive impact on children, families, schools, and/or other consumers
- g. Inclusion of both formative and summative performance-based evaluations of interns that are completed by both program faculty and

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<sup>5</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. Practica activities may be completed as part of separate courses focusing on distinct skills or as part of a more extensive 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>6</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>7</sup> See *Best Practice Guidelines for School Psychology Internships* for an additional resource for graduate programs and internship sites, available on the NASP website.

<sup>8</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.

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

- h. Provision of field supervision from a school psychologist holding the appropriate state school psychology credential for practice in the internship setting (or, if a portion of the internship is conducted in a another setting, as noted in Standard 3.4a, provision of field supervision from a psychologist holding the appropriate state psychology credential for practice in the internship setting)
  - i. An average of at least two hours of field-based supervision per full-time week or the equivalent for half-time placements
  - j. Preponderance of field-based supervision provided on at least a weekly, individual, face-to-face basis, with structured mentoring and evaluation that focus on development of the intern's competencies
- 3.5 Documentation is provided that the applicant has demonstrated the ability to integrate domains of knowledge and apply professional skills in delivering a comprehensive range of services evidenced by measurable positive impact on children, youth, families, and other consumers.
- 3.6 Applicants should achieve a passing score on a state or national test appropriate for school psychology. The National School Psychology Certification Board has established a passing score on the Educational Testing Service's (ETS) School Psychology Examination that is suitable for state credentialing purposes.

#### **4.0 Criteria for Doctoral Credential in School Psychology**

- 4.1 A doctoral-level credential in school psychology should be based upon (a) a minimum of 4 years of full-time study at the graduate level or the equivalent, if part time (b) 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), and (c) institutional documentation of school psychology doctoral-level program completion provided to graduates. Criteria for each of the following areas will be consistent with NASP *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists*.

- 4.2 The credential should be based upon the completion of an integrated and sequential program of study in school psychology<sup>9</sup> that is explicitly designed to develop knowledge and practice competencies in each of the following Domains of Professional Practice.
- a. Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability
  - b. Consultation and Collaboration
  - c. Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills
  - d. Interventions and Mental Health Services to Develop Social and Life Skills
  - e. School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning
  - f. Preventive and Responsive Services
  - g. Family-School Collaboration Services
  - h. Diversity in Development and Learning
  - i. Research and Program Evaluation
  - j. Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice
- 4.3 Applicants for a school psychology doctoral credential will have completed supervised practica experiences that include the following:
- a. 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.
  - b. Specific, required activities and systematic development and evaluation of skills, consistent with goals of the program and in settings relevant to program objectives for development of candidate skills (See Standards 2.1 to 2.10)
  - c. Direct oversight by the program to ensure appropriateness of the placement, activities,

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<sup>9</sup> 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).

- supervision, and collaboration with the placement sites and practicum supervisors
- d. Close supervision by program faculty and qualified practicum supervisors and inclusion of appropriate performance-based evaluation by program faculty and supervisors to ensure that candidates are developing professional work characteristics and designated competencies
- 4.4 Applicants for a school psychology doctoral credential will have completed a comprehensive, supervised, and carefully evaluated internship consisting of the following:
- a. A minimum of 1500 clock hours for doctoral-level interns<sup>10</sup>, including a minimum of 600 hours of the internship completed in a *school setting*.
  - b. 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
  - c. Completion in settings relevant to program objectives for candidate competencies and direct oversight by the program to ensure appropriateness of the placement, activities, and field supervision
  - d. A culminating experience in the program's course of study that is completed for academic credit or otherwise documented by the institution
  - e. 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 graduate education and practice (See Standards 2.1 to 2.10)
  - f. Completion of activities and attainment of school psychology competencies consistent with the goals and objectives of the program and delivery of professional school psychology services that result in direct, measurable, and positive impact on children, families, schools, and/or other consumers
- g. 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 designated competencies needed for effective school psychology practice
  - h. Provision of field supervision from a school psychologist holding the appropriate state school psychology credential for practice in the internship setting (or, if a portion of the internship is conducted in a another setting, as noted in Standard 4.4a, provision of field supervision from a psychologist holding the appropriate state psychology credential for practice in the internship setting)
  - i. An average of at least 2 hours of field-based supervision per full-time week or the equivalent for part-time placements.
  - j. Preponderance of field-based supervision provided on at least a weekly, individual, face-to-face basis, with structured mentoring and evaluation that focus on development of the intern's competencies
- 4.5 Documentation is provided that the candidate has demonstrated the ability to integrate domains of knowledge and apply professional skills in delivering a comprehensive range of services evidenced by measurable positive impact on children, youth, families, and other consumers.
- 4.6 Applicants should achieve a passing score on a state or national test appropriate for school psychology. The National School Psychology Certification Board has established a passing score on the Educational Testing Service's (ETS) School Psychology Examination that is suitable for state credentialing purposes.

