

Florida's Student Services Professional Standards and Ethics Information

National Association of School Psychologist (NASP)–Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services (2010)
NASP–Principles for Professional Ethics (2010)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA)–School Counselor Competencies
ASCA–Ethical Standards for School Counselors (2010)

National Association of Social Workers (NASW)–Standards for School Social Work Services (2012)
NASW–Code of Ethics (2008)

Standards of Practice for School Nursing
Code of Ethics for Nursing

Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services

2010

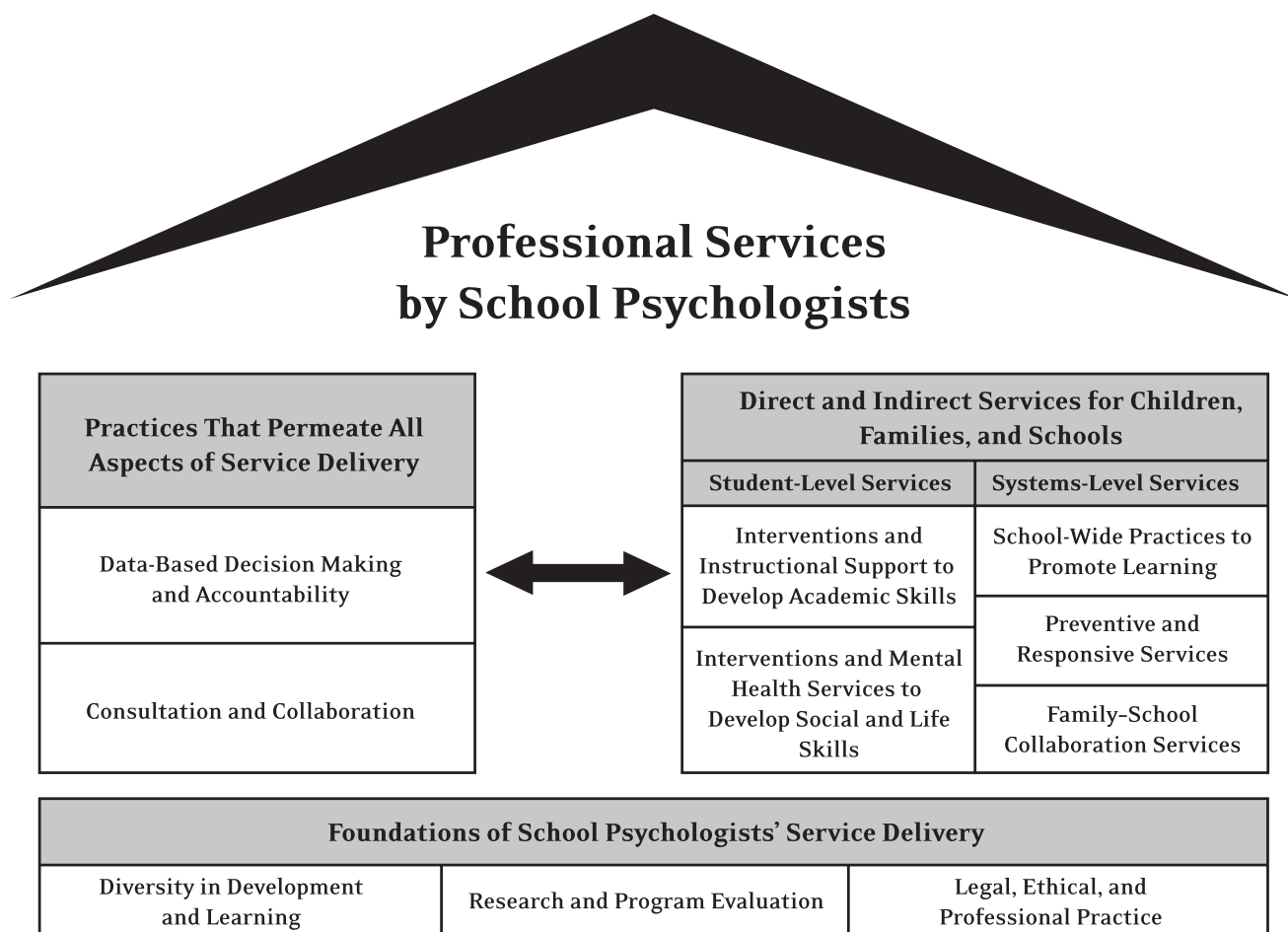
INTRODUCTION

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 Figure 1, 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 *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services* is designed to be used in conjunction with the NASP *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists*, *Standards for the Credentialing of School Psychologists*, and *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.

Figure 1. Model of comprehensive and integrated school psychological services.

The *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services* represents the official policy of NASP regarding the delivery of comprehensive school psychological services. First written in 1978 as the *Guidelines for the Provision of School Psychological Services*, revised in 1984, 1992, 1997, 2000, and 2010, the model serves as a guide to the organization and delivery of school psychological services at the federal, state, and local levels. The model provides direction to school psychologists, students, and faculty in school psychology, administrators of school psychological services, and consumers of school psychological services regarding excellence in professional school psychology. It also delineates what services might reasonably be expected to be available from most school psychologists and, thus, should help to further define the field. In addition, the model is intended to educate the profession and the public regarding appropriate professional practices and, hopefully, will stimulate the continued development of the profession.

The *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services* addresses the delivery of school psychological services within the context of educational programs and educational settings. In addition to providing services to public and private schools, school psychologists are employed in a variety of other settings, including juvenile justice institutions, colleges and universities, mental health clinics, hospitals, and in private practice. This revision of the *Guidelines for the Provision of School Psychological Services*, like its precursors, focuses on the special challenges associated with providing school psychological services in schools and to schoolchildren. School psychologists who provide services directly to children, parents, and other clients as private practitioners, and those who work in health and mental health settings, are encouraged to be knowledgeable of federal and state law regulating mental health providers, and to consult the National Association of School Psychologists's (2010) *Principles for Professional Ethics* and the American Psychological

Association's (2002) *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct* for guidance on issues not addressed in the model.

The model includes two major sections, which describe responsibilities of individual school psychologists and the responsibilities of school systems to support comprehensive school psychological services. The first section describes *Professional Practices* aligned with each of 10 domains of practice that are the core components of this model of school psychological services. The second section outlines *Organizational Principles* that should be assumed by the organizations that employ school psychologists. These principles describe the organizational conditions that must be met in order to ensure effective delivery of school psychological services for children, families, and schools.

Not all school psychologists or school systems will be able to meet every standard contained within this document. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that these guidelines will serve as a model for effective program development and professional practice on federal, state, and local levels. The 10 domains provide a *general framework of basic competencies* that practitioners should possess upon beginning practice as school psychologists. School psychologists will perceive that it is in their own best interest—and that of the agencies, parents, and children they serve—to adhere to and support the model. NASP encourages state and federal legislators, local school boards, and the administrative leaders of federal, state, and local education agencies to support the concepts contained within the model.

NASP acknowledges that this model sets requirements for services not presently mandated by federal law or regulation and not always mandated in state laws and administrative rules. Future amendments of such statutes and rules, and the state and local plans resulting from them, should incorporate the recommendations contained in this document. Furthermore, NASP understands that school psychological services are provided within the context of ethical and legal mandates. Nothing in the model should be construed as superseding such relevant rules and regulations.

The model provides flexibility, permitting agencies and professionals to develop procedures, policies, and administrative organizations that meet both the needs of the agency and the professional's desire to operate within recognized professional standards of practice. At the same time, the model has sufficient specificity to ensure appropriate and comprehensive service provision.

COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED SERVICES: DOMAINS OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY PRACTICE

School psychologists provide comprehensive and integrated services across 10 general domains of school psychology, as illustrated in Figure 1 on page 2 of this document. Graduate education in school psychology prepares practitioners with basic professional competencies, including both *knowledge* and *skills*, in the 10 domains of school psychology, as well as the ability to integrate knowledge and apply professional skills across domains in the practice of school psychology. 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 are highly interrelated and not mutually exclusive. The brief descriptions and examples of professional practices in each of the 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. Figure 1 represents the 10 domains within a model of comprehensive and integrated services by school psychologists. It is important to emphasize that the 10 domains provide a *general frame of reference for basic competencies* that program

graduates should possess upon beginning practice as school psychologists.

The *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services* describes the services provided by school psychologists to children, families, and schools. Because these services are based on the needs of children, families, and schools, the model generally does not differentiate the services provided by school psychologists prepared at the doctoral and specialist levels. Rather, the model promotes a high level of services to meet the academic, social, behavioral, and emotional needs of all children and youth. It may be noted, however, that work experience and advanced graduate education will result in areas of specialization by individual school psychologists. Among groups of school psychologists, not everyone will acquire skills to the same degree across all domains of practice. However, all school psychologists are expected to possess at least a basic level of competency in all of the 10 domains of practice described in this model.

PART I: PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES

PRACTICES THAT PERMEATE ALL ASPECTS OF SERVICE DELIVERY

Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability

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

- School psychologists use a problem-solving framework as the basis for all professional activities.
- School psychologists systematically collect data from multiple sources as a foundation for decision-making and consider ecological factors (e.g., classroom, family, community characteristics) as a context for assessment and intervention in general and special education settings.

- School psychologists collect and use assessment data to understand students' problems and to select and implement evidence-based instructional and mental health services.
- School psychologists, as part of an interdisciplinary team, conduct assessments to identify students' eligibility for special education and other educational services.
- School psychologists use valid and reliable assessment techniques to assess progress toward academic and behavioral goals, to measure responses to interventions, and to revise interventions as necessary.
- School psychologists assist with design and implementation of assessment procedures to determine the degree to which recommended interventions have been implemented (i.e., treatment fidelity).
- School psychologists use systematic and valid data-collection procedures for evaluating the effectiveness and/or need for modification of school-based interventions and programs.
- School psychologists use systematic and valid data-collection procedures to evaluate and document the effectiveness of their own services.
- School psychologists use information and technology resources to enhance data collection and decision-making.

Consultation and Collaboration

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

- School psychologists use a consultative problem-solving process as a vehicle for planning, implementing, and evaluating academic and mental health services.
- School psychologists effectively communicate information for diverse audiences, such as parents, teachers and other school personnel, policy makers, community leaders, and others.
- School psychologists consult and collaborate at the individual, family, group, and systems levels

- School psychologists facilitate communication and collaboration among diverse school personnel, families, community professionals, and others
- School psychologists function as change agents, using their skills in communication, collaboration, and consultation to promote necessary change at the individual student, classroom, building, and district, state, and federal levels.
- School psychologists apply psychological and educational principles necessary to enhance collaboration and achieve effectiveness in provision of services.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND SCHOOLS

Student-Level Services

Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills

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

- School psychologists use assessment data to develop and implement evidence-based instructional strategies that are intended to improve student performance.
- School psychologists promote the principles of student-centered learning to help students develop their individual abilities to be self-regulated learners, including the ability to set individual learning goals, design a learning process to achieve those goals, and assess outcomes to determine whether the goals were achieved.
- School psychologists work with other school personnel to ensure the attainment of state and local academic benchmarks by all students.
- School psychologists apply current empirically based research on learning and cognition to the development of effective instructional strategies to promote student learning at the individual, group, and systems level.

- School psychologists work with other school personnel to develop, implement, and evaluate effective interventions for increasing the amount of time students are engaged in learning.
- School psychologists incorporate all available assessment information in developing instructional strategies to meet the individual learning needs of children.
- School psychologists share information about research in curriculum and instruction with educators, parents, and the community to promote improvement in instruction, student achievement, and healthy lifestyles.
- School psychologists facilitate design and delivery of curriculum and instructional strategies that promote children's academic achievement, including, for example, literacy instruction, teacher-directed instruction, peer tutoring, interventions for self-regulation and planning/organization, etc.
- School psychologists use information and assistive technology resources to enhance students' cognitive and academic skills.
- School psychologists address intervention acceptability and fidelity during development, implementation, and evaluation of instructional interventions.

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. Examples of professional practices associated with development of social, emotional, behavioral, and life skills include the following:

- School psychologists integrate behavioral supports and mental health services with academic and learning goals for children.
- School psychologists facilitate design and delivery of curricula to help students develop effective behaviors, such as self-regulation and self-monitoring, planning/organization, empathy, and healthy decision-making.
- School psychologists use systematic decision-making to consider the antecedents, consequences, functions,

and potential causes of behavioral difficulties that may impede learning or socialization.

- School psychologists address intervention acceptability and fidelity during development, implementation, and evaluation of behavioral and mental health interventions.
- School psychologists provide a continuum of developmentally appropriate mental health services, including individual and group counseling, behavioral coaching, classroom and school-wide social-emotional learning programs, positive behavioral support, and parent education and support; this may include attention to issues such as life skills and personal safety for students with lower levels of functioning.
- School psychologists develop and implement behavior change programs at individual, group, classroom, and school-wide levels that demonstrate the use of appropriate ecological and behavioral approaches (e.g., positive reinforcement, social skills training, and positive psychology) to student discipline and classroom management.
- School psychologists evaluate implementation and outcomes of behavioral and mental health interventions for individuals and groups.

Systems-Level Services

School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning

School psychologists have knowledge of school and systems structure, organization, and theory; general and special education; technology resources; and evidence-based school practices that promote learning and mental health. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to develop and implement practices and strategies to create and maintain effective and supportive learning environments for children and others. Professional practices associated with school-wide promotion of learning include the following:

- School psychologists, in collaboration with others, incorporate evidence-based strategies in the design, implementation, and evaluation of effective policies and practices in areas such as discipline, instructional support, staff training, school and other agency improvement activities, program evaluation, student transitions at all levels of schooling, grading, home-school partnerships, and more.
- School psychologists use their knowledge of organizational development and systems theory to assist in

promoting a respectful and supportive atmosphere for decision making and collaboration, and a commitment to quality instruction and services.

- School psychologists are actively involved in the development of school improvement plans that impact the programs and services available to children, youth, and families, and the manner in which school psychologists deliver their services.
- School psychologists incorporate evidence-based strategies when developing and delivering intervention programs to facilitate successful transitions of students from one environment to another environment (e.g., program to program, school to school, age-level changes, and school to work transitions).
- School psychologists promote the development and maintenance of learning environments that support resilience and academic growth, promote high rates of academic engaged time, and reduce negative influences on learning and behavior.
- School psychologists participate in designing and implementing universal screening programs to identify students in need of additional instructional or behavioral support services, as well as progress monitoring systems to ensure successful learning and school adjustment.
- School psychologists work collaboratively with other school personnel to create and maintain a multitiered continuum of services to support all students' attainment of academic, social, emotional, and behavioral goals.
- School psychologists apply the problem-solving process to broader research and systems-level problems that result in the identification of factors that influence learning and behavior, the evaluation of the outcomes of classroom, building, and system initiatives and the implementation of decision-making practices designed to meet general public accountability responsibilities.

Preventive and Responsive Services

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

effective practices associated with preventive and responsive services include the following:

- School psychologists promote recognition of risk and protective factors that are vital to understanding and addressing systemic problems such as school failure, truancy, dropout, bullying, youth suicide, or school violence.
- School psychologists participate in school crisis teams and use data-based decision making methods, problem-solving strategies, consultation, collaboration, and direct services in the context of crisis prevention, preparation, response, and recovery.
- School psychologists provide direct counseling, behavioral coaching, and indirect interventions through consultation for students who experience mental health problems that impair learning and/or socialization.
- School psychologists develop, implement, and evaluate prevention and intervention programs based on risk and protective factors that are precursors to severe learning and behavioral problems.
- School psychologists collaborate with school personnel, parents, students, and community resources to provide competent mental health support during and after crisis situations.
- School psychologists promote wellness and resilience by (a) collaborating with other healthcare professionals to provide a basic knowledge of behaviors that lead to good health for children; (b) facilitating environmental changes conducive to good health and adjustment of children; and (c) accessing resources to address a wide variety of behavioral, learning, mental, and physical needs.
- School psychologists participate in the implementation and evaluation of programs that promote safe and violence-free schools and communities.
- School psychologists use evidence-based strategies to design, implement, and evaluate effective policies and practices that promote family, school, and community partnerships to enhance learning and mental health outcomes for students.
- School psychologists identify diverse cultural issues, contexts, and other factors that have an impact on family-school partnerships and interactions with community providers, and address these factors when developing and providing services for families.
- School psychologists promote strategies for safe, nurturing, and dependable parenting and home interventions to facilitate children's healthy development.
- School psychologists advocate for families and support parents in their involvement in school activities, for both addressing individual students' needs and participating in classroom and school events.
- School psychologists educate the school community regarding the influence of family involvement on school achievement and advocate for parent involvement in school governance and policy development whenever feasible.
- School psychologists help create linkages between schools, families, and community providers, and help coordinate services when programming for children involves multiple agencies.

FOUNDATIONS OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICE DELIVERY

Diversity in Development and Learning

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

Family-School Collaboration Services

School psychologists have knowledge of principles and research related to family systems, strengths, needs, and culture; evidence-based strategies to support family influences on children's learning and mental health; and strategies to develop collaboration between families and schools. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to design, implement, and evaluate services that respond to culture and context and facilitate family and school partnerships and interactions with community agencies for enhancement of academic and social-behavioral outcomes for children. Examples of professional practices associated with family-school collaboration include the following:

- School psychologists apply their understanding of the influence of culture, background, and individual learning characteristics (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) when designing and implementing interventions to achieve learning and behavioral outcomes.
- School psychologists, in collaboration with others, address individual differences, strengths, backgrounds, talents, and needs in the design, implementation, and evaluation of services in order to improve learning and mental health outcomes for all children in family, school, and community contexts.
- School psychologists 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.
- School psychologists work collaboratively with cultural brokers or community liaisons to understand and address the needs of diverse learners.
- School psychologists utilize a problem solving framework for addressing the needs of English language learners.
- School psychologists recognize in themselves and others the subtle racial, class, gender, cultural and other biases they may bring to their work and the way these biases influence decision-making, instruction, behavior, and long-term outcomes for students.
- School psychologists promote fairness and social justice in educational programs and services.
- School psychologists incorporate techniques for data collection, analyses, and accountability in evaluation of services at the individual, group, and system levels.
- School psychologists, in collaboration with others, collect, analyze, and interpret program evaluation data in applied settings.
- School psychologists provide support for classroom teachers in collecting and analyzing progress monitoring data.
- School psychologists apply knowledge of evidence-based interventions and programs in designing, implementing, and evaluating the fidelity and effectiveness of school-based intervention plans.
- School psychologists 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.
- School psychologists incorporate various techniques for data collection, measurement, analysis, accountability, and use of technology resources in evaluation of services at the individual, group, and/or systems levels.

Research and Program Evaluation

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

- School psychologists evaluate and synthesize a cumulative body of research findings as a foundation for effective service delivery.

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. Examples of legal, ethical, and professional practice include the following:

- School psychologists practice in ways that are consistent with ethical, professional, and legal standards and regulations.
- School psychologists engage in effective, collaborative, and ethical professional relationships.
- School psychologists use supervision and mentoring for effective practice.
- School psychologists access, evaluate, and utilize information sources and technology in ways that safeguard and enhance the quality of services and responsible record keeping.

- School psychologists assist administrators, teachers, other school personnel, and parents in understanding and adhering to legislation and regulations relevant to regular education and special education.
- School psychologists advocate for professional roles as providers of effective services that enhance the learning and mental health of all children and youth.
- School psychologists engage in lifelong learning and formulate personal plans for ongoing professional growth.
- School psychologists participate in continuing education activities at a level consistent with maintenance of the NCSP credential (i.e., a minimum of 25 hours of professional development per year).

