School Psychology Futures Conference Advancing Preparation, Practice, and Scholarship: Reimagining Student Success

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The school psychology “Futures Conference” is a decennial event sponsored by the collective of school psychology professional organizations dedicated to improving life outcomes for children, youth, and families across the globe. This special topic section will highlight themes featured in the Futures Conference 2023-2024 webinars, presentations, meetings and discussions (see pillars 1-6 below). School psychologists are well-trained mental health professionals in schools with comprehensive skill sets (NASP, 2020). School psychologists promote the adoption of research-based practices delivered through a culturally sensitive and ecologically informed lens to promote optimal outcomes in education and social-emotional well-being. School psychologists must be committed to promoting equity, dismantling long-standing systems of oppression, and maximizing mental wellbeing. The Future of School Psychology is socially responsive and addresses the impact of health, socioemotional and educational disparities on children and youth. Specifically, school psychologist’s work to mitigate systemic and structural inequities, which are present in all social structures, including social determinants of health, such as racism and ableism which cuts across educational, health/mental health, housing/neighborhoods, employment, criminal justice, violence exposure, law, and environmental spaces (Healthy People, 2030). To reduce the vast and increasing disparities in our society school psychologists promote anti-oppressive education, mental health, and wellness practices, policy and advocacy. They support a foundation of equitable, effective and comprehensive school psychology practices. School psychologists understand that promotion and prevention is more effective and less costly than later intervention. The vision of the 2023-2024 Futures Conference is that the field of school psychology becomes a more visible, necessary, and relevant force driving equitable and liberatory mental health, education and culturally affirming schools for all children and families.

Areas that the papers might address include, but are not limited to:

● Literature reviews, empirical research, or conceptual papers focused on at least one of the 6 Future’s Conference Pillars (see below).
● Pillar #1 Leadership – Definition: Exploring, expanding, and facilitating leadership skills in providing local, state, national, and international services.
● Pillar #2 Science and Scholarship - Definition: Maintaining the breadth and depth of school psychology knowledge base and expertise.
● Pillar #3 Practice - Definition: Engaging in culturally responsive and socially just practices to promote equity.
● Pillar #4 Education & Lifelong Learning - Definition: Providing educational experiences at the graduate and continuing professional development level to develop and advance the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to effectively service diverse youth.
● Pillar #5 Workforce Development - Definition: Increasing, maintaining, and advocating for a well-trained and diverse school psychology workforce.
● Pillar #6 Advocacy - Definition: Facilitating systems change to promote equity and access to education and mental health care.

A variety of scholarly manuscript types are sought including, but not limited to: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods investigations; systematic research reviews; data-based policy papers, and conceptual papers. Papers presenting empirical evidence and making unique scholarly contributions to one or more of the 6 Futures’ Conference Pillars described above will be given priority. Each submission will be processed through triple-anonymous peer-review to determine whether the manuscript is suitable for publication in the journal. The initial deadline for the receipt of submissions is October 1, 2024.

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