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<sup>10</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.

## STATE CREDENTIALING PROCEDURES

### 5.0 Implementation of School Psychology Credentialing Requirements by States

- 5.1 The state credential is granted to individuals who meet the requirements described in Standard 3.0, including completion of a specialist-level school psychology program consistent with NASP *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists*, demonstration of professional work characteristics, completion of applied professional practice, and demonstrated competency in the domains of professional practice.
- 5.2 Implementation of these requirements may be facilitated in four ways:
- Applicants who are graduates of school psychology programs approved by the National Association of School Psychologists at the specialist or doctoral level will have met preparation requirements 3.0 or 4.0 respectively and are eligible for credentialing as school psychologists.
  - Applicants who are graduates of school psychology programs that, at the time of the applicant's graduation, were accredited by an agency (e.g., American Psychological Association), approved by the U.S. Department of Education, and who have met the internship requirement specified in Standard 4.4, are eligible for credentialing as school psychologists.
  - Applicants who are graduates of other graduate education programs should demonstrate equivalency with the NASP *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists*. For applicants who hold graduate degrees in related fields and are seeking graduate preparation and credentialing as a school psychologist, the state should ensure that its requirements for alternative credentialing are consistent with these NASP credentialing standards. NASP approved graduate education programs may be consulted to ensure that an applicant's prior courses, field experiences, and professional competencies are equivalent to NASP *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists*<sup>11</sup>.
  - Applicants who hold a valid credential as Nationally Certified School Psychologists (NCSP) have been judged by the National Association of School Psychologists to have met its graduate preparation and credentialing standards and should be considered eligible for state credentialing as school psychologists.
- 5.3 The NCSP credential is suitable for adoption by state education agencies for credentialing of school psychologists. However, comparable credentialing approaches should be available to applicants as described in Standard 5.2. Recognition of the NCSP facilitates interstate reciprocity agreements. The NCSP system can also satisfy state credential renewal requirements for continuing professional development.
- 5.4 Adequate professional support should be provided to all credentialed school psychologists. School systems should ensure that all personnel have levels and types of supervision and/or mentoring adequate to ensure the provision of effective and accountable services. Supervision and mentoring are provided through an ongoing, positive, systematic, collaborative process between the school psychologist and a school psychology supervisor or other school psychology colleagues.
- 5.5 Credentialed school psychologists in their first postgraduate year of employment should participate in district-provided supervision or mentoring. Such induction experiences should be for the purpose of establishing a foundation for lifelong learning and professional growth. For initially credentialed school psychologists, participation in district-provided supervision and/or mentoring conducted either directly or indirectly is recommended for a minimum average of 1 hour per week.
- 5.6 Supervisors have a valid school psychologist credential for the setting in which they are

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<sup>11</sup> 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.

employed, and have a minimum of 3 years of experience as a practicing school psychologist. Education and/or experience in the supervision of school personnel are desirable.

- 5.7 Supervision methods should match the developmental level of the school psychologist. Novice school psychologists require more intensive supervisory modalities, including regularly scheduled sessions. Alternative methods, such as supervision groups, mentoring, and/or peer support can be utilized with more experienced school psychologists to ensure continued professional growth and support for complex or difficult cases. School systems should allow time for school psychologists to participate in supervision and mentoring.
- 5.8 The school system should develop and implement a coordinated plan for the accountability and evaluation of all school psychological services. This plan should address evaluation of both implementation and outcomes of services.
- 5.9 Renewal of the initial state credential should be granted to applicants meeting the following criteria:
  - a. Evidence of public, private, or university-based practice for a minimum of 1 academic year of full-time equivalent (FTE) experience during the previous 3 years.
  - b. Evidence of continuing professional development for a minimum of 75 clock hours during the previous 3-year period while the credential was in effect.
  - c. Evidence of having successfully completed a minimum of 1 academic year of professional experience with a mentor or supervisor. For professional practice within a school setting, supervision or mentoring should be provided

by a credentialed school psychologist with a minimum of 3 years of experience.