PART II: ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES

ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLE 1: ORGANIZATION OF SERVICE DELIVERY

School psychological services are provided in a coordinated, organized fashion and are delivered in a manner that ensures the provision of a comprehensive and seamless continuum of services. Services are delivered in accordance with a strategic planning process that considers the needs of consumers and utilizes an evidence-based program evaluation model.

- 1.1 School psychological services are planned and delivered on the basis of a systematic assessment of the educational and psychological needs of the students and families in the local community. School systems ensure that services provided directly by school psychologists are based on a strategic plan. The plan is developed based on the collective needs of the school system and community, with the primary focus being the specific needs of the students served by individual school psychologists.
- 1.2 School psychological services are available to all students on an equal basis and are not determined by a specific funding source. Services are provided to students based on their need, not based on their eligibility to generate specific funding.
- 1.3 School psychological services are integrated with other school and community services. Students and their families should not be responsible for the integration of these services based on funding, setting, or program location. Therefore, school psychological and mental health services are provided through a “seamless” system of care.

When school psychological services are provided by outside consultants, the school system maintains responsibility for the quality of services and for oversight of planning and implementation of services.

- 1.4 Contractual school psychological services are provided in a manner consistent with this model, *NASP Principles for Professional Ethics*, and other relevant professional guidelines and standards. Contractual school psychological services are not used as a means to decrease the type, amount, and quality of school psychological services provided by an employing agency. They may be used to augment and enhance programs.
- 1.5 School systems conduct regular evaluations of the collective delivery of educational, mental health, and other student services as well as those services provided by individual school psychologists. The evaluation process focuses on both the nature and extent of the services provided (process) and the student- or family-focused effects of those services (outcomes). Evaluation of services from outside consultants who provide school psychological services is the responsibility of the school system, and the evaluation process should be consistent with that used for services provided by school psychologists who are school district employees.
- 1.6 The school system provides a range of services to meet the academic and mental health needs of students. As indicated in this model, school psychologists collaborate with other school personnel to provide both direct and indirect services to students and families. The consumers of and participants in these services include the following: students, teachers, counselors, social workers, administrators, other school personnel, families, care providers, other community and regional agencies, and resources that support the educational process.
- 1.7 School systems support the provision of consultative and other services by school psychologists to teachers, administrators, and other school personnel for the purpose of improving student outcomes.

ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLE 2: CLIMATE

It is the responsibility of the school system to create a climate in which school psychological services can be delivered with mutual respect for all parties. Employees have the freedom to advocate for the services that are necessary to

meet the needs of consumers and are free from artificial, administrative, or political constraints that might hinder or alter the provision of appropriate services.

- 2.1 School systems promote cooperative and collaborative relationships among staff members in the best mutual interests of students and families. Conflicts are resolved in a constructive and professional manner.
- 2.2 School systems provide an organizational climate in which school psychologists and other personnel may advocate in a professional manner for the most appropriate services for students and families, without fear of reprisal from supervisors or administrators.
- 2.3 School systems promote work environments that maximize job satisfaction of employees in order to maintain a high quality of services provided to students. Measures of work climate are included in organizational self-evaluation.
- 2.4 School systems promote and advocate for balance between professional and personal lives of employees. Supervisors monitor work and stress levels of employees and take steps to reduce pressure when the well-being of the employee is at risk. Supervisors are available to employees to problem solve when personal factors may adversely affect job performance and when job expectations may adversely affect the personal life of the employee.

ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLE 3: PHYSICAL, PERSONNEL, AND FISCAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS

School systems ensure that (a) an adequate recruitment and retention plan for employees exists to ensure adequate personnel to meet the needs of the system; (b) all sources of funding, both public and private, are used and maximized to ensure the fiscal support necessary to provide adequate services; (c) all employees have adequate technology, clerical services, and a physical work environment; and (d) employees have adequate personnel benefits necessary to support their work, including continuing educational professional development.

- 3.1 School systems assume professional responsibility and accountability for services through the recruitment of qualified and diverse staff and the assurance that staff function only in their areas of competency.

- 3.2 School systems support recruitment and retention of qualified staff by advocating for appropriate ratios of school psychology services staff to students. The ratio of school psychologists to students is a critical aspect of the quality of services to students. This ratio should be determined by the level of staffing needed to provide comprehensive school psychological services in accordance with the system's needs assessment. Generally, the ratio should not exceed 1,000 students to 1 school psychologist. When school psychologists are providing comprehensive and preventive services (i.e., evaluations, consultation, individual/group counseling, crisis response, behavioral interventions, etc), this ratio should not exceed 500 to 700 students for 1 school psychologist in order to ensure quality of student outcomes. Similarly, when school psychologists are assigned to work primarily with student populations that have particularly intensive special needs (e.g., students with significant emotional or behavioral disorders, or students with autism spectrum disorders), this student to school psychologist ratio should be even lower.
- 3.3 School systems provide advanced technological resources in time management, communication systems, data management systems, and service delivery.
- 3.4 School systems provide staff with access to adequate clerical assistance, appropriate professional work materials, sufficient office and work space, adequate technology support (e.g., e-mail, computer), and general working conditions that enhance the delivery of effective services. Included are assessment and intervention materials, access to private telephone and office, clerical services, therapeutic aids, and access to professional literature.

ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLE 4: PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

School systems ensure that policies and practices exist that result in positive, proactive communication among employees at all administrative levels of the organization.

- 4.1 School systems provide opportunities for employees to communicate with each other about issues of mutual professional interest on a regular basis.
- 4.2 School systems support collaborative problem solving approaches to the planning and delivery of school psychological services. Decision making

and strategic planning regarding school psychological services is done in collaboration with other departments and outside agencies to ensure optimal services for students.

- 4.3 School systems ensure that staff members have access to the technology necessary to perform their jobs adequately and to maintain appropriate and confidential communication with students, families, and service providers within and outside the system.
- 4.4 The school system's policy on student records is consistent with state and federal rules and laws and ensures the protection of the confidentiality of the student and his or her family. The policy specifies the types of data developed by the school psychologist that are classified as school or pupil records. The policy gives clear guidance (consistent with *the Family Educational Records and Privacy Act* or similar state/court regulations) regarding which documents belong to the school and the student/guardian and which documents (such as clinical notes) are the personal property of the school psychologist. Although test protocols are part of the student's record, the school system ensures that test security is protected and copyright restrictions are observed. Release of records and protocols is consistent with state and federal regulations. The policy on student records includes procedures for maintaining student confidentiality and privacy in the use of electronic communications. The *NASP Principles for Professional Ethics* provides additional guidance for schools with regard to responsible school-based record keeping.

ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLE 5: SUPERVISION AND MENTORING

The school system ensures 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. This process focuses on promoting professional growth and exemplary professional practice leading to improved performance by all concerned, including the school psychologist, supervisor, students, and the entire school community.

- 5.1 Supervisors have a valid state school psychologist credential for the setting in which they are 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.
- 5.2 Supervision methods should match the developmental level of the school psychologist. Interns and novice school psychologists require more intensive supervisory modalities, including regularly scheduled face-to-face 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.
- 5.3 School systems allow time for school psychologists to participate in supervision and mentoring. In small or rural systems, where a supervising school psychologist may not be available, the school system ensures that school psychologists are given opportunities to seek supervision and/or peer support outside the district (e.g., through regional, state, or national school psychologist networks).
- 5.4 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.
- 5.5 Supervisors ensure that practica and internship experiences occur under conditions of appropriate supervision including (a) access to professional school psychologists who will serve as appropriate role models, (b) provision of supervision by an appropriately credentialed school psychologist, and (c) provision of supervision within the guidelines of the training institution and *NASP Graduate Preparation Standards for School Psychology*.
- 5.6 Supervisors provide professional leadership through participation in school psychology professional organizations and active involvement in local, state, and federal public policy development.

ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLE 6: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RECOGNITION SYSTEMS

Individual school psychologists and school systems develop professional development plans annually. The school system ensures that continuing professional development of its

personnel is both adequate for and relevant to the service delivery priorities of the school system. School systems recognize the need for a variety of professional development activities. These activities could include those provided by the school system, NASP-approved providers, other educational entities, or other activities such as online training, formal self-study, and professional learning communities.

6.1 Professional Development Responsibilities

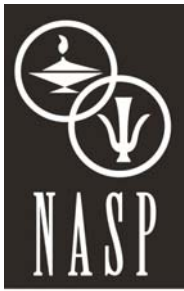
- The school system provides support (e.g., funding, time, supervision) to ensure that school psychologists have sufficient access to continuing professional development at a level necessary to remain current regarding developments in professional practices that benefit children, families, and schools.
- The school system provides technology and personnel resources to assist in providing a system for documenting professional development activities.

6.2 Professional Development Plans and Application of New Skills

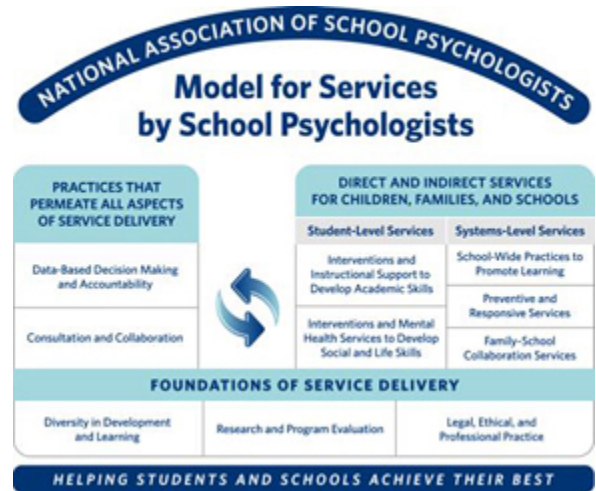
- The school system provides supervision of school psychologists by an appropriately credentialed and experienced school psychologist, so that the development of professional skills is continued and maintained over time. School psychologists seek and use appropriate types and levels of supervision as they acquire new knowledge, skills, and abilities by creating and following a personal plan of professional development.
- Supervision supported by the school system makes available the opportunities to provide feedback to the school psychologist about the quality of new skill applications.

6.3 Advanced Recognition of Professional Development:

The school system provides levels of recognition (e.g., salary, opportunity to use new skills) that reflect the professional growth of individual school psychologists.



**NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOL
PSYCHOLOGISTS**



The **NASP Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services**, also known as the NASP Practice Model, represents NASP's official policy regarding the delivery of school psychological services. It delineates what services can reasonably be expected from school psychologists across 10 domains of practice, and the general framework within which services should be provided. The recommended ratio for schools implementing this comprehensive Model is one school psychologist to 500–700 students.

NASP Model 10 Domains of Practice

Practices That Permeate All Aspects of Service Delivery

Domain 1: Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability

School psychologists have knowledge of varied models and methods of assessment and data collection for identifying strengths and needs, developing effective services and programs, and measuring progress and outcomes.

Domain 2: Consultation and Collaboration

School psychologists have knowledge of varied models and strategies of consultation, collaboration, and communication applicable to individuals, families, groups, and systems and methods to promote effective implementation of services.

Direct and Indirect Services for Children, Families, and Schools

Student-Level Services

Domain 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 curricula and instructional strategies.

Domain 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.

Systems-Level Services

Domain 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 learning and mental health.

Domain 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 evidence-based strategies for effective crisis response.

Domain 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 and mental health; and strategies to develop collaboration between families and schools.

Foundations of School Psychological Service Delivery

Domain 8: Diversity in Development and Learning

School psychologists have knowledge of individual differences, abilities, disabilities, and other diverse student characteristics; principles and research related to diversity factors for children, families, and schools, including factors related to culture, context, and individual and role difference; and evidence-based strategies to enhance services and address potential influences related to diversity.

Domain 9: Research and Program Evaluation

School psychologists have knowledge of research design, statistics, measurement, varied data collection and analysis techniques, and program evaluation sufficient for understanding research and interpreting data in applied settings.

Domain 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.

NASP Practice Model Organizational Principals

The NASP practice model is framed on six organizational principles that reflect and link to the broader organizational principles of effective schools. These principles are summarized below.

Principle 1. Services are coordinated and delivered in a comprehensive and seamless continuum that considers the needs of consumers and utilizes an evidence-based program evaluation model.

Principle 2. The professional climate facilitates effective service delivery that allows school psychologist to advocate for and provide appropriate services.

Principle 3. Physical, personnel, and fiscal systems support appropriately trained and adequate numbers of school psychologists, and provide adequate financial and physical resources to practice effectively.

Principle 4. Policies and practices exist that result in positive, proactive communication among employees at all administrative levels.

Principle 5. All personnel have levels and types of supervision and/or mentoring adequate to ensure the provision of effective and accountable services.

Principle 6. Individual school psychologists and school systems create professional development plans annually that are both adequate for and relevant to the service delivery priorities of the school system.

For more information on the NASP Practice Model and the full NASP Standards visit

<http://www.nasponline.org/standards/2010standards.aspx>.

Principles for Professional Ethics

2010

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National Association of School Psychologists

Principles for Professional Ethics

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 *Principles for Professional Ethics* is designed to be used in conjunction with the NASP *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists*, *Standards for the Credentialing of School Psychologists*, and *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services* 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 formal principles that elucidate the proper conduct of a professional school psychologist are known as *ethics*. In 1974, NASP adopted its first code of ethics, the *Principles for Professional Ethics (Principles)*, and revisions were made in 1984, 1992, 1997, and 2000. The purpose of the *Principles* is to protect the public and those who receive school psychological services by sensitizing

school psychologists to the ethical aspects of their work, educating them about appropriate conduct, helping them monitor their own behavior, and providing standards to be used in the resolution of complaints of unethical conduct.¹ NASP members and school psychologists who are certified by the National School Psychologist Certification System are bound to abide by NASP's code of ethics.²

The NASP *Principles for Professional Ethics* were developed to address the unique circumstances associated with providing school psychological services. The duty to educate children and the legal authority to do so rests with state governments. When school psychologists employed by a school board make decisions in their official roles, such acts are seen as actions by state government. As state actors, school-based practitioners have special obligations to all students. They must know and respect the rights of students under the U.S. Constitution and federal and state statutory law. They must balance the authority of parents to make decisions about their children with the needs and rights of those children, and the purposes and authority of schools. Furthermore, as school employees, school psychologists have a legal as well as an ethical obligation to take steps to protect all students from reasonably foreseeable risk of harm. Finally, school-based practitioners work in a context that emphasizes multidisciplinary problem solving and intervention.³ For these reasons, psychologists employed by the schools may have less control over aspects of service delivery than practitioners in private practice. However, within this framework, it is expected that school psychologists will make careful, reasoned, and principled ethical choices⁴ based on knowledge of this code, recognizing that responsibility for ethical conduct rests with the individual practitioner.

School psychologists are committed to the application of their professional expertise for the purpose of promoting improvement in the quality of life for students, families, and school communities. This objective is pursued in ways that protect the dignity and rights of those involved. School psychologists consider the interests and rights of children and youth to be their highest priority in decision making, and act as advocates for all students. These assumptions necessitate that school psychologists "speak up" for the needs and rights of students even when it may be difficult to do so.

The *Principles for Professional Ethics*, like all codes of ethics, provide only limited guidance in making ethical choices. Individual judgment is necessary to apply the code to situations that arise in professional practice. Ethical dilemmas may be created by situations involving

competing ethical principles, conflicts between ethics and law, the conflicting interests of multiple parties, the dual roles of employee and pupil advocate, or because it is difficult to decide how statements in the ethics code apply to a particular situation.⁵ Such situations are often complicated and may require a nuanced application of these *Principles* to effect a resolution that results in the greatest benefit for the student and concerned others. When difficult situations arise, school psychologists are advised to use a systematic problem-solving process to identify the best course of action. This process should include identifying the ethical issues involved, consulting these *Principles*, consulting colleagues with greater expertise, evaluating the rights and welfare of all affected parties, considering alternative solutions and their consequences, and accepting responsibility for the decisions made.^{6,7}

The NASP *Principles for Professional Ethics* may require a more stringent standard of conduct than law, and in those situations in which both apply, school psychologists are expected to adhere to the *Principles*. When conflicts between ethics and law occur, school psychologists are expected to take steps to resolve conflicts by problem solving with others and through positive, respected, and legal channels. If not able to resolve the conflict in this manner, they may abide by the law, as long as the resulting actions do not violate basic human rights.⁸

In addition to providing services to public and private schools, school psychologists may be employed in a variety of other settings, including juvenile justice institutions, colleges and universities, mental health clinics, hospitals, and private practice. The principles in this code should be considered by school psychologists in their ethical decision making regardless of employment setting. However, this revision of the code, like its precursors, focuses on the special challenges associated with providing school psychological services in schools and to students. School psychologists who provide services directly to children, parents, and other clients as private practitioners, and those who work in health and mental health settings, are encouraged to be knowledgeable of federal and state law regulating mental health providers, and to consult the American Psychological Association's (2002) *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct* for guidance on issues not directly addressed in this code.

Four broad ethical themes⁹ provide the organizational framework for the 2010 *Principles for Professional Ethics*. The four broad ethical themes subsume 17 ethical principles. Each principle is then further articulated by

multiple specific standards of conduct. The broad themes, corollary principles, and ethical standards are to be considered in decision making. NASP will seek to enforce the 17 ethical principles and corollary standards that appear in the *Principles for Professional Ethics* with its members and school psychologists who hold the Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) credential in accordance with NASP's *Ethical and Professional Practices Committee Procedures* (2008). Regardless of role, clientele, or setting, school psychologists should reflect on the theme and intent of each ethical principle and standard to determine its application to his or her individual situation.

The decisions made by school psychologists affect the welfare of children and families and can enhance their schools and communities. For this reason, school psychologists are encouraged to strive for excellence rather than simply meeting the minimum obligations outlined in the NASP *Principles for Professional Ethics*,¹⁰ and to engage in the lifelong learning that is necessary to achieve and maintain expertise in applied professional ethics.

DEFINITION OF TERMS AS USED IN THE PRINCIPLES FOR PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Client: The *client* is the person or persons with whom the school psychologist establishes a professional relationship for the purpose of providing school psychological services. A school psychologist–client professional relationship is established by an informed agreement with client(s) about the school psychologist's ethical and other duties to each party.¹¹ While not clients per se, classrooms, schools, and school systems also may be recipients of school psychological services and often are parties with an interest in the actions of school psychologists.

Child: A *child*, as defined in law, generally refers to a minor, a person younger than the age of majority. Although this term may be regarded as demeaning when applied to teenagers, it is used in this document when necessary to denote minor status. The term *student* is used when a less precise term is adequate.

Informed Consent: *Informed consent* means that the person giving consent has the legal authority to make a consent decision, a clear understanding of what it is he or she is consenting to, and that his or her consent is freely given and may be withdrawn without prejudice.¹²

Assent: The term *assent* refers to a minor's affirmative agreement to participate in psychological services or research.

Parent: The term *parent* may be defined in law or district policy, and can include the birth or adoptive parent, an individual acting in the place of a natural or adoptive parent (a grandparent or other relative, stepparent, or domestic partner), and/or an individual who is legally responsible for the child's welfare.

Advocacy: School psychologists have a special obligation to speak up for the rights and welfare of students and families, and to provide a voice to clients who cannot or do not wish to speak for themselves. *Advocacy* also occurs when school psychologists use their expertise in psychology and education to promote changes in schools, systems, and laws that will benefit schoolchildren, other students, and families.¹³ Nothing in this code of ethics, however, should be construed as requiring school psychologists to engage in insubordination (willful disregard of an employer's lawful instructions) or to file a complaint about school district practices with a federal or state regulatory agency as part of their advocacy efforts.

School-Based Versus Private Practice: *School-based practice* refers to the provision of school psychological services under the authority of a state, regional, or local educational agency. School-based practice occurs if the school psychologist is an employee of the schools or contracted by the schools on a per case or consultative basis. *Private practice* occurs when a school psychologist enters into an agreement with a client(s) rather than an educational agency to provide school psychological services and the school psychologist's fee for services is the responsibility of the client or his or her representative.

I. RESPECTING THE DIGNITY AND RIGHTS OF ALL PERSONS

School psychologists engage only in professional practices that maintain the dignity of all with whom they work. In their words and actions, school psychologists demonstrate respect for the autonomy of persons and their right to self-determination, respect for privacy, and a commitment to just and fair treatment of all persons.

Principle I.1. Autonomy and Self-Determination (Consent and Assent)

School psychologists respect the right of persons to participate in decisions affecting their own welfare.

Standard I.1.1

School psychologists encourage and promote parental participation in school decisions affecting their children (see Standard II.3.10). However, where school psychologists are members of the school's educational support staff, not all of their services require informed parent consent. It is ethically permissible to provide school-based consultation services regarding a child or adolescent to a student assistance team or teacher without informed parent consent as long as the resulting interventions are under the authority of the teacher and within the scope of typical classroom interventions.¹⁴ Parent consent is not ethically required for a school-based school psychologist to review a student's educational records, conduct classroom observations, assist in within-classroom interventions and progress monitoring, or to participate in educational screenings conducted as part of a regular program of instruction. Parent consent is required if the consultation about a particular child or adolescent is likely to be extensive and ongoing and/or if school actions may result in a significant intrusion on student or family privacy beyond what might be expected in the course of ordinary school activities.¹⁵ Parents must be notified prior to the administration of school- or classroom-wide screenings for mental health problems and given the opportunity to remove their child or adolescent from participation in such screenings.

Standard I.1.2

Except for urgent situations or self-referrals by a minor student, school psychologists seek parent consent (or the consent of an adult student) prior to establishing a school psychologist–client relationship for the purpose of psychological diagnosis, assessment of eligibility for special education or disability accommodations, or to provide ongoing individual or group counseling or other nonclassroom therapeutic intervention.*

- It is ethically permissible to provide psychological assistance without parent notice or consent in emergency situations or if there is reason to believe a student may pose a danger to others; is at risk for self-harm; or is in danger of injury, exploitation, or maltreatment.
- When a student who is a minor self-refers for assistance, it is ethically permissible to provide

psychological assistance without parent notice or consent for one or several meetings to establish the nature and degree of the need for services and assure the child is safe and not in danger. It is ethically permissible to provide services to mature minors without parent consent where allowed by state law and school district policy. However, if the student is *not* old enough to receive school psychological assistance independent of parent consent, the school psychologist obtains parent consent to provide continuing assistance to the student beyond the preliminary meetings or refers the student to alternative sources of assistance that do not require parent notice or consent.

Standard I.1.3

School psychologists ensure that an individual providing consent for school psychological services is fully informed about the nature and scope of services offered, assessment/intervention goals and procedures, any foreseeable risks, the cost of services to the parent or student (if any), and the benefits that reasonably can be expected. The explanation includes discussion of the limits of confidentiality, who will receive information about assessment or intervention outcomes, and the possible consequences of the assessment/intervention services being offered. Available alternative services are identified, if appropriate. This explanation takes into account language and cultural differences, cognitive capabilities, developmental level, age, and other relevant factors so that it may be understood by the individual providing consent. School psychologists appropriately document written or oral consent. Any service provision by interns, practicum students, or other trainees is explained and agreed to in advance, and the identity and responsibilities of the supervising school psychologist are explained prior to the provision of services.¹⁶

Standard I.1.4

School psychologists encourage a minor student's voluntary participation in decision making about school psychological services as much as feasible. Ordinarily, school psychologists seek the student's assent to services; however, it is ethically permissible to bypass student assent to services if the service is considered to be of direct benefit to the student and/or is required by law.¹⁷

*It is recommended that school district parent handbooks and websites advise parents that a minor student may be seen by school health or mental health professionals (e.g., school nurse, counselor, social worker, school psychologist) without parent notice or consent to ensure that the student is safe or is not a danger to others. Parents should also be advised that district school psychologists routinely assist teachers in planning classroom instruction and monitoring its effectiveness and do not need to notify parents of, or seek consent for, such involvement in student support.

- If a student's assent for services is not solicited, school psychologists nevertheless honor the student's right to be informed about the services provided.
- When a student is given a choice regarding whether to accept or refuse services, the school psychologist ensures the student understands what is being offered, honors the student's stated choice, and guards against overwhelming the student with choices he or she does not wish or is not able to make.¹⁸

Standard 1.1.5

School psychologists respect the wishes of parents who object to school psychological services and attempt to guide parents to alternative resources.

Principle I.2. Privacy and Confidentiality

School psychologists respect the right of persons to choose for themselves whether to disclose their private thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and behaviors.

Standard 1.2.1

School psychologists respect the right of persons to self-determine whether to disclose private information.

Standard 1.2.2

School psychologists minimize intrusions on privacy. They do not seek or store private information about clients that is not needed in the provision of services. School psychologists recognize that client–school psychologist communications are privileged in most jurisdictions and do not disclose information that would put the student or family at legal, social, or other risk if shared with third parties, except as permitted by the mental health provider–client privilege laws in their state.¹⁹

Standard 1.2.3

School psychologists inform students and other clients of the boundaries of confidentiality at the outset of establishing a professional relationship. They seek a shared understanding with clients regarding the types of information that will and will not be shared with third parties. However, if a child or adolescent is in immediate need of assistance, it is permissible to delay the discussion of confidentiality until the immediate crisis is resolved. School psychologists recognize that it may be necessary to discuss confidentiality at multiple points in a professional relationship to ensure client understanding and agreement regarding how sensitive disclosures will be handled.

Standard 1.2.4

School psychologists respect the confidentiality of information obtained during their professional work. Information is not revealed to third parties without the agreement of a minor child's parent or legal guardian (or an adult student), except in those situations in which failure to release information would result in danger to the student or others, or where otherwise required by law. Whenever feasible, student assent is obtained prior to disclosure of his or her confidences to third parties, including disclosures to the student's parents.

Standard 1.2.5

School psychologists discuss and/or release confidential information only for professional purposes and only with persons who have a legitimate need to know. They do so within the strict boundaries of relevant privacy statutes.

Standard 1.2.6

School psychologists respect the right of privacy of students, parents, and colleagues with regard to sexual orientation, gender identity, or transgender status. They do not share information about the sexual orientation, gender identity, or transgender status of a student (including minors), parent, or school employee with anyone without that individual's permission.²⁰

Standard 1.2.7

School psychologists respect the right of privacy of students, their parents and other family members, and colleagues with regard to sensitive health information (e.g., presence of a communicable disease). They do not share sensitive health information about a student, parent, or school employee with others without that individual's permission (or the permission of a parent or guardian in the case of a minor). School psychologists consult their state laws and department of public health for guidance if they believe a client poses a health risk to others.²¹

Principle I.3. Fairness and Justice

In their words and actions, school psychologists promote fairness and justice. They use their expertise to cultivate school climates that are safe and welcoming to all persons regardless of actual or perceived characteristics, including race, ethnicity, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, immigration status, socioeconomic status, primary language, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression,

disability, or any other distinguishing characteristics.

Standard I.3.1

School psychologists do not engage in or condone actions or policies that discriminate against persons, including students and their families, other recipients of service, supervisees, and colleagues based on actual or perceived characteristics including race; ethnicity; color; religion; ancestry; national origin; immigration status; socioeconomic status; primary language; gender; sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression; mental, physical, or sensory disability; or any other distinguishing characteristics.

Standard I.3.2

School psychologists pursue awareness and knowledge of how diversity factors may influence child development, behavior, and school learning. In conducting psychological, educational, or behavioral evaluations or in providing interventions, therapy, counseling, or consultation services, the school psychologist takes into account individual characteristics as enumerated in Standard I.3.1 so as to provide effective services.²²

Standard I.3.3

School psychologists work to correct school practices that are unjustly discriminatory or that deny students, parents, or others their legal rights. They take steps to foster a school climate that is safe, accepting, and respectful of all persons.

Standard I.3.4

School psychologists strive to ensure that all children have equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from school programs and that all students and families have access to and can benefit from school psychological services.²³

II. PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE AND RESPONSIBILITY

Beneficence, or responsible caring, means that the school psychologist acts to benefit others. To do this, school psychologists must practice within the boundaries of their competence, use scientific knowledge from psychology and education to help clients and others make informed choices, and accept responsibility for their work.²⁴

Principle II.1. Competence

To benefit clients, school psychologists engage only in practices for which they are qualified and competent.

Standard II.1.1

School psychologists recognize the strengths and limitations of their training and experience, engaging only in practices for which they are qualified. They enlist the assistance of other specialists in supervisory, consultative, or referral roles as appropriate in providing effective services.

Standard II.1.2

Practitioners are obligated to pursue knowledge and understanding of the diverse cultural, linguistic, and experiential backgrounds of students, families, and other clients. When knowledge and understanding of diversity characteristics are essential to ensure competent assessment, intervention, or consultation, school psychologists have or obtain the training or supervision necessary to provide effective services, or they make appropriate referrals.

Standard II.1.3

School psychologists refrain from any activity in which their personal problems may interfere with professional effectiveness. They seek assistance when personal problems threaten to compromise their professional effectiveness (also see III.4.2).

Standard II.1.4

School psychologists engage in continuing professional development. They remain current regarding developments in research, training, and professional practices that benefit children, families, and schools. They also understand that professional skill development beyond that of the novice practitioner requires well-planned continuing professional development and professional supervision.

Principle II.2. Accepting Responsibility for Actions

School psychologists accept responsibility for their professional work, monitor the effectiveness of their services, and work to correct ineffective recommendations.

Standard II.2.1

School psychologists review all of their written documents for accuracy, signing them only when correct. They may add an addendum, dated and signed, to a previously submitted report if information is found to be inaccurate or incomplete.

Standard II.2.2

School psychologists actively monitor the impact of their recommendations and intervention plans. They revise a recommendation, or modify or terminate an intervention plan, when data indicate the desired outcomes are not being attained. School psychologists seek the assistance of others in supervisory, consultative, or referral roles when progress monitoring indicates that their recommendations and interventions are not effective in assisting a client.

Standard II.2.3

School psychologists accept responsibility for the appropriateness of their professional practices, decisions, and recommendations. They correct misunderstandings resulting from their recommendations, advice, or information and take affirmative steps to offset any harmful consequences of ineffective or inappropriate recommendations.

Standard II.2.4

When supervising graduate students' field experiences or internships, school psychologists are responsible for the work of their supervisees.

Principle II.3. Responsible Assessment and Intervention Practices

School psychologists maintain the highest standard for responsible professional practices in educational and psychological assessment and direct and indirect interventions.

Standard II.3.1

Prior to the consideration of a disability label or category, the effects of current behavior management and/or instructional practices on the student's school performance are considered.

Standard II.3.2

School psychologists use assessment techniques and practices that the profession considers to be responsible, research-based practice.

- School psychologists select assessment instruments and strategies that are reliable and valid for the child and the purpose of the assessment. When using standardized measures, school psychologists adhere to the procedures for administration of the instrument that are provided by the author or publisher or the instrument. If modifications are made in the administration procedures for standardized tests or other instruments, such modifications are identified and discussed in the interpretation of the results.
- If using norm-referenced measures, school psychologists choose instruments with up-to-date normative data.
- When using computer-administered assessments, computer-assisted scoring, and/or interpretation programs, school psychologists choose programs that meet professional standards for accuracy and validity. School psychologists use professional judgment in evaluating the accuracy of computer-assisted assessment findings for the examinee.

Standard II.3.3

A psychological or psychoeducational assessment is based on a variety of different types of information from different sources.

Standard II.3.4

Consistent with education law and sound professional practice, children with suspected disabilities are assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability

Standard II.3.5

School psychologists conduct valid and fair assessments. They actively pursue knowledge of the student's disabilities and developmental, cultural, linguistic, and experiential background and then select, administer, and interpret assessment instruments and procedures in light of those characteristics (see Standard I.3.1. and I.3.2).

Standard II.3.6

When interpreters are used to facilitate the provision of assessment and intervention services, school psychologists take steps to ensure that the interpreters are appropriately trained and are acceptable to clients.²⁵

Standard II.3.7

It is permissible for school psychologists to make recommendations based solely on a review of existing records. However, they should utilize a representative

sample of records and explain the basis for, and the limitations of, their recommendations.²⁶

Standard II.3.8

School psychologists adequately interpret findings and present results in clear, understandable terms so that the recipient can make informed choices.

Standard II.3.9

School psychologists use intervention, counseling and therapy procedures, consultation techniques, and other direct and indirect service methods that the profession considers to be responsible, research-based practice:

- School psychologists use a problem-solving process to develop interventions appropriate to the presenting problems and that are consistent with data collected.
- Preference is given to interventions described in the peer-reviewed professional research literature and found to be efficacious.

Standard II.3.10

School psychologists encourage and promote parental participation in designing interventions for their children. When appropriate, this includes linking interventions between the school and the home, tailoring parental involvement to the skills of the family, and helping parents gain the skills needed to help their children.

- School psychologists discuss with parents the recommendations and plans for assisting their children. This discussion takes into account the ethnic/cultural values of the family and includes alternatives that may be available. Subsequent recommendations for program changes or additional services are discussed with parents, including any alternatives that may be available.
- Parents are informed of sources of support available at school and in the community.

Standard II.3.11

School psychologists discuss with students the recommendations and plans for assisting them. To the maximum extent appropriate, students are invited to participate in selecting and planning interventions.²⁷

Principle II.4 Responsible School-Based Record Keeping

School psychologists safeguard the privacy of school psychological records and ensure parent access to the records of their own children.

Standard II.4.1

School psychologists discuss with parents and adult students their rights regarding creation, modification, storage, and disposal of psychological and educational records that result from the provision of services. Parents and adult students are notified of the electronic storage and transmission of personally identifiable school psychological records and the associated risks to privacy.²⁸

Standard II.4.2

School psychologists maintain school-based psychological and educational records with sufficient detail to be useful in decision making by another professional and with sufficient detail to withstand scrutiny if challenged in a due process or other legal procedure.²⁹

Standard II.4.3

School psychologists include only documented and relevant information from reliable sources in school psychological records.

Standard II.4.4

School psychologists ensure that parents have appropriate access to the psychological and educational records of their child.

- Parents have a right to access any and all information that is used to make educational decisions about their child.
- School psychologists respect the right of parents to inspect, but not necessarily to copy, their child's answers to school psychological test questions, even if those answers are recorded on a test protocol (also see II.5.1).³⁰

Standard II.4.5

School psychologists take steps to ensure that information in school psychological records is not released to persons or agencies outside of the school without the consent of the parent except as required and permitted by law.

Standard II.4.6

To the extent that school psychological records are under their control, school psychologists ensure that only those school personnel who have a legitimate educational interest in a student are given access to the student's school psychological records without prior parent permission or the permission of an adult student.

Standard II.4.7

To the extent that school psychological records are under their control, school psychologists protect elec-

tronic files from unauthorized release or modification (e.g., by using passwords and encryption), and they take reasonable steps to ensure that school psychological records are not lost due to equipment failure.

Standard II.4.8

It is ethically permissible for school psychologists to keep private notes to use as a memory aid that are not made accessible to others. However, as noted in Standard II.4.4, any and all information that is used to make educational decisions about a student must be accessible to parents and adult students.

Standard II.4.9

School psychologists, in collaboration with administrators and other school staff, work to establish district policies regarding the storage and disposal of school psychological records that are consistent with law and sound professional practice. They advocate for school district policies and practices that:

- safeguard the security of school psychological records while facilitating appropriate parent access to those records
- identify time lines for the periodic review and disposal of outdated school psychological records that are consistent with law and sound professional practice
- seek parent or other appropriate permission prior to the destruction of obsolete school psychological records of current students
- ensure that obsolete school psychology records are destroyed in a way that the information cannot be recovered

Principle II.5 Responsible Use of Materials

School psychologists respect the intellectual property rights of those who produce tests, intervention materials, scholarly works, and other materials.

Standard II.5.1

School psychologists maintain test security, preventing the release of underlying principles and specific content that would undermine or invalidate the use of the instrument. Unless otherwise required by law or district policy, school psychologists provide parents with the opportunity to inspect and review their child's test answers rather than providing them with copies of the their child's test protocols. However, on parent request, it is permissible to provide copies of a child's test protocols to a professional who is qualified to interpret them.

Standard II.5.2

School psychologists do not promote or condone the use of restricted psychological and educational tests or other assessment tools or procedures by individuals who are not qualified to use them.

Standard II.5.3

School psychologists recognize the effort and expense involved in the development and publication of psychological and educational tests, intervention materials, and scholarly works. They respect the intellectual property rights and copyright interests of the producers of such materials, whether the materials are published in print or digital formats. They do not duplicate copyright-protected test manuals, testing materials, or unused test protocols without the permission of the producer. However, school psychologists understand that, at times, parents' rights to examine their child's test answers may supersede the interests of test publishers.^{31 32}

III. HONESTY AND INTEGRITY IN PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

To foster and maintain trust, school psychologists must be faithful to the truth and adhere to their professional promises. They are forthright about their qualifications, competencies, and roles; work in full cooperation with other professional disciplines to meet the needs of students and families; and avoid multiple relationships that diminish their professional effectiveness.

Principle III.1. Accurate Presentation of Professional Qualifications

School psychologists accurately identify their professional qualifications to others.

Standard III.1.1

Competency levels, education, training, experience, and certification and licensing credentials are accurately represented to clients, recipients of services, and others. School psychologists correct any misperceptions of their qualifications. School psychologists do not represent themselves as specialists in a particular domain without verifiable training and supervised experience in the specialty.

Standard III.1.2

School psychologists do not use affiliations with persons, associations, or institutions to imply a level of profes-

sional competence that exceeds that which has actually been achieved.

Principle III.2. Forthright Explanation of Professional Services, Roles, and Priorities

School psychologists are candid about the nature and scope of their services.

Standard III.2.1

School psychologists explain their professional competencies, roles, assignments, and working relationships to recipients of services and others in their work setting in a forthright and understandable manner. School psychologists explain all professional services to clients in a clear, understandable manner (see I.1.2).

Standard III.2.2

School psychologists make reasonable efforts to become integral members of the client service systems to which they are assigned. They establish clear roles for themselves within those systems while respecting the various roles of colleagues in other professions.

Standard III.2.3

The school psychologist's commitment to protecting the rights and welfare of children is communicated to the school administration, staff, and others as the highest priority in determining services.

Standard III.2.4

School psychologists who provide services to several different groups (e.g., families, teachers, classrooms) may encounter situations in which loyalties are conflicted. As much as possible, school psychologists make known their priorities and commitments in advance to all parties to prevent misunderstandings.

Standard III.2.5

School psychologists ensure that announcements and advertisements of the availability of their publications, products, and services for sale are factual and professional. They do not misrepresent their degree of responsibility for the development and distribution of publications, products, and services.

Principle III.3. Respecting Other Professionals

To best meet the needs of children, school psychologists cooperate with other profes-

sionals in relationships based on mutual respect.

Standard III.3.1

To meet the needs of children and other clients most effectively, school psychologists cooperate with other psychologists and professionals from other disciplines in relationships based on mutual respect. They encourage and support the use of all resources to serve the interests of students. If a child or other client is receiving similar services from another professional, school psychologists promote coordination of services.

Standard III.3.2

If a child or other client is referred to another professional for services, school psychologists ensure that all relevant and appropriate individuals, including the client, are notified of the change and reasons for the change. When referring clients to other professionals, school psychologists provide clients with lists of suitable practitioners from whom the client may seek services.