## 6.0 Nationally Certified School Psychologist

- 6.1 The Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) credential is granted to persons who have successfully met standards 3.0–3.7 above<sup>12</sup>.
- 6.2 For initial renewal of the NCSP credential, there should be evidence of having successfully completed a minimum of 1 academic year of professional support from a mentor or supervisor. For professional practice within a school setting, supervision or mentoring shall be provided by a credentialed school psychologist with a minimum of three years of experience. For any portion of the experience that is accumulated in a nonschool setting, supervision or mentoring shall be provided by a psychologist appropriately credentialed for practice in that setting. Supervision and/or mentoring conducted either individually or within a group for a minimum average of 1 hour per week is recommended.
- 6.3 Renewal of the NCSP will only be granted to applicants who complete at least 75 contact hours of continuing professional development activities within a 3-year period.

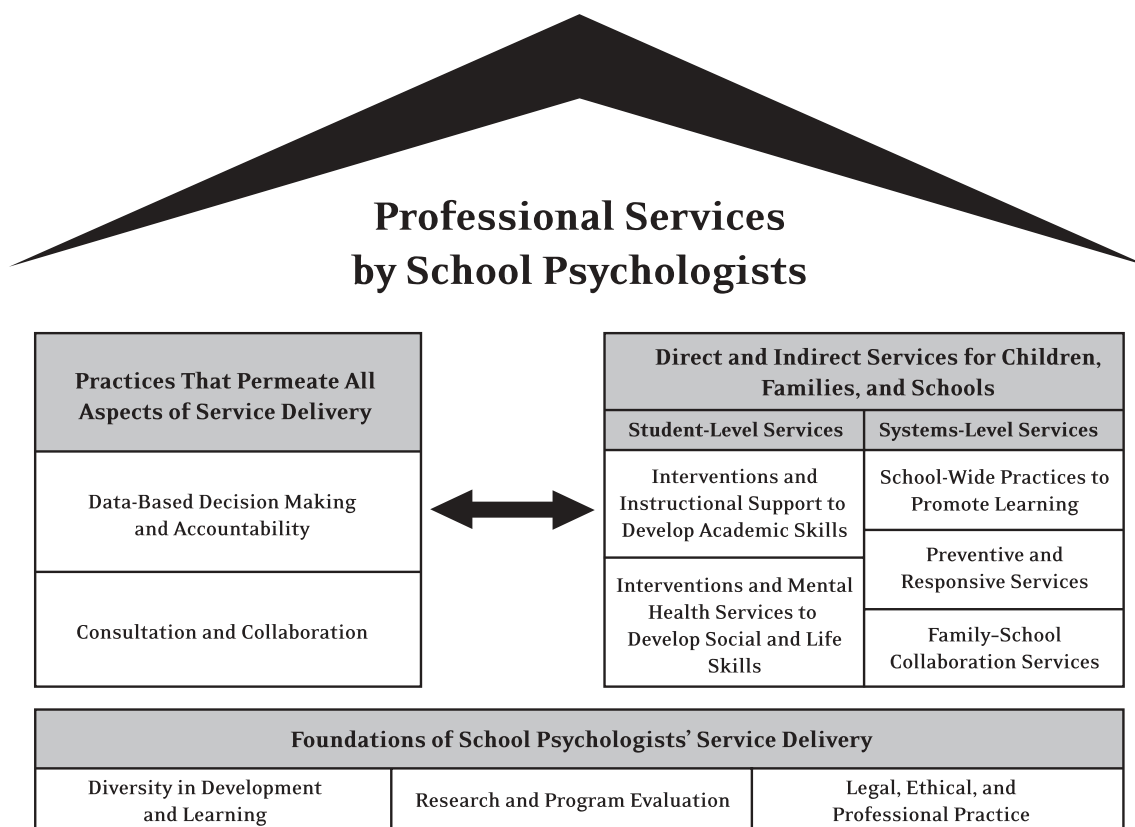
## 7.0 Principles for Professional Ethics

State and local education agencies are encouraged to adopt the NASP *Principles for Professional Ethics* and develop appropriate problem-solving, due process, and discipline procedures for addressing potential ethical misconduct by school psychologists in addition to the already established procedures for handling employee misconduct.