Standard III.3.3

Except when supervising graduate students, school psychologists do not alter reports completed by another professional without his or her permission to do so.

Principle III.4. Multiple Relationships and Conflicts of Interest

School psychologists avoid multiple relationships and conflicts of interest that diminish their professional effectiveness.

Standard III.4.1

The *Principles for Professional Ethics* provide standards for professional conduct. School psychologists, in their private lives, are free to pursue their personal interests, except to the degree that those interests compromise professional effectiveness.

Standard III.4.2

School psychologists refrain from any activity in which conflicts of interest or multiple relationships with a client or a client's family may interfere with professional effectiveness. School psychologists attempt to resolve such situations in a manner that provides greatest benefit to the client. School psychologists whose personal or religious beliefs or commitments may influence the nature of their professional services or their willingness to provide certain services inform

clients and responsible parties of this fact. When personal beliefs, conflicts of interests, or multiple relationships threaten to diminish professional effectiveness or would be viewed by the public as inappropriate, school psychologists ask their supervisor for reassignment of responsibilities, or they direct the client to alternative services.³³

Standard III.4.3

School psychologists do not exploit clients, supervisees, or graduate students through professional relationships or condone these actions by their colleagues. They do not participate in or condone sexual harassment of children, parents, other clients, colleagues, employees, trainees, supervisees, or research participants. School psychologists do not engage in sexual relationships with individuals over whom they have evaluation authority, including college students in their classes or program, or any other trainees, or supervisees. School psychologists do not engage in sexual relationships with their current or former pupil-clients; the parents, siblings, or other close family members of current pupil-clients; or current consultees.

Standard III.4.4

School psychologists are cautious about business and other relationships with clients that could interfere with professional judgment and effectiveness or potentially result in exploitation of a client.

Standard III.4.5

NASP requires that any action taken by its officers, members of the Executive Council or Delegate Assembly, or other committee members be free from the appearance of impropriety and free from any conflict of interest. NASP leaders recuse themselves from decisions regarding proposed NASP initiatives if they may gain an economic benefit from the proposed venture.

Standard III.4.6

A school psychologist's financial interests in a product (e.g., tests, computer software, professional materials) or service can influence his or her objectivity or the perception of his or her objectivity regarding that product or service. For this reason, school psychologists are obligated to disclose any significant financial interest in the products or services they discuss in their presentations or writings if that interest is not obvious in the authorship/ownership citations provided.

Standard III.4.7

School psychologists neither give nor receive any remuneration for referring children and other clients for professional services.

Standard III.4.8

School psychologists do not accept any remuneration in exchange for data from their client database without the permission of their employer and a determination of whether the data release ethically requires informed client consent.

Standard III.4.9

School psychologists who provide school-based services and also engage in the provision of private practice services (dual setting practitioners) recognize the potential for conflicts of interests between their two roles and take steps to avoid such conflicts. Dual setting practitioners:

- are obligated to inform parents or other potential clients of any psychological and educational services available at no cost from the schools prior to offering such services for remuneration
- may not offer or provide private practice services to a student of a school or special school program where the practitioner is currently assigned
- may not offer or provide private practice services to the parents or family members of a student eligible to attend a school or special school program where the practitioner is currently assigned
- may not offer or provide an independent evaluation as defined in special education law for a student who attends a local or cooperative school district where the practitioner is employed
- do not use tests, materials, equipment, facilities, secretarial assistance, or other services belonging to the public sector employer unless approved in advance by the employer
- conduct all private practice outside of the hours of contracted public employment
- hold appropriate credentials for practice in both the public and private sectors

IV. RESPONSIBILITY TO SCHOOLS, FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES, THE PROFESSION, AND SOCIETY

School psychologists promote healthy school, family, and community environments. They assume a proactive role in identifying social injustices that affect children and schools and

strive to reform systems-level patterns of injustice. They maintain the public trust in school psychologists by respecting law and encouraging ethical conduct. School psychologists advance professional excellence by mentoring less experienced practitioners and contributing to the school psychology knowledge base.

Principle IV.1. Promoting Healthy School, Family, and Community Environments

School psychologists use their expertise in psychology and education to promote school, family, and community environments that are safe and healthy for children.

Standard IV.1.1

To provide effective services and systems consultation, school psychologists are knowledgeable about the organization, philosophy, goals, objectives, culture, and methodologies of the settings in which they provide services. In addition, school psychologists develop partnerships and networks with community service providers and agencies to provide seamless services to children and families.

Standard IV.1.2

School psychologists use their professional expertise to promote changes in schools and community service systems that will benefit children and other clients. They advocate for school policies and practices that are in the best interests of children and that respect and protect the legal rights of students and parents.³⁴

Principle IV.2. Respect for Law and the Relationship of Law and Ethics

School psychologists are knowledgeable of and respect laws pertinent to the practice of school psychology. In choosing an appropriate course of action, they consider the relationship between law and the *Principles for Professional Ethics*.

Standard IV.2.1

School psychologists recognize that an understanding of the goals, procedures, and legal requirements of their particular workplace is essential for effective functioning within that setting.

Standard IV.2.2

School psychologists respect the law and the civil and legal rights of students and other clients. The *Principles for Professional Ethics* may require a more stringent standard of conduct than law, and in those situations school psychologists are expected to adhere to the *Principles*.

Standard IV.2.3

When conflicts between ethics and law occur, school psychologists take steps to resolve the conflict through positive, respected, and legal channels. If not able to resolve the conflict in this manner, they may abide by the law, as long as the resulting actions do not violate basic human rights.³⁵

Standard IV.2.4

School psychologists may act as individual citizens to bring about change in a lawful manner. They identify when they are speaking as private citizens rather than as employees. They also identify when they speak as individual professionals rather than as representatives of a professional association.

Principle IV.3. Maintaining Public Trust by Self-Monitoring and Peer Monitoring

School psychologists accept responsibility to monitor their own conduct and the conduct of other school psychologists to ensure it conforms to ethical standards.

Standard IV.3.1

School psychologists know the *Principles for Professional Ethics* and thoughtfully apply them to situations within their employment context. In difficult situations, school psychologists consult experienced school psychologists or state associations or NASP.

Standard IV.3.2

When a school psychologist suspects that another school psychologist or another professional has engaged in unethical practices, he or she attempts to resolve the suspected problem through a collegial problem-solving process, if feasible.

Standard IV.3.3

If a collegial problem-solving process is not possible or productive, school psychologists take further action appropriate to the situation, including discussing the situation with a supervisor in the employment setting, consulting state association ethics committees, and, if

necessary, filing a formal ethical violation complaint with state associations, state credentialing bodies, or the NASP Ethical and Professional Practices Committee in accordance with their procedures.

Standard IV.3.4

When school psychologists are concerned about unethical practices by professionals who are not NASP members or do not hold the NCSP, informal contact is made to discuss the concern if feasible. If the situation cannot be resolved in this manner, discussing the situation with the professional's supervisor should be considered. If necessary, an appropriate professional organization or state credentialing agency could be contacted to determine the procedures established by that professional association or agency for examining the practices in question.

Principle IV.4. Contributing to the Profession by Mentoring, Teaching, and Supervision

As part of their obligation to students, schools, society, and their profession, school psychologists mentor less experienced practitioners and graduate students to assure high quality services, and they serve as role models for sound ethical and professional practices and decision making.

Standard IV.4.1

School psychologists who serve as directors of graduate education programs provide current and prospective graduate students with accurate information regarding program accreditation, goals and objectives, graduate program policies and requirements, and likely outcomes and benefits.

Standard IV.4.2

School psychologists who supervise practicum students and interns are responsible for all professional practices of the supervisees. They ensure that practicum students and interns are adequately supervised as outlined in the *NASP Graduate Preparation Standards for School Psychologists*. Interns and graduate students are identified as such, and their work is cosigned by the supervising school psychologist.

Standard IV.4.3

School psychologists who employ, supervise, or train professionals provide appropriate working conditions,

fair and timely evaluation, constructive supervision, and continuing professional development opportunities.

Standard IV.4.4

School psychologists who are faculty members at universities or who supervise graduate education field experiences apply these ethical principles in all work with school psychology graduate students. In addition, they promote the ethical practice of graduate students by providing specific and comprehensive instruction, feedback, and mentoring.

Principle IV.5. Contributing to the School Psychology Knowledge Base

To improve services to children, families, and schools, and to promote the welfare of children, school psychologists are encouraged to contribute to the school psychology knowledge base by participating in, assisting in, or conducting and disseminating research.

Standard IV.5.1

When designing and conducting research in schools, school psychologists choose topics and employ research methodology, research participant selection procedures, data-gathering methods, and analysis and reporting techniques that are grounded in sound research practice. School psychologists identify their level of training and graduate degree to potential research participants.

Standard IV.5.2

School psychologists respect the rights, and protect the well-being, of research participants. School psychologists obtain appropriate review and approval of proposed research prior to beginning their data collection.

- Prior to initiating research, school psychologists and graduate students affiliated with a university, hospital, or other agency subject to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regulation of research first obtain approval for their research from their Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects (IRB) as well as the school or other agency in which the research will be conducted. Research proposals that have not been subject to IRB approval should be reviewed by individuals knowledgeable about research methodology and ethics and approved by the school administration or other appropriate authority.

- In planning research, school psychologists are ethically obligated to consider carefully whether the informed consent of research participants is needed for their study, recognizing that research involving more than minimum risk requires informed consent, and that research with students involving activities that are not part of ordinary, typical schooling requires informed consent. Consent and assent protocols provide the information necessary for potential research participants to make an informed and voluntary choice about participation. School psychologists evaluate the potential risks (including risks of physical or psychological harm, intrusions on privacy, breach of confidentiality) and benefits of their research and only conduct studies in which the risks to participants are minimized and acceptable.

Standard IV.5.3

School psychologists who use their assessment, intervention, or consultation cases in lectures, presentations, or publications obtain written prior client consent or they remove and disguise identifying client information.

Standard IV.5.4

School psychologists do not publish or present fabricated or falsified data or results in their publications and presentations.

Standard IV.5.5

School psychologists make available their data or other information that provided the basis for findings and conclusions reported in publications and presentations, if such data are needed to address a legitimate concern or need and under the condition that the confidentiality and other rights of research participants are protected.

Standard IV.5.6

If errors are discovered after the publication or presentation of research or other information, school psychologists make efforts to correct errors by publishing errata, retractions, or corrections.

Standard IV.5.7

School psychologists only publish data or other information that make original contributions to the professional literature. They do not report the same study in a second publication without acknowledging previous publication of the same data. They do not duplicate significant portions of their own or others' previous publications without permission of copyright holders.

Standard IV.5.8

When publishing or presenting research or other work, school psychologists do not plagiarize the works or ideas of others. They appropriately cite and reference all sources, print or digital, and assign credit to those whose ideas are reflected. In inservice or conference presentations, school psychologists give credit to others whose ideas have been used or adapted.

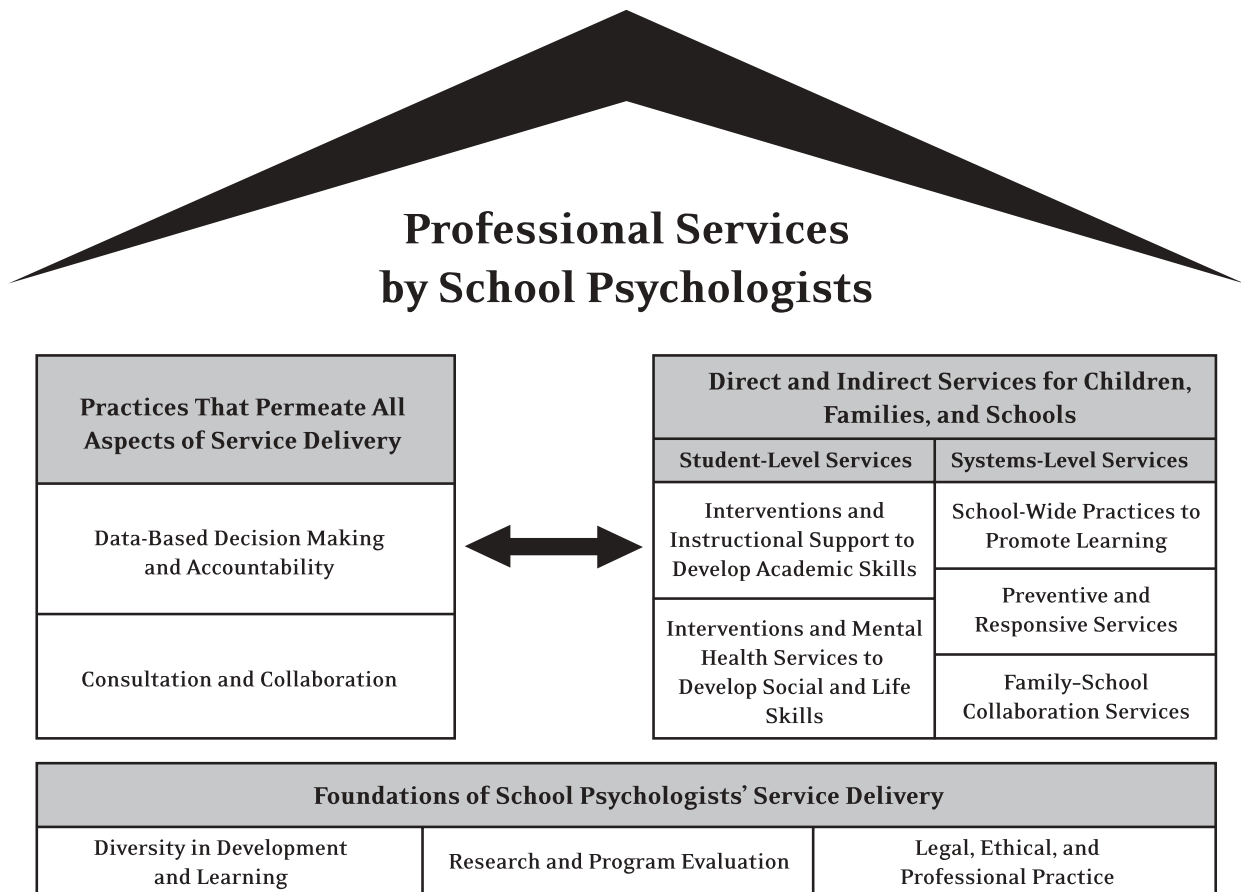
Standard IV.5.9

School psychologists accurately reflect the contributions of authors and other individuals who contributed to presentations and publications. Authorship credit is given only to individuals who have made a substantial professional contribution to the research, publication, or presentation. Authors discuss and resolve issues related to publication credit as early as feasible in the research and publication process.

Standard IV.5.10

School psychologists who participate in reviews of manuscripts, proposals, and other materials respect the confidentiality and proprietary rights of the authors. They limit their use of the materials to the activities relevant to the purposes of the professional review. School psychologists who review professional materials do not communicate the identity of the author, quote from the materials, or duplicate or circulate copies of the materials without the author's permission.

APPENDIX A.



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School Counselor Competencies

History and Purpose

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) supports school counselors' efforts to help students focus on academic, personal/social and career development so they achieve success in school and are prepared to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society. In recent years, the ASCA leadership has recognized the need for a more unified vision of the school counseling profession. "The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs" was a landmark document that provided a mechanism with which school counselors and school counseling teams could design, coordinate, implement, manage and enhance their programs for students' success. The ASCA National Model® provides a framework for the program components, the school counselor's role in implementation and the underlying philosophies of leadership, advocacy, collaboration and systemic change.

The School Counselor Competencies continue the effort for a unified vision by outlining the knowledge, attitudes and skills that ensure school counselors are equipped to meet the rigorous demands of our profession and the needs of our Pre-K-12 students. These competencies are necessary to better ensure that our future school counselor workforce will be able to continue to make a positive difference in the lives of students.

Development of the Competencies

The development of the School Counselor Competencies document was a highly collaborative effort among many members of the school counseling profession.

A group of school counseling professionals that included practicing school counselors, district school counseling supervisors and counselor educators from across the country met in January 2007 to discuss ways to ensure that school counselor education programs adequately train and prepare future school counselors to design and implement comprehensive school counseling programs. The group agreed that the logical first task should be the development of a set of competencies necessary and sufficient to be an effective professional school counselor.

The group created a general outline of competencies and asked ASCA to form a task force to develop draft school counselor competencies supporting the ASCA National Model. The task force used sample competencies from states, universities and other organizations to develop a first draft, which was presented to the whole group for feedback. After comments and revisions were incorporated, the revised draft was released for public review and comment. Revisions through the public comment were incorporated to develop the final version. The school counselor competencies document is unique in several ways. First, this set of competencies is organized around and consistent with the ASCA National Model. Second, the competencies are comprehensive in that they include skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for meritoriously performing the range of school counselor responsibilities (e.g., counseling, coordinating, consulting, etc.) in all four components of comprehensive school counseling programs: foundation, management, delivery and accountability. These

competencies have been identified as those that will equip new and experienced school counselors with the skills to establish, maintain and enhance a comprehensive, developmental, results-based school counseling program addressing academic achievement, personal and social development and career planning.

Applications

ASCA views these competencies as being applicable along a continuum of areas. For instance, school counselor education programs may use the competencies as benchmarks for ensuring students graduate with the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed for developing comprehensive school counseling programs. Professional school counselors could use the School Counselor Competencies as a checklist to self-evaluate their own competencies and, as a result, formulate an appropriate professional development plan. School administrators may find these competencies useful as a guide for seeking and hiring highly competent school counselors and for developing meaningful school counselor performance evaluations. Also, the School Counselor Competencies include the necessary technological competencies needed for performing effectively and efficiently in the 21st century.

I. School Counseling Programs

School counselors should possess the knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes necessary to plan, organize, implement and evaluate a comprehensive, developmental, results-based school counseling program that aligns with the ASCA National Model.

I-A: KNOWLEDGE

ASCA's position statement, The Professional School Counselor and School Counseling Preparation Programs, states that school counselors should articulate and demonstrate an understanding of:

- I-A-1 The organizational structure and governance of the American educational system as well as cultural, political and social influences on current educational practices
- I-A-2 The organizational structure and qualities of an effective school counseling program that aligns with the ASCA National Model
- I-A-3 Impediments to student learning and use of advocacy and data-driven school counseling practices to act effectively in closing the achievement/opportunity gap
- I-A-4 Leadership principles and theories
- I-A-5 Individual counseling, group counseling and classroom guidance programs ensuring equitable access to resources that promote academic achievement; personal, social and emotional development; and career development including the identification of appropriate post-secondary education for every student
- I-A-6 Collaborations with stakeholders such as parents and guardians, teachers, administrators and community leaders to create learning environments that promote educational equity and success for every student
- I-A-7 Legal, ethical and professional issues in pre-K—12 schools
- I-A-8 Developmental theory, learning theories, social justice theory, multiculturalism, counseling theories and career

counseling theories

- I-A-9. The continuum of mental health services, including prevention and intervention strategies to enhance student success

I-B: ABILITIES AND SKILLS

An effective school counselor is able to accomplish measurable objectives demonstrating the following abilities and skills.

- I-B-1. Plans, organizes, implements and evaluates a school counseling program aligning with the ASCA National Model
 - I-B-1a. Creates a vision statement examining the professional and personal competencies and qualities a school counselor should possess
 - I-B-1b. Describes the rationale for a comprehensive school counseling program
 - I-B-1c. Articulates the school counseling themes of advocacy, leadership, collaboration and systemic change, which are critical to a successful school counseling program.
 - I-B-1d. Describes, defines and identifies the qualities of an effective school counseling program
 - I-B-1e. Describes the benefits of a comprehensive school counseling program for all stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, administrators, school boards, department of education, school counselors, counselor educators, community stakeholders and business leaders
 - I-B-1f. Describes the history of school counseling to create a context for the current state of the profession and comprehensive school counseling programs
 - I-B-1g. Uses technology effectively and efficiently to plan, organize, implement and evaluate the comprehensive

school counseling program

- I-B-1h. Demonstrates multicultural, ethical and professional competencies in planning, organizing, implementing and evaluating the comprehensive school counseling program

- I-B-2. Serves as a leader in the school and community to promote and support student success
 - I-B-2a. Understands and defines leadership and its role in comprehensive school counseling programs
 - I-B-2b. Identifies and applies a model of leadership to a comprehensive school counseling program
 - I-B-2c. Identifies and demonstrates professional and personal qualities and skills of effective leaders
 - I-B-2d. Identifies and applies components of the ASCA National Model requiring leadership, such as an advisory council, management system and accountability
 - I-B-2e. Creates a plan to challenge the non-counseling tasks that are assigned to school counselors

- I-B-3. Advocates for student success
 - I-B-3a. Understands and defines advocacy and its role in comprehensive school counseling programs
 - I-B-3b. Identifies and demonstrates benefits of advocacy with school and community stakeholders
 - I-B-3c. Describes school counselor advocacy competencies, which include dispositions, knowledge and skills
 - I-B-3d. Reviews advocacy models and develops a personal advocacy plan
 - I-B-3e. Understands the process for

development of policy and procedures at the building, district, state and national levels

- I-B-4. Collaborates with parents, teachers, administrators, community leaders and other stakeholders to promote and support student success
 - I-B-4a. Defines collaboration and its role in comprehensive school counseling programs
 - I-B-4b. Identifies and applies models of collaboration for effective use in a school counseling program and understands the similarities and differences between consultation, collaboration and counseling and coordination strategies.
 - I-B-4c. Creates statements or other documents delineating the various roles of student service providers, such as school social worker, school psychologist, school nurse, and identifies best practices for collaborating to affect student success
 - I-B-4d. Understands and knows how to apply a consensus-building process to foster agreement in a group
 - I-B-4e. Understands how to facilitate group meetings to effectively and efficiently meet group goals
-
- I-B-5. Acts as a systems change agent to create an environment promoting and supporting student success
 - I-B-5a. Defines and understands system change and its role in comprehensive school counseling programs
 - I-B-5b. Develops a plan to deal with personal (emotional and cognitive) and institutional resistance impeding the change process
 - I-B-5c. Understands the impact of school, district and state educational policies, procedures and practices supporting and/or impeding student success

I-C: ATTITUDES

School counselors believe:

- I-C-1. Every student can learn, and every student can succeed
- I-C-2. Every student should have access to and opportunity for a high-quality education
- I-C-3. Every student should graduate from high school and be prepared for employment or college and other post-secondary education
- I-C-4. Every student should have access to a school counseling program
- I-C-5. Effective school counseling is a collaborative process involving school counselors, students, parents, teachers, administrators, community leaders and other stakeholders
- I-C-6. School counselors can and should be leaders in the school and district
- I-C-7. The effectiveness of school counseling programs should be measurable using process, perception and results data

II: Foundations

School counselors should possess the knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes necessary to establish the foundations of a school counseling program aligning with the ASCA National Model.

II-A: KNOWLEDGE

School counselors should articulate and demonstrate an understanding of:

- II-A-1 Beliefs and philosophy of the school counseling program that align with current school improvement and student success initiatives at the school, district and state level
- II-A-2 Educational systems, philosophies and theories and current trends in education, including federal and state legislation
- II-A-3 Learning theories
- II-A-4 History and purpose of school counseling, including traditional and transformed roles of school counselors
- II-A-5 Human development theories

and developmental issues affecting student success

- II-A-6 District, state and national student standards and competencies, including ASCA Student Competencies
- II-A-7 Legal and ethical standards and principles of the school counseling profession and educational systems, including district and building policies
- II-A-8 Three domains of academic achievement, career planning, and personal and social development

II-B: ABILITIES AND SKILLS

An effective school counselor is able to accomplish measurable objectives demonstrating the following abilities and skills.

- II-B-1. Develops the beliefs and philosophy of the school counseling program that align with current school improvement and student success initiatives at the school, district and state level
 - II-B-1a. Examines personal, district and state beliefs, assumptions and philosophies about student success, specifically what they should know and be able to do
 - II-B-1b. Demonstrates knowledge of a school's particular educational philosophy and mission
 - II-B-1c. Conceptualizes and writes a personal philosophy about students, families, teachers, school counseling programs and the educational process consistent with the school's educational philosophy and mission
-
- II-B-2. Develops a school counseling mission statement aligning with the school, district and state mission.
 - II-B-2a. Critiques a school district mission statement and identifies or writes a mission statement aligning with beliefs
 - II-B-2b. Writes a school counseling mission statement that is specific, concise, clear and comprehensive, describing a

- school counseling program's purpose and a vision of the program's benefits every student
- II-B-2c. Communicates the philosophy and mission of the school counseling program to all appropriate stakeholders
-
- II-B-3. Uses student standards, such as ASCA Student Competencies, and district or state standards, to drive the implementation of a comprehensive school counseling program
- II-B-3a. Crosswalks the ASCA Student Competencies with other appropriate standards
- II-B-3b. Prioritizes student standards that align with the school's goals
-
- II-B-4. Applies the ethical standards and principles of the school counseling profession and adheres to the legal aspects of the role of the school counselor
- II-B-4a. Practices ethical principles of the school counseling profession in accordance with the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors
- II-B-4b. Understands the legal and ethical nature of working in a pluralistic, multicultural, and technological society.
- II-B-4c. Understands and practices in accordance with school district policy and local, state and federal statutory requirements.
- II-B-4d. Understands the unique legal and ethical nature of working with minor students in a school setting.
- II-B-4e. Advocates responsibly for school board policy, local, state and federal statutory requirements that are in the best interests of students
- II-B-4f. Resolves ethical dilemmas by employing an ethical decision-making model appropriate to work in schools.
- II-B-4g. Models ethical behavior
- II-B-4h. Continuously engages in

- professional development and uses resources to inform and guide ethical and legal work
- II-B-4i. Practices within the ethical and statutory limits of confidentiality
- II-B-4j. Continually seeks consultation and supervision to guide legal and ethical decision making and to recognize and resolve ethical dilemmas
- II-B-4k. Understands and applies an ethical and legal obligation not only to students but to parents, administration and teachers as well

II-C: ATTITUDES

School counselors believe:

- II-C-1. School counseling is an organized program for every student and not a series of services provided only to students in need
- II-C-2. School counseling programs should be an integral component of student success and the overall mission of schools and school districts
- II-C-3. School counseling programs promote and support academic achievement, personal and social development and career planning for every student
- II-C-4. School counselors operate within a framework of school and district policies, state laws and regulations and professional ethics standards

III: Delivery

School counselors should possess the knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes necessary to deliver a school counseling program aligning with the ASCA National Model.

III-A: KNOWLEDGE

School counselors should articulate and demonstrate an understanding of:

- III-A-1. The concept of a guidance curriculum
- III-A-2. Counseling theories and techniques that work in school, such as solution-

- focused brief counseling, reality therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy
- III-A-3. Counseling theories and techniques in different settings, such as individual planning, group counseling and classroom guidance
- III-A-4. Classroom management
- III-A-5. Principles of career planning and college admissions, including financial aid and athletic eligibility
- III-A-6. Principles of working with various student populations based on ethnic and racial background, English language proficiency, special needs, religion, gender and income
- III-A-7. Responsive services
- III-A-8. Crisis counseling, including grief and bereavement

III-B: ABILITIES AND SKILLS

An effective school counselor is able to accomplish measurable objectives demonstrating the following abilities and skills.

- III-B-1. Implements the school guidance curriculum
- III-B-1a. Crosswalks ASCA Student Competencies with appropriate guidance curriculum
- III-B-1b. Develops and presents a developmental guidance curriculum addressing all students' needs, including closing-the-gap activities
- III-B-1c. Demonstrates classroom management and instructional skills
- III-B-1d. Develops materials and instructional strategies to meet student needs and school goals
- III-B-1e. Encourages staff involvement to ensure the effective implementation of the school guidance curriculum
- III-B-1f. Knows, understands and uses a variety of technology in the delivery of guidance curriculum activities
- III-B-1g. Understands multicultural and pluralistic trends when developing and choosing guidance curriculum

III-B-1h. Understands the resources available for students with special needs	facilitation	and substance abuse counseling, within a continuum of care

III-B-2. Facilitates individual student planning	III-B-3c. Compiles resources to utilize with students, staff and families to effectively address issues through responsive services	III-B-3m. Understands the role of the school counselor and the school counseling program in the school crisis plan
III-B-2a. Understands individual student planning as a component of a comprehensive program.	III-B-3d. Understands appropriate individual and small-group counseling theories and techniques such as rational emotive behavior therapy, reality therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, Adlerian, solution-focused brief counseling, person-centered counseling and family systems	-----
III-B-2b. Develops strategies to implement individual student planning, such as strategies for appraisal, advisement, goal-setting, decision-making, social skills, transition or post-secondary planning	III-B-3e. Demonstrates an ability to provide counseling for students during times of transition, separation, heightened stress and critical change	III-B-4. Implements system support activities for the comprehensive school counseling program
III-B-2c. Helps students establish goals, and develops and uses planning skills in collaboration with parents or guardians and school personnel	III-B-3f. Understands what defines a crisis, the appropriate response and a variety of intervention strategies to meet the needs of the individual, group, or school community before, during and after crisis response	III-B-4a. Creates a system support planning document addressing school counselor's responsibilities for professional development, consultation and collaboration and program management
III-B-2d. Understands career opportunities, labor market trends, and global economics, and uses various career assessment techniques to assist students in understanding their abilities and career interests	III-B-3g. Provides team leadership to the school and community in a crisis	III-B-4b. Coordinates activities that establish, maintain and enhance the school counseling program as well as other educational programs
III-B-2e. Helps students learn the importance of college and other post-secondary education and helps students navigate the college admissions process	III-B-3h. Involves appropriate school and community professionals as well as the family in a crisis situation	III-B-4c. Conducts in-service training for other stakeholders to share school counseling expertise
III-B-2f. Understands the relationship of academic performance to the world of work, family life and community service	III-B-3i. Develops a database of community agencies and service providers for student referrals	III-B-4d. Understands and knows how to provide supervision for school counseling interns consistent with the principles of the ASCA National Model
III-B-2g. Understands methods for helping students monitor and direct their own learning and personal/social and career development	III-B-3j. Applies appropriate counseling approaches to promoting change among consultees within a consultation approach	
-----	III-B-3k. Understands and is able to build effective and high-quality peer helper programs	
III-B-3. Provides responsive services	III-B-3l. Understands the nature of academic, career and personal/social counseling in schools and the similarities and differences among school counseling and other types of counseling, such as mental health, marriage and family,	
III-B-3a. Understands how to make referrals to appropriate professionals when necessary		
III-B-3b. Lists and describes interventions used in responsive services, such as consultation, individual and small-group counseling, crisis counseling, referrals and peer		

III-C: ATTITUDES

School counselors believe:

- III-C-1 School counseling is one component in the continuum of care that should be available to all students
- III-C-2 School counselors coordinate and facilitate counseling and other services to ensure all students receive the care they need, even though school counselors may not personally provide the care themselves
- III-C-3 School counselors engage in developmental counseling and short-term responsive counseling
- III-C-4 School counselors should refer students to district or community resources to meet more extensive needs such as long-term therapy or diagnoses of disorders

IV: Management

School counselors should possess the knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes necessary to manage a school counseling program aligning with the ASCA National Model.

IV-A: KNOWLEDGE

School counselors should articulate and demonstrate an understanding of:

- IV-A-1. Leadership principles, including sources of power and authority, and formal and informal leadership
- IV-A-2. Organization theory to facilitate advocacy, collaboration and systemic change
- IV-A-3. Presentation skills for programs such as teacher in-services and results reports to school boards
- IV-A-4. Time management, including long- and short-term management using tools such as schedules and calendars
- IV-A-5. Data-driven decision making
- IV-A-6. Current and emerging technologies such as use of the Internet, Web-based resources and management information systems

IV-B: ABILITIES AND SKILLS

An effective school counselor is able to accomplish measurable objectives demonstrating the following abilities and skills.

- IV-B-1. Negotiates with the administrator to define the management system for the comprehensive school counseling program
- IV-B-1a. Discusses and develops the components of the school counselor management system with the other members of the counseling staff
- IV-B-1b. Presents the school counseling management system to the principal, and finalizes an annual school counseling management agreement
- IV-B-1c. Discusses the anticipated program results when implementing the action plans for the school year
- IV-B-1d. Participates in professional

organizations

- IV-B-1e. Develops a yearly professional development plan demonstrating how the school counselor advances relevant knowledge, skills and dispositions
- IV-B-1f. Communicates effective goals and benchmarks for meeting and exceeding expectations consistent with the administrator-counselor agreement and district performance appraisals
- IV-B-1g. Uses personal reflection, consultation and supervision to promote professional growth and development

-
- IV-B-2. Establishes and convenes an advisory council for the comprehensive school counseling program
 - IV-B-2a. Uses leadership skills to facilitate vision and positive change for the comprehensive school counseling program
 - IV-B-2b. Determines appropriate education stakeholders who should be represented on the advisory council
 - IV-B-2c. Develops meeting agendas
 - IV-B-2d. Reviews school data, school counseling program audit and school counseling program goals with the council
 - IV-B-2e. Records meeting notes and distributes as appropriate
 - IV-B-2f. Analyzes and incorporates feedback from advisory council related to school counseling program goals as appropriate

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- IV-B-3. Collects, analyzes and interprets relevant data, including process, perception and results data, to monitor and improve student behavior and achievement
 - IV-B-3a. Analyzes, synthesizes and disaggregates data to examine student outcomes and to identify and implement interventions as needed
 - IV-B-3b. Uses data to identify policies,

practices and procedures leading to successes, systemic barriers and areas of weakness

- IV-B-3c. Uses student data to demonstrate a need for systemic change in areas such as course enrollment patterns; equity and access; and the achievement, opportunity and information gap
 - IV-B-3d. Understands and uses data to establish goals and activities to close the achievement, opportunity and information gap
 - IV-B-3e. Knows how to use and analyze data to evaluate the school counseling program, research activity outcomes and identify gaps between and among different groups of students
 - IV-B-3f. Uses school data to identify and assist individual students who do not perform at grade level and do not have opportunities and resources to be successful in school
 - IV-B-3g. Knows and understands theoretical and historical bases for assessment techniques
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- IV-B-4. Organizes and manages time to implement an effective school counseling program
 - IV-B-4a. Identifies appropriate distribution of school counselor's time based on delivery system and school's data
 - IV-B-4b. Creates a rationale for school counselor's time to focus on the goals of the comprehensive school counseling program
 - IV-B-4c. Identifies and evaluates fair-share responsibilities, which articulate appropriate and inappropriate counseling and non-counseling activities
 - IV-B-4d. Creates a rationale for the school counselor's total time spent in each component of the school counseling program
-
- IV-B-5. Develops calendars to ensure the effective implementation of the school counseling program

IV-B-5a. Creates annual, monthly and weekly calendars to plan activities to reflect school goals

IV-B-5b. Demonstrates time management skills including scheduling, publicizing and prioritizing time and task

IV-B-6. Designs and implements action plans aligning with school and school counseling program goals

IV-B-6a. Uses appropriate academic and behavioral data to develop guidance curriculum and closing-the-gap action plan and determines appropriate students for the target group or interventions

IV-B-6b. Identifies ASCA domains, standards and competencies being addressed by the plan

IV-B-6c. Determines the intended impact on academics and behavior

IV-B-6d. Identifies appropriate activities to accomplish objectives

IV-B-6e. Identifies appropriate resources needed

IV-B-6f. Identifies data-collection strategies to gather process, perception and results data

IV-B-6g. Shares results of action plans with staff, parents and community.

IV-C: ATTITUDES

School counselors believe:

IV-C-1. A school counseling program and guidance department must be managed like other programs and departments in a school

IV-C-2. One of the critical responsibilities of a school counselor is to plan, organize, implement and evaluate a school counseling program

IV-C-3. Management of a school counseling program must be done in collaboration with administrators.

V: Accountability

School counselors should possess the knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes necessary to monitor and evaluate the processes and results of a school coun-

seling program aligning with the ASCA National Model.

V-A: KNOWLEDGE

School counselors should articulate and demonstrate an understanding of:

V-A-1. Basic concept of results-based school counseling and accountability issues

V-A-2. Basic research and statistical concepts to read and conduct research

V-A-3. Use of data to evaluate program effectiveness and to determine program needs

V-A-4. Program audits and results reports

V-B: ABILITIES AND SKILLS

An effective school counselor is able to accomplish measurable objectives demonstrating the following abilities and skills.

V-B-1. Uses data from results reports to evaluate program effectiveness and to determine program needs

V-B-1a. Uses formal and informal methods of program evaluation to design and modify comprehensive school counseling programs

V-B-1b. Uses student data to support decision making in designing effective school counseling programs and interventions

V-B-1c. Measures results attained from school guidance curriculum and closing-the-gap activities

V-B-1d. Works with members of the school counseling team and with the administration to decide how school counseling programs are evaluated and how results are shared

V-B-1e. Collects process, perception and results data

V-B-1f. Uses technology in conducting research and program evaluation

V-B-1g. Reports program results to professional school counseling community

V-B-1h. Uses data to demonstrate the value the school counseling program adds to student achievement

V-B-1i. Uses results obtained for program improvement

V-B-2. Understands and advocates for appropriate school counselor performance appraisal process based on school counselors competencies and implementation of the guidance curriculum and agreed-upon action plans

V-B-2a. Conducts self-appraisal related to school counseling skills and performance

V-B-2b. Identifies how school counseling activities fit within categories of performance appraisal instrument

V-B-2c. Encourages administrators to use performance appraisal instrument reflecting appropriate responsibilities for school counselors

V-B-3. Conducts a program audit

V-B-3a. Completes a program audit to compare current school counseling program implementation with the ASCA National Model

V-B-3b. Shares the results of the program audit with administrators, the advisory council and other appropriate stakeholders

V-B-3c. Identifies areas for improvement for the school counseling program

V-C: ATTITUDES

School counselors believe:

V-C-1. School counseling programs should achieve demonstrable results

V-C-2. School counselors should be accountable for the results of the school counseling program

V-C-3. School counselors should use quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate their school counseling program and to demonstrate program results

V-C-4. The results of the school counseling program should be analyzed and presented in the context of the overall school and district performance



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Ethical Standards for School Counselors

(Adopted 1984; revised 1992, 1998, 2004 and 2010)

Preamble

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is a professional organization whose members are school counselors certified/licensed in school counseling with unique qualifications and skills to address all students' academic, personal/social and career development needs. Members are also school counseling program directors/supervisors and counselor educators. These ethical standards are the ethical responsibility of school counselors. School counseling program directors/supervisors should know them and provide support for practitioners to uphold them. School counselor educators should know them, teach them to their students and provide support for school counseling candidates to uphold them.

Professional school counselors are advocates, leaders, collaborators and consultants who create opportunities for equity in access and success in educational opportunities by connecting their programs to the mission of schools and subscribing to the following tenets of professional responsibility:

- Each person has the right to be respected, be treated with dignity and have access to a comprehensive school counseling program that advocates for and affirms all students from diverse populations including: ethnic/racial identity, age, economic status, abilities/disabilities, language, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity/expression, family type, religious/spiritual identity and appearance.
- Each person has the right to receive the information and support needed to move toward self-direction and self-development and affirmation within one's group identities, with special care being given to students who have historically not received adequate educational services, e.g., students of color, students living at a low socio-economic status, students with disabilities and students from non-dominant language backgrounds.
- Each person has the right to understand the full magnitude and meaning of his/her educational choices and how those choices will affect future opportunities.
- Each person has the right to privacy and thereby the right to expect the school-counselor/student relationship to comply with all laws, policies and ethical standards pertaining to confidentiality in the school setting.
- Each person has the right to feel safe in school environments that school counselors help create, free from abuse, bullying, neglect, harassment or other forms of violence.