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<sup>12</sup> *Approved Programs in School Psychology*: The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) publishes annually a list of graduate education programs in school psychology that have been determined to meet the NASP *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists*. A copy of the approved program list can be obtained by contacting the National Association of School Psychologists, 4340 East West Highway, Suite 402, Bethesda, MD 20814 or at <http://www.nasponline.org>

## 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' activities include knowledge and skills across 10 domains of school psychology. As noted in NASP Graduate Preparation Standards 2.1 to 2.10, the school psychology program ensures that all candidates demonstrate basic competencies in the 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. The NASP (2010) *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services* presents specific school psychology practices and provide 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 that programs may find 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 skill 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 from 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.

The following elements are apparent in the school psychology program:

### 2.1 Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability

School psychologists have knowledge of 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 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

School psychologists demonstrate *skills* to:

- Use psychological and educational assessment and data collection strategies 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 empirically supported 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
- Methods for effective consultation and collaboration that link home, school, and community settings  
School psychologists demonstrate *skills* to:
  - 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 communication and collaboration 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

## 2.2 Consultation and Collaboration

School psychologists have *knowledge* of 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 and collaboration strategies effective across situations, contexts, and diverse characteristics

## 2.3 Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills

School psychologists have *knowledge* of 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
- Empirically supported 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 for using data in decision making, planning, and progress monitoring
- Information and assistive technology resources to enhance children's cognitive and academic skills

School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate *skills* to:

- 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 evidenced-based practices
- Use empirically supported 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**

School psychologists have *knowledge* of 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
- Empirically supported 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 for using data in decision making, planning, and progress monitoring

School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate *skills* to:

- 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 empirically supported 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 Diversity in Development and Learning**

School psychologists have *knowledge* of 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, 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)
- Empirically supported strategies 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

School psychologists demonstrate *skills* to:

- 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, 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 in family, school, and community contexts
- In schools and other agencies, advance 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

## 2.6 School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning

School psychologists have *knowledge* of 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 and local, state, and federal policies and regulations
  - Empirically supported 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
- School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate *skills* to:
- Design and implement empirically supported 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, 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

## 2.7 Preventive and Responsive Services

School psychologists have *knowledge* of 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
- Empirically supported strategies for effective crisis prevention, preparation, and response

School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate *skills* to:

- 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

## 2.8 Family-School Collaboration Services

School psychologists have *knowledge* of 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
- Empirically supported 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

School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate *skills* to:

- Design and implement empirically supported 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 and evaluation methods, problem-solving strategies, consultation, and direct and indirect services to enhance family–school-community effectiveness in addressing the needs of children
- Design, implement, and evaluate educational, support, and other types of programs that assist parents with promoting the academic and social–behavioral success of their children and addressing issues and concerns

## 2.9 Research and Program Evaluation

School psychologists have *knowledge* of 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

School psychologists demonstrate *skills* to:

- 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 using empirical foundations for effective practices at the individual, group, and/or systems levels
- Incorporate various techniques for data collection, measurement, analysis, accountability, and use of technology resources 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

School psychologists have *knowledge* of the following:

- History and foundations of their profession
- Multiple school psychology service delivery models and methods
- Ethical and professional standards for school psychology
- Legal standards and regulations
- Factors related to professional identity in school psychology
- Relevant information sources and technology
- Methods for planning and engaging in continuing education

School psychologists demonstrate *skills* to:

- Provide services consistent with ethical and professional standards in school psychology
- Provide services consistent with legal standards and regulations
- Engage in effective 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 a school psychologist, including respect for human diversity and social justice, communication skills, effective interpersonal skills, responsibility, adaptability, initiative, and dependability
- 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