In this document, ASCA specifies the principles of ethical behavior necessary to maintain the high standards of integrity, leadership and professionalism among its members. The Ethical Standards for School Counselors were developed to clarify the nature of ethical responsibilities held in common by school counselors, supervisors/directors of school counseling programs and school counselor educators. The purposes of this document are to:

- Serve as a guide for the ethical practices of all professional school counselors, supervisors/directors of school counseling programs and school counselor educators regardless of level, area, population served or membership in this professional association;
- Provide self-appraisal and peer evaluations regarding school counselors' responsibilities to students, parents/guardians, colleagues and professional associates, schools, communities and the counseling profession; and
- Inform all stakeholders, including students, parents and guardians, teachers, administrators, community members and courts of justice, of best ethical practices, values and expected behaviors of the school counseling professional.

A.1. Responsibilities to Students

Professional school counselors:

- a. Have a primary obligation to the students, who are to be treated with dignity and respect as unique individuals.
- b. Are concerned with the educational, academic, career, personal and social needs and encourage the maximum development of every student.
- c. Respect students' values, beliefs and cultural background and do not impose the school counselor's personal values on students or their families.
- d. Are knowledgeable of laws, regulations and policies relating to students and strive to protect and inform students regarding their rights.
- e. Promote the welfare of individual students and collaborate with them to develop an action plan for success.
- f. Consider the involvement of support networks valued by the individual students.
- g. Understand that professional distance with students is appropriate, and any sexual or romantic relationship with students whether illegal in the state of practice is considered a grievous breach of ethics and is prohibited regardless of a student's age.
- h. Consider the potential for harm before entering into a relationship with former students or one of their family members.

A.2. Confidentiality

Professional school counselors:

- a. Inform individual students of the purposes, goals, techniques and rules of procedure under which they may receive counseling. Disclosure includes the limits of confidentiality in a developmentally appropriate manner. Informed consent requires competence on the part of students to understand the limits of confidentiality and

therefore, can be difficult to obtain from students of a certain developmental level. Professionals are aware that even though every attempt is made to obtain informed consent it is not always possible and when needed will make counseling decisions on students' behalf.

b. Explain the limits of confidentiality in appropriate ways such as classroom guidance lessons, the student handbook, school counseling brochures, school Web site, verbal notice or other methods of student, school and community communication in addition to oral notification to individual students.

c. Recognize the complicated nature of confidentiality in schools and consider each case in context. Keep information confidential unless legal requirements demand that confidential information be revealed or a breach is required to prevent serious and foreseeable harm to the student. Serious and foreseeable harm is different for each minor in schools and is defined by students' developmental and chronological age, the setting, parental rights and the nature of the harm. School counselors consult with appropriate professionals when in doubt as to the validity of an exception.

d. Recognize their primary obligation for confidentiality is to the students but balance that obligation with an understanding of parents'/guardians' legal and inherent rights to be the guiding voice in their children's lives, especially in value-laden issues. Understand the need to balance students' ethical rights to make choices, their capacity to give consent or assent and parental or familial legal rights and responsibilities to protect these students and make decisions on their behalf.

e. Promote the autonomy and independence of students to the extent possible and use the most appropriate and least intrusive method of breach. The developmental age and the circumstances requiring the breach are considered and as appropriate students are engaged in a discussion about the method and timing of the breach.

f. In absence of state legislation expressly forbidding disclosure, consider the ethical responsibility to provide information to an identified third party who, by his/her relationship with the student, is at a high risk of contracting a disease that is commonly known to be communicable and fatal. Disclosure requires satisfaction of all of the following conditions:

- Student identifies partner or the partner is highly identifiable
- School counselor recommends the student notify partner and refrain from further high-risk behavior
- Student refuses
- School counselor informs the student of the intent to notify the partner
- School counselor seeks legal consultation from the school district's legal representative in writing as to the legalities of informing the partner

g. Request of the court that disclosure not be required when the release of confidential information may potentially harm a student or the counseling relationship.

h. Protect the confidentiality of students' records and release personal data in accordance with prescribed federal and state laws and school policies including the laws within the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Student information stored and transmitted electronically is treated with the same care as traditional student records. Recognize the vulnerability of confidentiality in electronic communications and only transmit sensitive information electronically in a way that is untraceable to students' identity. Critical information such as a student who has a history of suicidal ideation must be conveyed to the receiving school in a personal contact such as a phone call.

A.3. Academic, Career/College/Post-Secondary Access and Personal/Social Counseling Plans

Professional school counselors:

a. Provide students with a comprehensive school counseling program that parallels the ASCA National Model with emphasis on working jointly with all students to develop personal/social, academic and career goals.

b. Ensure equitable academic, career, post-secondary access and personal/social opportunities for all students through the use of data to help close achievement gaps and opportunity gaps.

c. Provide and advocate for individual students' career awareness, exploration and post-secondary plans supporting the students' right to choose from the wide array of options when they leave secondary education.

A.4. Dual Relationships

Professional school counselors:

a. Avoid dual relationships that might impair their objectivity and increase the risk of harm to students (e.g., counseling one's family members or the children of close friends or associates). If a dual relationship is unavoidable, the school counselor is responsible for taking action to eliminate or reduce the potential for harm to the student through use of safeguards, which might include informed consent, consultation, supervision and documentation.

b. Maintain appropriate professional distance with students at all times.

c. Avoid dual relationships with students through communication mediums such as social networking sites.

d. Avoid dual relationships with school personnel that might infringe on the integrity of the school counselor/student relationship.

A.5. Appropriate Referrals

Professional school counselors:

a. Make referrals when necessary or appropriate to outside resources for student and/or family support. Appropriate referrals may necessitate informing both parents/guardians and students of applicable resources and making proper plans for transitions with minimal interruption of services. Students retain the right to discontinue the counseling relationship at any time.

b. Help educate about and prevent personal and social concerns for all students within the school counselor's scope of education and competence and make necessary referrals when the counseling needs are beyond the individual school counselor's education and training. Every attempt is made to find appropriate specialized resources for clinical therapeutic topics that are difficult or inappropriate to address in a school setting such as eating disorders, sexual trauma, chemical dependency and other addictions needing sustained clinical duration or assistance.

c. Request a release of information signed by the student and/or parents/guardians when attempting to develop a collaborative relationship with other service providers assigned to the student.

d. Develop a reasonable method of termination of counseling when it becomes apparent that counseling assistance is no longer needed or a referral is necessary to better meet the student's needs.

A.6. Group Work

Professional school counselors:

- a. Screen prospective group members and maintain an awareness of participants' needs, appropriate fit and personal goals in relation to the group's intention and focus. The school counselor takes reasonable precautions to protect members from physical and psychological harm resulting from interaction within the group.
- b. Recognize that best practice is to notify the parents/guardians of children participating in small groups.
- c. Establish clear expectations in the group setting, and clearly state that confidentiality in group counseling cannot be guaranteed. Given the developmental and chronological ages of minors in schools, recognize the tenuous nature of confidentiality for minors renders some topics inappropriate for group work in a school setting.
- d. Provide necessary follow up with group members, and document proceedings as appropriate.
- e. Develop professional competencies, and maintain appropriate education, training and supervision in group facilitation and any topics specific to the group.
- f. Facilitate group work that is brief and solution-focused, working with a variety of academic, career, college and personal/social issues.

A.7. Danger to Self or Others

Professional school counselors:

- a. Inform parents/guardians and/or appropriate authorities when a student poses a danger to self or others. This is to be done after careful deliberation and consultation with other counseling professionals.
- b. Report risk assessments to parents when they underscore the need to act on behalf of a child at risk; never negate a risk of harm as students sometimes deceive in order to avoid further scrutiny and/or parental notification.
- c. Understand the legal and ethical liability for releasing a student who is in danger to self or others without proper and necessary support for that student.

A.8. Student Records

Professional school counselors:

- a. Maintain and secure records necessary for rendering professional services to the student as required by laws, regulations, institutional procedures and confidentiality guidelines.
- b. Keep sole-possession records or individual student case notes separate from students' educational records in keeping with state laws.
- c. Recognize the limits of sole-possession records and understand these records are a memory aid for the creator and in absence of privileged communication may be subpoenaed and may become educational records when they are shared or are accessible to others in either verbal or written form or when they include information other than professional opinion or personal observations.
- d. Establish a reasonable timeline for purging sole-possession records or case notes. Suggested guidelines include shredding sole possession records when the student transitions to the next level, transfers to another school or graduates. Apply careful discretion

and deliberation before destroying sole-possession records that may be needed by a court of law such as notes on child abuse, suicide, sexual harassment or violence.

- e. Understand and abide by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 1974), which safeguards student's records and allows parents to have a voice in what and how information is shared with others regarding their child's educational records.

A.9. Evaluation, Assessment and Interpretation

Professional school counselors:

- a. Adhere to all professional standards regarding selecting, administering and interpreting assessment measures and only utilize assessment measures that are within the scope of practice for school counselors and for which they are trained and competent.
- b. Consider confidentiality issues when utilizing evaluative or assessment instruments and electronically based programs.
- c. Consider the developmental age, language skills and level of competence of the student taking the assessments before assessments are given.
- d. Provide interpretation of the nature, purposes, results and potential impact of assessment/evaluation measures in language the students can understand.
- e. Monitor the use of assessment results and interpretations, and take reasonable steps to prevent others from misusing the information.
- f. Use caution when utilizing assessment techniques, making evaluations and interpreting the performance of populations not represented in the norm group on which an instrument is standardized.
- g. Assess the effectiveness of their program in having an impact on students' academic, career and personal/social development through accountability measures especially examining efforts to close achievement, opportunity and attainment gaps.

A.10. Technology

Professional school counselors:

- a. Promote the benefits of and clarify the limitations of various appropriate technological applications. Professional school counselors promote technological applications (1) that are appropriate for students' individual needs, (2) that students understand how to use and (3) for which follow-up counseling assistance is provided.
- b. Advocate for equal access to technology for all students, especially those historically underserved.
- c. Take appropriate and reasonable measures for maintaining confidentiality of student information and educational records stored or transmitted through the use of computers, facsimile machines, telephones, voicemail, answering machines and other electronic or computer technology.
- d. Understand the intent of FERPA and its impact on sharing electronic student records.
- e. Consider the extent to which cyberbullying is interfering with students' educational process and base guidance curriculum and intervention programming for this pervasive and potentially dangerous problem on research-based and best practices.

A.11. Student Peer Support Program

Professional school counselors:

- a. Have unique responsibilities when working with peer-helper or student-assistance programs and safeguard the welfare of students participating in peer-to-peer programs under their direction.
- b. Are ultimately responsible for appropriate training and supervision for students serving as peer-support individuals in their school counseling programs.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

B.1. Parent Rights and Responsibilities

Professional school counselors:

- a. Respect the rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians for their children and endeavor to establish, as appropriate, a collaborative relationship with parents/guardians to facilitate students' maximum development.
- b. Adhere to laws, local guidelines and ethical standards of practice when assisting parents/guardians experiencing family difficulties interfering with the student's effectiveness and welfare.
- c. Are sensitive to diversity among families and recognize that all parents/guardians, custodial and noncustodial, are vested with certain rights and responsibilities for their children's welfare by virtue of their role and according to law.
- d. Inform parents of the nature of counseling services provided in the school setting.
- e. Adhere to the FERPA act regarding disclosure of student information.
- f. Work to establish, as appropriate, collaborative relationships with parents/guardians to best serve student.

B.2. Parents/Guardians and Confidentiality

Professional school counselors:

- a. Inform parents/guardians of the school counselor's role to include the confidential nature of the counseling relationship between the counselor and student.
- b. Recognize that working with minors in a school setting requires school counselors to collaborate with students' parents/guardians to the extent possible.
- c. Respect the confidentiality of parents/guardians to the extent that is reasonable to protect the best interest of the student being counseled.
- d. Provide parents/guardians with accurate, comprehensive and relevant information in an objective and caring manner, as is appropriate and consistent with ethical responsibilities to the student.
- e. Make reasonable efforts to honor the wishes of parents/guardians concerning information regarding the student unless a court order expressly forbids the involvement of a parent(s). In cases of divorce or separation, school counselors exercise a good-faith effort to keep both parents informed, maintaining focus on the student and avoiding supporting one parent over another in divorce proceedings.

C. RESPONSIBILITIES TO COLLEAGUES AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATES

C.1. Professional Relationships

Professional school counselors, the school counseling program director/site supervisor and the school counselor educator:

- a. Establish and maintain professional relationships with faculty, staff and administration to facilitate an optimum counseling program.
- b. Treat colleagues with professional respect, courtesy and fairness.
- c. Recognize that teachers, staff and administrators who are high-functioning in the personal and social development skills can be powerful allies in supporting student success. School counselors work to develop relationships with all faculty and staff in order to advantage students.
- d. Are aware of and utilize related professionals, organizations and other resources to whom the student may be referred.

C.2. Sharing Information with Other Professionals

Professional school counselors:

- a. Promote awareness and adherence to appropriate guidelines regarding confidentiality, the distinction between public and private information and staff consultation.
- b. Provide professional personnel with accurate, objective, concise and meaningful data necessary to adequately evaluate, counsel and assist the student.
- c. Secure parental consent and develop clear agreements with other mental health professionals when a student is receiving services from another counselor or other mental health professional in order to avoid confusion and conflict for the student and parents/guardians.
- d. Understand about the "release of information" process and parental rights in sharing information and attempt to establish a cooperative and collaborative relationship with other professionals to benefit students.
- e. Recognize the powerful role of ally that faculty and administration who function high in personal/social development skills can play in supporting students in stress, and carefully filter confidential information to give these allies what they "need to know" in order to advantage the student. Consultation with other members of the school counseling profession is helpful in determining need-to-know information. The primary focus and obligation is always on the student when it comes to sharing confidential information.
- f. Keep appropriate records regarding individual students, and develop a plan for transferring those records to another professional school counselor should the need occur. This documentation transfer will protect the confidentiality and benefit the needs of the student for whom the records are written.

C.3. Collaborating and Educating Around the Role of the School Counselor

The school counselor, school counseling program supervisor/director and school counselor educator:

- a. Share the role of the school counseling program in ensuring data-driven academic, career/college and personal/social success compe-

tencies for every student, resulting in specific outcomes/indicators with all stakeholders.

b. Broker services internal and external to the schools to help ensure every student receives the benefits of a school counseling program and specific academic, career/college and personal/social competencies.

D. RESPONSIBILITIES TO SCHOOL, COMMUNITIES AND FAMILIES

D.1. Responsibilities to the School

Professional school counselors:

- a. Support and protect students' best interest against any infringement of their educational program.
- b. Inform appropriate officials, in accordance with school policy, of conditions that may be potentially disruptive or damaging to the school's mission, personnel and property while honoring the confidentiality between the student and the school counselor.
- c. Are knowledgeable and supportive of their school's mission, and connect their program to the school's mission.
- d. Delineate and promote the school counselor's role, and function as a student advocate in meeting the needs of those served. School counselors will notify appropriate officials of systemic conditions that may limit or curtail their effectiveness in providing programs and services.
- e. Accept employment only for positions for which they are qualified by education, training, supervised experience, state and national professional credentials and appropriate professional experience.
- f. Advocate that administrators hire only qualified, appropriately trained and competent individuals for professional school counseling positions.
- g. Assist in developing: (1) curricular and environmental conditions appropriate for the school and community; (2) educational procedures and programs to meet students' developmental needs; (3) a systematic evaluation process for comprehensive, developmental, standards-based school counseling programs, services and personnel; and (4) a data-driven evaluation process guiding the comprehensive, developmental school counseling program and service delivery.

D.2. Responsibility to the Community

Professional school counselors:

- a. Collaborate with community agencies, organizations and individuals in students' best interest and without regard to personal reward or remuneration.
- b. Extend their influence and opportunity to deliver a comprehensive school counseling program to all students by collaborating with community resources for student success.
- c. Promote equity for all students through community resources.
- d. Are careful not to use their professional role as a school counselor to benefit any type of private therapeutic or consultative practice in which they might be involved outside of the school setting.

E. RESPONSIBILITIES TO SELF

E.1. Professional Competence

Professional school counselors:

- a. Function within the boundaries of individual professional competence and accept responsibility for the consequences of their actions.
- b. Monitor emotional and physical health and practice wellness to ensure optimal effectiveness. Seek physical or mental health referrals when needed to ensure competence at all times.
- c. Monitor personal responsibility and recognize the high standard of care a professional in this critical position of trust must maintain on and off the job and are cognizant of and refrain from activity that may lead to inadequate professional services or diminish their effectiveness with school community members. Professional and personal growth are ongoing throughout the counselor's career.
- d. Strive through personal initiative to stay abreast of current research and to maintain professional competence in advocacy, teaming and collaboration, culturally competent counseling and school counseling program coordination, knowledge and use of technology, leadership, and equity assessment using data.
- e. Ensure a variety of regular opportunities for participating in and facilitating professional development for self and other educators and school counselors through continuing education opportunities annually including: attendance at professional school counseling conferences; reading *Professional School Counseling* journal articles; facilitating workshops for education staff on issues school counselors are uniquely positioned to provide.
- f. Enhance personal self-awareness, professional effectiveness and ethical practice by regularly attending presentations on ethical decision-making. Effective school counselors will seek supervision when ethical or professional questions arise in their practice.
- g. Maintain current membership in professional associations to ensure ethical and best practices.

E.2. Multicultural and Social Justice Advocacy and Leadership

Professional school counselors:

- a. Monitor and expand personal multicultural and social justice advocacy awareness, knowledge and skills. School counselors strive for exemplary cultural competence by ensuring personal beliefs or values are not imposed on students or other stakeholders.
- b. Develop competencies in how prejudice, power and various forms of oppression, such as ableism, ageism, classism, familyism, genderism, heterosexism, immigrationism, linguisticism, racism, religionism and sexism, affect self, students and all stakeholders.
- c. Acquire educational, consultation and training experiences to improve awareness, knowledge, skills and effectiveness in working with diverse populations: ethnic/racial status, age, economic status, special needs, ESL or ELL, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity/expression, family type, religious/spiritual identity and appearance.
- d. Affirm the multiple cultural and linguistic identities of every student and all stakeholders. Advocate for equitable school and school counseling program policies and practices for every student and all stakeholders including use of translators and bilingual/multilingual school counseling program materials that repre-

sent all languages used by families in the school community, and advocate for appropriate accommodations and accessibility for students with disabilities.

e. Use inclusive and culturally responsible language in all forms of communication.

f. Provide regular workshops and written/digital information to families to increase understanding, collaborative two-way communication and a welcoming school climate between families and the school to promote increased student achievement.

g. Work as advocates and leaders in the school to create equity-based school counseling programs that help close any achievement, opportunity and attainment gaps that deny all students the chance to pursue their educational goals.

F. RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE PROFESSION

F.1. Professionalism

Professional school counselors:

a. Accept the policies and procedures for handling ethical violations as a result of maintaining membership in the American School Counselor Association.

b. Conduct themselves in such a manner as to advance individual ethical practice and the profession.

c. Conduct appropriate research, and report findings in a manner consistent with acceptable educational and psychological research practices. School counselors advocate for the protection of individual students' identities when using data for research or program planning.

d. Seek institutional and parent/guardian consent before administering any research, and maintain security of research records.

e. Adhere to ethical standards of the profession, other official policy statements, such as ASCA's position statements, role statement and the ASCA National Model and relevant statutes established by federal, state and local governments, and when these are in conflict work responsibly for change.

f. Clearly distinguish between statements and actions made as a private individual and those made as a representative of the school counseling profession.

g. Do not use their professional position to recruit or gain clients, consultees for their private practice or to seek and receive unjustified personal gains, unfair advantage, inappropriate relationships or unearned goods or services.

F.2. Contribution to the Profession

Professional school counselors:

a. Actively participate in professional associations and share results and best practices in assessing, implementing and annually evaluating the outcomes of data-driven school counseling programs with measurable academic, career/college and personal/social competencies for every student.

b. Provide support, consultation and mentoring to novice professionals.

c. Have a responsibility to read and abide by the ASCA Ethical Standards and adhere to the applicable laws and regulations.

F.3 Supervision of School Counselor Candidates Pursuing Practicum and Internship Experiences:

Professional school counselors:

a. Provide support for appropriate experiences in academic, career, college access and personal/social counseling for school counseling interns.

b. Ensure school counselor candidates have experience in developing, implementing and evaluating a data-driven school counseling program model, such as the ASCA National Model.

c. Ensure the school counseling practicum and internship have specific, measurable service delivery, foundation, management and accountability systems.

d. Ensure school counselor candidates maintain appropriate liability insurance for the duration of the school counseling practicum and internship experiences.

e. Ensure a site visit is completed by a school counselor education faculty member for each practicum or internship student, preferably when both the school counselor trainee and site supervisor are present.

F.4 Collaboration and Education about School Counselors and School Counseling Programs with other Professionals

School counselors and school counseling program directors/supervisors collaborate with special educators, school nurses, school social workers, school psychologists, college counselors/admissions officers, physical therapists, occupational therapists and speech pathologists to advocate for optimal services for students and all other stakeholders.

G. MAINTENANCE OF STANDARDS

Professional school counselors are expected to maintain ethical behavior at all times.

G.1. When there exists serious doubt as to the ethical behavior of a colleague(s) the following procedure may serve as a guide:

1. The school counselor should consult confidentially with a professional colleague to discuss the nature of a complaint to see if the professional colleague views the situation as an ethical violation.

2. When feasible, the school counselor should directly approach the colleague whose behavior is in question to discuss the complaint and seek resolution.

3. The school counselor should keep documentation of all the steps taken.

4. If resolution is not forthcoming at the personal level, the school counselor shall utilize the channels established within the school, school district, the state school counseling association and ASCA's Ethics Committee.

5. If the matter still remains unresolved, referral for review and appropriate action should be made to the Ethics Committees in the following sequence:

- State school counselor association
- American School Counselor Association

6. The ASCA Ethics Committee is responsible for:
- Educating and consulting with the membership regarding ethical standards
 - Periodically reviewing and recommending changes in code
 - Receiving and processing questions to clarify the application of such standards. Questions must be submitted in writing to the ASCA Ethics Committee chair.
 - Handling complaints of alleged violations of the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors. At the national level, complaints should be submitted in writing to the ASCA Ethics Committee, c/o the Executive Director, American School Counselor Association, 1101 King St., Suite 625, Alexandria, VA 22314.

G.2. When school counselors are forced to work in situations or abide by policies that do not reflect the ethics of the profession, the school counselor works responsibly through the correct channels to try and remedy the condition.

G.3. When faced with any ethical dilemma school counselors, school counseling program directors/supervisors and school counselor educators use an ethical decision-making model such as Solutions to Ethical Problems in Schools (STEPS) (Stone, 2001):

1. *Define the problem emotionally and intellectually*
2. *Apply the ASCA Ethical Standards and the law*
3. *Consider the students' chronological and developmental levels*
4. *Consider the setting, parental rights and minors' rights*
5. *Apply the moral principles*
6. *Determine Your potential courses of action and their consequences*
7. *Evaluate the selected action*
8. *Consult*
9. *Implement the course of action*

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS

N A S W S t a n d a r d s f o r

School Social Work Services



National Association of Social Workers

2012

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School Social Work Services

National Association of Social Workers

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Introduction

For over a hundred years, school social workers have been providing a critical link between school, home, and community. The school social work profession has consistently focused on coordinating the efforts of schools, families, and communities toward helping students improve their academic achievement and social, emotional, and behavioral competence by using its unique perspective of viewing the person in his or her environment. School social workers seek to ensure equitable education opportunities; ensure that students are mentally, physically, and emotionally present in the classroom; and promote respect and dignity for all students.

School social work is a complex and specialized field of practice that is affected by changes in education policy, research, and practice models that continue to evolve. NASW periodically revises the *NASW Standards for School Social Work Services* to meet the changing needs of school social workers, the clients they serve, and local education agencies. NASW has revised these standards to reflect the values of our profession and current practice trends.

The Evolving Context of Education

Passage of the 2002 No Child Left Behind Act, a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, addresses school social work services and was written to create a stronger, more accountable education system with an emphasis on parental involvement, evidence-informed educational strategies, and data-informed decision making.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA), a reauthorization of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142), also addresses school social work services. This reauthorization promotes the adoption of effective interventions and places a premium on prevention by allowing school districts to alter substantially the screening and identification procedures for children with disabilities. Specifically, IDEA permits school districts to use a process that determines students' ability to respond to scientific, evidence-informed interventions as criteria for special education eligibility. This approach, referred to as response to intervention (RtI), has been applied to academic and behavioral supports in special and regular education. This method can replace the discrepancy model—the process of comparing ability and achievement to identify students with learning difficulties.

The multitier model suggests a reallocation of school social work services to address schoolwide and small group intervention and consideration of more intensive interventions for individual students, based on their level of response to interventions at prior levels. The RtI framework directs school personnel to monitor student success across all three levels and to make data-informed decisions to determine which students require more intensive levels of intervention. By using data-informed decision making, schools can more effectively direct resources to where they are needed.

Educational research has focused on the following five topics and will likely continue to have a direct impact on school social work practice: (1) integrated intervention efforts that

emphasize primary prevention; (2) early screening and intervention; (3) approaches to intervention that target multiple risk factors in home, school, and community settings and involve parents, teachers, and administrators; (4) approaches that seek to improve individual and system factors contributing to academic success; and (5) data-informed decision making and intervention fidelity.

These policy, research, and practice themes are reflected in these standards.

Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles address multiple domains of practice and are reflected in these standards.

1. Education/School Reform: Legislators, policymakers, and the general public will continue to demand reform and increased accountability as economic stressors require cutbacks in expenditures for education. It is important that social workers be proactive to address these pressures and advocate for resources. School social workers actively help school systems meet expectations of federal, state, and local mandates; particularly those designed to promote equal educational opportunity, social justice, and the removal of barriers to learning. School social work practice is consistent with these mandates and promotes the academic mission of schools by fostering educational environments that are safe; have supportive, fair, and responsive policies; and emphasize early intervention and positive behavioral interventions.

2. Social Justice: Equal educational opportunity continues to be an elusive goal as indicated by discrepancies in standardized measures of achievement, graduation rates, and the percentage of students attending college across population subgroups. It is important for the school social worker to collaborate with and facilitate collaboration among students, parents, community members, administration, teachers, and other school staff to identify ways to intervene early with students who struggle to benefit fully from the educational system. An ecological perspective, the hallmark of social work education, is essential for identifying resources for addressing these disparities.

3. Multitier Interventions: The multitier model includes three tiers relating to prevention and intervention.

Tier 1 refers to evidence-informed, schoolwide prevention programs and practices that teach positive behaviors, promote social emotional development, and ensure a school climate conducive to learning. Tier 1 programs and practices are implemented by all staff in the school setting. Ongoing data-informed decision making ensures that Tier 1 interventions are effective.

Tier 2 refers to the use of evidence-informed, small group, and short-term interventions focused on improving early academic and social-emotional engagement to reduce problem behavior. For example, these interventions could target conflict resolution, social skills, mental health needs, and short-term crisis situations that do not require more intensive tier 3 interventions. On the basis of data

demonstrating a lack of response to tier 1 interventions, students are referred for the additional support offered at tier 2. These strategies should be efficient to apply and effective in terms of producing rapid improvement in students' ability to learn and be successful in school.

Tier 3 refers to the use of evidence-informed individual and long-term interventions. Tier 3 interventions are provided to students who have serious academic, behavioral, or social-emotional problems that constitute a chronic condition that has not responded to data-driven tier 1 or tier 2 interventions. The goal of this tier is to reduce the negative impact of the condition on a student's functioning. Tier 3 interventions involve intensive individualized strategies that are implemented for extended periods of time and frequently involve community agencies. Data from tier 3 interventions may indicate the need to consider eligibility for special education services.

In summary, school social workers not only provide direct services to children who require basic needs or exhibit challenging behavior, but also lead prevention efforts that support children through building the capacity of family members, other school staff, and community agencies to improve student outcomes.

Goals of the Standards

These standards were developed to broadly define the scope of services that school social workers shall provide, that school administrators should support, and that students and families

should expect. The standards are designed to enhance awareness of the skills, knowledge, values, methods, and sensitivity school social workers need to work effectively within school systems.

Ideally, these standards will stimulate the development of clear guidelines, goals, and objectives related to school social work services in social work practice, research, policy, and education.

The specific goals of the standards are

- to establish expectations for school social work practices and services;
- to ensure that school social work services are guided by the NASW *Code of Ethics*;
- to ensure the highest quality of school social work services will be provided to students and families;
- to provide a basis for advocating for clients' rights to be treated with respect and dignity, confidentiality, access to supportive services, and appropriate inclusion in decision making;
- to provide a basis for the preparation of school social workers and the development of continuing education materials and programs related to school social work services; and
- to encourage school social workers to participate in the development and refinement of public policy, at the local, state, and federal levels, to support school success.

Standards

Standard 1. Ethics and Values

School social workers shall adhere to the ethics and values of the social work profession and shall use the NASW *Code of Ethics* as a guide to ethical decision making, while understanding the unique aspects of school social work practice and the needs of the students, parents, and communities they serve.

Interpretation

School social workers shall demonstrate core values of service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. In addition, school social workers shall adhere to the professional ethical responsibilities delineated in the NASW *Code of Ethics*.

School social workers shall have knowledge of and comply with local, state, and federal mandates related to informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, and access to records within the context of legal and ethical rights of minors and parents. Students, families, and other professionals shall be informed of the limits of confidentiality when services are initiated. Employers and school administrators should be informed of the ethical responsibilities of the social work profession. In the event that conflicts arise among competing expectations, school social workers are directed to the NASW *Code of Ethics* as a tool in their decision making.

Standard 2. Qualifications

School social workers shall meet the provisions for professional practice set by NASW and their respective state department of education and possess knowledge and understanding basic to the social work profession as well as the local education system.

Interpretation

School social workers shall have a graduate degree in social work from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). An MSW degree is the recommended entry-level qualification for a school social worker position. As a distinct specialty within the social work profession, school social work requires specialized knowledge and understanding of education systems, which should be provided by social work education programs. The school social worker shall actively seek this specialized training when the CSWE accredited program does not provide it. School social workers shall be licensed by state boards of social work and certified through state departments of education when available.

School social workers shall have specialized knowledge and an understanding of historical and current perspectives of public school education at the local, state, and national levels, including educational reform and legislation. School social workers shall also be knowledgeable about evidence-informed approaches to teaching and learning that promote positive academic outcomes for all students.

Standard 3. Assessment

School social workers shall conduct assessments of individuals, families and systems/organizations (namely, classroom, school, neighborhood, district, state) with the goal of improving student social, emotional, behavioral, and academic outcomes.

Interpretation

School social workers shall possess skills in systematic assessment, data gathering, and interpretation at multiple levels using a variety of methods (for example, interview, direct observation, standardized instruments, surveys, focus groups) to assess the needs, characteristics, and interactions of students, families, and school personnel. School social workers shall conduct reliable and valid assessments of students and organizations to inform the design of interventions to remove barriers to learning. Assessments shall use ecological perspectives and functional approaches to enhance understanding of barriers to learning and the interventions that foster improvement of student well-being and academic progress.

Standard 4. Intervention

School social workers shall understand and use evidence-informed practices in their interventions.

Interpretation

School social workers shall remain current with school-based intervention research and use evidence-informed practices in service delivery. Interventions shall be designed to enhance positive educational experiences and involve the student, the family, other team members, school personnel, and community resources as

appropriate. Interventions shall be based on assessments relevant to the concerns in the referral and include goals, objectives, methods of evaluation, and outcome criteria. Interventions shall be applied within the multitier framework and address the ecologies (for example, home, school, community) most relevant to the problem being addressed.

Standard 5. Decision Making and Practice Evaluation

School social workers shall use data to guide service delivery and to evaluate their practice regularly to improve and expand services.

Interpretation

School social workers shall collect, analyze, synthesize, and disseminate data related to their practice. School social workers shall conduct ongoing evaluation to determine the level of effectiveness of all interventions. Methods used to evaluate social work practice shall be assessed periodically to ensure that objectives, activities, and measured outcomes are aligned with the local education agency's goals and social work ethical practice.

Standard 6. Record Keeping

School social workers shall maintain accurate data and records that are relevant to planning, implementation, and evaluation of school social work services.

Interpretation

School social workers shall maintain timely, accurate, and confidential records that document school social work services, demonstrate outcomes, and promote accountability to the local education agency

and community. Records shall be maintained according to federal, state, and local laws.

Standard 7. Workload Management

School social workers shall organize their workloads to fulfill their responsibilities and clarify their critical roles within the educational mission of the school or district in which they work.

Interpretation

School social workers shall manage their work in an efficient and effective manner. Priorities for practice shall be developed collaboratively between the school social worker and the supervisor. Priorities shall be established on the basis of the needs of students, professional skills of the school social worker, program needs, research, and availability of other resources. School social workers shall perform roles and responsibilities across a multitier framework for service delivery and use technology to enhance communication, obtain and organize information, demonstrate accountability, and complete workload assignments.

Standard 8. Professional Development

School social workers shall pursue continuous enhancement of knowledge and skills to provide the most current, beneficial, and culturally appropriate services to students and their families.

Interpretation

School social workers shall adhere to the *NASW Standards for Continuing Professional Education* and follow state professional regulation regarding continuing education requirements. School social workers shall access

ongoing supervision and consultation to increase their professional proficiency and competence. School social workers shall participate in professional development activities that enhance their knowledge and skills. School social workers shall also contribute to the development of the profession by educating and supervising school social work interns when possible.

Standard 9. Cultural Competence

School social workers shall ensure that students and their families are provided services within the context of multicultural understanding and competence.

Interpretation

School social workers shall demonstrate self awareness, knowledge, and practice skills consistent with the *NASW Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice*. School social workers shall continue to develop specialized knowledge and understanding about client groups they serve and culturally appropriate resources. This understanding shall be applied in a manner that results in a positive school climate that respects and values differences. School social workers shall use evidence-informed practices, skills, and techniques that reflect the worker's understanding of the role of culture in the helping process. School social workers shall recognize barriers to academic progress relating to cultural issues within the local education agency, while supporting an environment that honors and celebrates the cultures of the population within the school.

Standard 10. Interdisciplinary Leadership and Collaboration

School social workers shall provide leadership in developing a positive school climate and work collaboratively with school administration, school personnel, family members, and community professionals as appropriate to increase accessibility and effectiveness of services.

Interpretation

School social workers shall serve as leaders and consultants in promoting positive school climate. School social workers shall also serve as leaders and consultants to facilitate an understanding of factors in the home, school and community that affect students' educational experiences. School social workers shall provide training and engage parents, school personnel, other professionals and community members in the removal of barriers to learning. School social workers shall also provide leadership and collaboration in the implementation of comprehensive school-based and school-linked programs that promote student well-being and positive academic outcomes.

Standard 11. Advocacy

School social workers shall engage in advocacy that seeks to ensure that all students have equal access to education and services to enhance their academic progress.

Interpretation

School social workers shall advocate for students and their families. This advocacy includes helping them gain access to and effectively use formal and informal community resources that enable families to self-advocate. School social workers, as systems' change agents, shall identify

areas of need that are not being addressed by the local education agency and community and shall work to create services that address these needs. School social workers shall be informed about court decisions, legislation, rules and regulations, and policies and procedures that affect school social work practice, to effectively advocate for students.

Appendix A. Administrative Structure and Support

Qualifications and Title

An MSW degree is the recommended entry-level qualification for school social workers. Local education agencies should ensure that school social workers have an MSW degree from a program accredited by CSWE. However, should the local education agency employ school social workers whose highest degree is a BSW, an MSW-level social worker should provide supervision for the BSW-level social worker.

Salaries and job classifications of school social workers should be commensurate with their education, experience, and responsibilities and be comparable to similarly qualified specialized instructional support personnel employed by the local education agency.

“School social worker” is the position title that correctly identifies the educational background, profession, and function of a social worker employed by a local education agency. Other titles, such as “attendance officer,” “pupil personnel worker,” “home and school visitor,” “home–school coordinator,” “visiting teacher,”

“family collaborative worker,” “family specialist,” or “home family specialist,” project incomplete and misleading notions of school social workers’ qualifications and functions and should not be used.

All social workers in school settings should adhere to the *NASW Standards for School Social Work Services*.

Roles of State Education Agencies/ Credentialing/Licensing Boards

State departments of education or other state entities that license or certify educational personnel should regulate school social work practice.

State departments should support a state consultant position to oversee quality assurance of school social work practice. A state consultant should have an MSW degree, have direct experience as a school social worker, and be knowledgeable about current trends in school social work practice and policy. The state consultant should work closely with state, regional and national professional organizations that support school social work practice and are knowledgeable about the field of school social work.

Roles of Local Education Agencies

Administrative Support. The administrative structure of the local education agency should delineate clear lines of support and accountability for the school social work program and provide for optimum use of the school social workers’ knowledge and skills. Realistic job descriptions, working conditions, and workload standards are essential for

effective practice. Regular review of goals, objectives, accomplishments, and accountability procedures of the school social work program are also necessary. Designation of a lead social worker to help promote appropriate support and accountability is recommended.

Supervision. The administrative structure established by the local education agency should provide for appropriate school social work supervision. The local education agency is responsible for administrative and professional supervision to ensure high quality services. Supervision of school social work programs should be provided by credentialed and experienced MSW-level school social workers.

Job Tasks. The goals, objectives, and tasks of a school social work program should be clearly and directly related to the mission of the local education agency and the educational process. School social workers are expected to support and help facilitate educational reforms and initiatives. Some examples are those that emphasize multitier prevention, early intervention, parent education and involvement, service integration, partnerships, and support for student transitions. The local education agency should have position descriptions that appropriately describe the roles and responsibilities of school social workers and should use a performance evaluation tool that is specific to the practice of school social work.

Work Setting. The local education agency should provide a professional work setting that allows school social workers to practice effectively. School social workers require basic work resources to ensure privacy and

confidentiality for students and families. These basic resources include an office, clerical support, current information technology, and an adequate budget for professional materials, supplies, and activities. Adequate, confidential space at each school site for meeting with students, families, and local education agency personnel is essential.

Professional Development. The local education agency should provide opportunities for school social workers to engage in professional development activities that support school social work practice and continued licensure/certification. Funding support and an adequate number of professional leave days enable school social workers to strengthen and broaden skills required to better serve students, families, the local education agency, and the community.

Leadership. The local education agency should involve school social workers in developing and coordinating partnerships with community health, mental health, and social service providers linked with or based at school sites to ensure that these services promote student educational success. Because of their extensive knowledge of community resources, school social workers play a critical role in facilitating the provision of community services in the local education agency and help orient community providers to school climate, culture, and structure and to the laws and regulations governing practice in educational settings.

Ratios

The local education agency should establish and implement a school social worker-to-student population ratio to ensure reasonable workload expectations. The local education agency should provide school social work services at a level that is sufficient to address the nature and extent of student needs. Appropriate ratios for school social work staff to students depend on the characteristics and needs of the student population to be served, as well as other resources in the local education agency and community available to address these needs. Each local or state education agency should establish adequate levels and types of school social work services on the basis of comprehensive needs assessment data.

School social work services should be provided at a ratio of one school social worker to each school building serving up to 250 general education students, or a ratio of 1:250 students. When a school social worker is providing services to students with intensive needs, a lower ratio, such as 1:50, is suggested.



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**Code of Ethics
of the National Association of Social Workers**

Approved by the 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly and [revised by the 2008 NASW Delegate Assembly](#)

The 2008 NASW Delegate Assembly approved the following revisions to the NASW Code of Ethics:

1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity

(c) Social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability.

2.01 Respect

(a) Social workers should treat colleagues with respect and should represent accurately and fairly the qualifications, views, and obligations of colleagues.

(b) Social workers should avoid unwarranted negative criticism of colleagues in communications with clients or with other professionals. Unwarranted negative criticism may include demeaning comments that refer to colleagues' level of competence or to individuals' attributes such as race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability.

4.02 Discrimination

Social workers should not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate with any form of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical disability.

6.04 Social and Political Action

(d) Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical disability.

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Preamble

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human wellbeing and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual wellbeing in a social context and the wellbeing of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living.

Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. "Clients" is used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems.

The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values. These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundation of social work's unique purpose and perspective:

- service
- social justice
- dignity and worth of the person
- importance of human relationships
- integrity
- competence.

This constellation of core values reflects what is unique to the social work profession. Core values, and the principles that flow from them, must be balanced within the context and complexity of the human experience.

Purpose of the NASW Code of Ethics

Professional ethics are at the core of social work. The profession has an obligation to articulate its basic values, ethical principles, and ethical standards. The *NASW Code of Ethics* sets forth these values, principles, and standards to guide social workers' conduct. The *Code* is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve.

The *NASW Code of Ethics* serves six purposes:

1. The *Code* identifies core values on which social work's mission is based.
2. The *Code* summarizes broad ethical principles that reflect the profession's core values and establishes a set of specific ethical standards that should be used to guide social work practice.
3. The *Code* is designed to help social workers identify relevant considerations when professional obligations conflict or ethical uncertainties arise.
4. The *Code* provides ethical standards to which the general public can hold the social work profession accountable.
5. The *Code* socializes practitioners new to the field to social work's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards.
6. The *Code* articulates standards that the social work profession itself can use to assess whether social workers have engaged in unethical conduct. NASW has formal procedures to adjudicate ethics complaints filed against its members.* In subscribing to this *Code*, social workers are required to cooperate in its implementation, participate in NASW adjudication proceedings, and abide by any NASW disciplinary rulings or sanctions based on it.

The *Code* offers a set of values, principles, and standards to guide decision making and conduct when ethical issues arise. It does not provide a set of rules that prescribe how social workers should act in all situations. Specific applications of the *Code* must take into account the context in which it is being considered and the possibility of conflicts among the *Code*'s values, principles, and standards. Ethical responsibilities flow from all human relationships, from the personal and familial to the social and professional.

Further, the *NASW Code of Ethics* does not specify which values, principles, and standards are most important and ought to outweigh others in instances when they conflict. Reasonable differences of opinion can and do exist among social workers with respect to the ways in which values, ethical principles, and ethical standards should be rank ordered when they conflict. Ethical decision making in a given situation must apply the informed judgment of the individual social worker

and should also consider how the issues would be judged in a peer review process where the ethical standards of the profession would be applied.

Ethical decision making is a process. There are many instances in social work where simple answers are not available to resolve complex ethical issues. Social workers should take into consideration all the values, principles, and standards in this *Code* that are relevant to any situation in which ethical judgment is warranted. Social workers' decisions and actions should be consistent with the spirit as well as the letter of this *Code*.

In addition to this *Code*, there are many other sources of information about ethical thinking that may be useful. Social workers should consider ethical theory and principles generally, social work theory and research, laws, regulations, agency policies, and other relevant codes of ethics, recognizing that among codes of ethics social workers should consider the *NASW Code of Ethics* as their primary source. Social workers also should be aware of the impact on ethical decision making of their clients' and their own personal values and cultural and religious beliefs and practices. They should be aware of any conflicts between personal and professional values and deal with them responsibly. For additional guidance social workers should consult the relevant literature on professional ethics and ethical decision making and seek appropriate consultation when faced with ethical dilemmas. This may involve consultation with an agency-based or social work organization's ethics committee, a regulatory body, knowledgeable colleagues, supervisors, or legal counsel.

Instances may arise when social workers' ethical obligations conflict with agency policies or relevant laws or regulations. When such conflicts occur, social workers must make a responsible effort to resolve the conflict in a manner that is consistent with the values, principles, and standards expressed in this *Code*. If a reasonable resolution of the conflict does not appear possible, social workers should seek proper consultation before making a decision.

The *NASW Code of Ethics* is to be used by NASW and by individuals, agencies, organizations, and bodies (such as licensing and regulatory boards, professional liability insurance providers, courts of law, agency boards of directors, government agencies, and other professional groups) that choose to adopt it or use it as a frame of reference. Violation of standards in this *Code* does not automatically imply legal liability or violation of the law. Such determination can only be made in the context of legal and judicial proceedings. Alleged violations of the *Code* would be subject to a peer review process. Such processes are generally separate from legal or administrative procedures and insulated from legal review or proceedings to allow the profession to counsel and discipline its own members.

A code of ethics cannot guarantee ethical behavior. Moreover, a code of ethics cannot resolve all ethical issues or disputes or capture the richness and complexity involved in striving to make responsible choices within a moral community. Rather, a code of ethics sets forth values, ethical principles, and ethical standards to which professionals aspire and by which their actions can be judged. Social workers' ethical behavior should result from their personal commitment to engage in ethical practice. The *NASW Code of Ethics* reflects the commitment of all social workers to uphold the profession's values and to act ethically. Principles and standards must be applied by individuals of good character who discern moral questions and, in good faith, seek to make reliable ethical judgments.

Ethical Principles

The following broad ethical principles are based on social work's core values of service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. These principles set forth ideals to which all social workers should aspire.

Value: Service

Ethical Principle: *Social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems.*

Social workers elevate service to others above self-interest. Social workers draw on their knowledge, values, and skills to help people in need and to address social problems. Social workers are encouraged to volunteer some portion of their professional skills with no expectation of significant financial return (*pro bono* service).

Value: Social Justice

Ethical Principle: *Social workers challenge social injustice.*

Social workers pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people. Social workers' social change efforts are focused primarily on issues of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and other forms of social injustice. These activities seek to promote sensitivity to and knowledge about oppression and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers strive to ensure access to needed information, services, and resources; equality of opportunity; and meaningful participation in decision making for all people.

Value: *Dignity and Worth of the Person*

Ethical Principle: *Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person.*

Social workers treat each person in a caring and respectful fashion, mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers promote clients' socially responsible selfdetermination. Social workers seek to enhance clients' capacity and opportunity to change and to address their own needs. Social workers are cognizant of their dual responsibility to clients and to the broader society. They seek to resolve conflicts between clients' interests and the broader society's interests in a socially responsible manner consistent with the values, ethical principles, and ethical standards of the profession.

Value: *Importance of Human Relationships*

Ethical Principle: *Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships.*

Social workers understand that relationships between and among people are an important vehicle for change. Social workers engage people as partners in the helping process. Social workers seek to strengthen relationships among people in a purposeful effort to promote, restore, maintain, and enhance the wellbeing of individuals, families, social groups, organizations, and communities.

Value: *Integrity*

Ethical Principle: *Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner.*

Social workers are continually aware of the profession's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards and practice in a manner consistent with them. Social workers act honestly and responsibly and promote ethical practices on the part of the organizations with which they are affiliated.

Value: *Competence*

Ethical Principle: *Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise.*

Social workers continually strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills and to apply them in practice. Social workers should aspire to contribute to the knowledge base of the profession.

Ethical Standards

The following ethical standards are relevant to the professional activities of all social workers. These standards concern (1) social workers' ethical responsibilities to clients, (2) social workers' ethical responsibilities to colleagues, (3) social workers' ethical responsibilities in practice settings, (4) social workers' ethical responsibilities as professionals, (5) social workers' ethical responsibilities to the social work profession, and (6) social workers' ethical responsibilities to the broader society.

Some of the standards that follow are enforceable guidelines for professional conduct, and some are aspirational. The extent to which each standard is enforceable is a matter of professional judgment to be exercised by those responsible for reviewing alleged violations of ethical standards.

1. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO CLIENTS

1.01 Commitment to Clients

Social workers' primary responsibility is to promote the wellbeing of clients. In general, clients' interests are primary. However, social workers' responsibility to the larger society or specific legal obligations may on limited occasions supersede the loyalty owed clients, and clients should be so advised. (Examples include when a social worker is required by law to report that a client has abused a child or has threatened to harm self or others.)

1.02 SelfDetermination

Social workers respect and promote the right of clients to selfdetermination and assist clients in their efforts to identify and

clarify their goals. Social workers may limit clients' right to self-determination when, in the social workers' professional judgment, clients' actions or potential actions pose a serious, foreseeable, and imminent risk to themselves or others.

1.03 Informed Consent

(a) Social workers should provide services to clients only in the context of a professional relationship based, when appropriate, on valid informed consent. Social workers should use clear and understandable language to inform clients of the purpose of the services, risks related to the services, limits to services because of the requirements of a third-party payer, relevant costs, reasonable alternatives, clients' right to refuse or withdraw consent, and the time frame covered by the consent. Social workers should provide clients with an opportunity to ask questions.

(b) In instances when clients are not literate or have difficulty understanding the primary language used in the practice setting, social workers should take steps to ensure clients' comprehension. This may include providing clients with a detailed verbal explanation or arranging for a qualified interpreter or translator whenever possible.

(c) In instances when clients lack the capacity to provide informed consent, social workers should protect clients' interests by seeking permission from an appropriate third party, informing clients consistent with the clients' level of understanding. In such instances social workers should seek to ensure that the third party acts in a manner consistent with clients' wishes and interests. Social workers should take reasonable steps to enhance such clients' ability to give informed consent.

(d) In instances when clients are receiving services involuntarily, social workers should provide information about the nature and extent of services and about the extent of clients' right to refuse service.

(e) Social workers who provide services via electronic media (such as computer, telephone, radio, and television) should inform recipients of the limitations and risks associated with such services.

(f) Social workers should obtain clients' informed consent before audiotaping or videotaping clients or permitting observation of services to clients by a third party.

1.04 Competence

(a) Social workers should provide services and represent themselves as competent only within the boundaries of their education, training, license, certification, consultation received, supervised experience, or other relevant professional experience.

(b) Social workers should provide services in substantive areas or use intervention techniques or approaches that are new to them only after engaging in appropriate study, training, consultation, and supervision from people who are competent in those interventions or techniques.

(c) When generally recognized standards do not exist with respect to an emerging area of practice, social workers should exercise careful judgment and take responsible steps (including appropriate education, research, training, consultation, and supervision) to ensure the competence of their work and to protect clients from harm.

1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity

(a) Social workers should understand culture and its function in human behavior and society, recognizing the strengths that exist in all cultures.

(b) Social workers should have a knowledge base of their clients' cultures and be able to demonstrate competence in the provision of services that are sensitive to clients' cultures and to differences among people and cultural groups.

(c) Social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability.

1.06 Conflicts of Interest

- (a) Social workers should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest that interfere with the exercise of professional discretion and impartial judgment. Social workers should inform clients when a real or potential conflict of interest arises and take reasonable steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes the clients' interests primary and protects clients' interests to the greatest extent possible. In some cases, protecting clients' interests may require termination of the professional relationship with proper referral of the client.
- (b) Social workers should not take unfair advantage of any professional relationship or exploit others to further their personal, religious, political, or business interests.
- (c) Social workers should not engage in dual or multiple relationships with clients or former clients in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. In instances when dual or multiple relationships are unavoidable, social workers should take steps to protect clients and are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries. (Dual or multiple relationships occur when social workers relate to clients in more than one relationship, whether professional, social, or business. Dual or multiple relationships can occur simultaneously or consecutively.)
- (d) When social workers provide services to two or more people who have a relationship with each other (for example, couples, family members), social workers should clarify with all parties which individuals will be considered clients and the nature of social workers' professional obligations to the various individuals who are receiving services. Social workers who anticipate a conflict of interest among the individuals receiving services or who anticipate having to perform in potentially conflicting roles (for example, when a social worker is asked to testify in a child custody dispute or divorce proceedings involving clients) should clarify their role with the parties involved and take appropriate action to minimize any conflict of interest.

1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality

- (a) Social workers should respect clients' right to privacy. Social workers should not solicit private information from clients unless it is essential to providing services or conducting social work evaluation or research. Once private information is shared, standards of confidentiality apply.
- (b) Social workers may disclose confidential information when appropriate with valid consent from a client or a person legally authorized to consent on behalf of a client.
- (c) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of professional service, except for compelling professional reasons. The general expectation that social workers will keep information confidential does not apply when disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm to a client or other identifiable person. In all instances, social workers should disclose the least amount of confidential information necessary to achieve the desired purpose; only information that is directly relevant to the purpose for which the disclosure is made should be revealed.
- (d) Social workers should inform clients, to the extent possible, about the disclosure of confidential information and the potential consequences, when feasible before the disclosure is made. This applies whether social workers disclose confidential information on the basis of a legal requirement or client consent.
- (e) Social workers should discuss with clients and other interested parties the nature of confidentiality and limitations of clients' right to confidentiality. Social workers should review with clients circumstances where confidential information may be requested and where disclosure of confidential information may be legally required. This discussion should occur as soon as possible in the social workerclient relationship and as needed throughout the course of the relationship.
- (f) When social workers provide counseling services to families, couples, or groups, social workers should seek agreement among the parties involved concerning each individual's right to confidentiality and obligation to preserve the confidentiality of information shared by others. Social workers should inform participants in family, couples, or group counseling that social workers cannot guarantee that all participants will honor such agreements.
- (g) Social workers should inform clients involved in family, couples, marital, or group counseling of the social worker's,

employer's, and agency's policy concerning the social worker's disclosure of confidential information among the parties involved in the counseling.

(h) Social workers should not disclose confidential information to thirdparty payers unless clients have authorized such disclosure.

(i) Social workers should not discuss confidential information in any setting unless privacy can be ensured. Social workers should not discuss confidential information in public or semipublic areas such as hallways, waiting rooms, elevators, and restaurants.

(j) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients during legal proceedings to the extent permitted by law. When a court of law or other legally authorized body orders social workers to disclose confidential or privileged information without a client's consent and such disclosure could cause harm to the client, social workers should request that the court withdraw the order or limit the order as narrowly as possible or maintain the records under seal, unavailable for public inspection.

(k) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients when responding to requests from members of the media.

(l) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients' written and electronic records and other sensitive information. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients' records are stored in a secure location and that clients' records are not available to others who are not authorized to have access.

(m) Social workers should take precautions to ensure and maintain the confidentiality of information transmitted to other parties through the use of computers, electronic mail, facsimile machines, telephones and telephone answering machines, and other electronic or computer technology. Disclosure of identifying information should be avoided whenever possible.

(n) Social workers should transfer or dispose of clients' records in a manner that protects clients' confidentiality and is consistent with state statutes governing records and social work licensure.

(o) Social workers should take reasonable precautions to protect client confidentiality in the event of the social worker's termination of practice, incapacitation, or death.

(p) Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients for teaching or training purposes unless the client has consented to disclosure of confidential information.

(q) Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients with consultants unless the client has consented to disclosure of confidential information or there is a compelling need for such disclosure.

(r) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of deceased clients consistent with the preceding standards.

1.08 Access to Records

(a) Social workers should provide clients with reasonable access to records concerning the clients. Social workers who are concerned that clients' access to their records could cause serious misunderstanding or harm to the client should provide assistance in interpreting the records and consultation with the client regarding the records. Social workers should limit clients' access to their records, or portions of their records, only in exceptional circumstances when there is compelling evidence that such access would cause serious harm to the client. Both clients' requests and the rationale for withholding some or all of the record should be documented in clients' files.

(b) When providing clients with access to their records, social workers should take steps to protect the confidentiality of other individuals identified or discussed in such records.

1.09 Sexual Relationships

(a) Social workers should under no circumstances engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with current clients, whether such contact is consensual or forced.

(b) Social workers should not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with clients' relatives or other individuals with whom clients maintain a close personal relationship when there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client.

Sexual activity or sexual contact with clients' relatives or other individuals with whom clients maintain a personal relationship has the potential to be harmful to the client and may make it difficult for the social worker and client to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. Social workers—not their clients, their clients' relatives, or other individuals with whom the client maintains a personal relationship—assume the full burden for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

(c) Social workers should not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with former clients because of the potential for harm to the client. If social workers engage in conduct contrary to this prohibition or claim that an exception to this prohibition is warranted because of extraordinary circumstances, it is social workers—not their clients—who assume the full burden of demonstrating that the former client has not been exploited, coerced, or manipulated, intentionally or unintentionally.

(d) Social workers should not provide clinical services to individuals with whom they have had a prior sexual relationship. Providing clinical services to a former sexual partner has the potential to be harmful to the individual and is likely to make it difficult for the social worker and individual to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

1.10 Physical Contact

Social workers should not engage in physical contact with clients when there is a possibility of psychological harm to the client as a result of the contact (such as cradling or caressing clients). Social workers who engage in appropriate physical contact with clients are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries that govern such physical contact.

1.11 Sexual Harassment

Social workers should not sexually harass clients. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, sexual solicitation, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

1.12 Derogatory Language

Social workers should not use derogatory language in their written or verbal communications to or about clients. Social workers should use accurate and respectful language in all communications to and about clients.

1.13 Payment for Services

(a) When setting fees, social workers should ensure that the fees are fair, reasonable, and commensurate with the services performed. Consideration should be given to clients' ability to pay.

(b) Social workers should avoid accepting goods or services from clients as payment for professional services. Bartering arrangements, particularly involving services, create the potential for conflicts of interest, exploitation, and inappropriate boundaries in social workers' relationships with clients. Social workers should explore and may participate in bartering only in very limited circumstances when it can be demonstrated that such arrangements are an accepted practice among professionals in the local community, considered to be essential for the provision of services, negotiated without coercion, and entered into at the client's initiative and with the client's informed consent. Social workers who accept goods or services from clients as payment for professional services assume the full burden of demonstrating that this arrangement will not be detrimental to the client or the professional relationship.

(c) Social workers should not solicit a private fee or other remuneration for providing services to clients who are entitled to such available services through the social workers' employer or agency.

1.14 Clients Who Lack DecisionMaking Capacity

When social workers act on behalf of clients who lack the capacity to make informed decisions, social workers should take reasonable steps to safeguard the interests and rights of those clients.

1.15 Interruption of Services

Social workers should make reasonable efforts to ensure continuity of services in the event that services are interrupted by factors such as unavailability, relocation, illness, disability, or death.

1.16 Termination of Services

(a) Social workers should terminate services to clients and professional relationships with them when such services and relationships are no longer required or no longer serve the clients' needs or interests.

(b) Social workers should take reasonable steps to avoid abandoning clients who are still in need of services. Social workers should withdraw services precipitously only under unusual circumstances, giving careful consideration to all factors in the situation and taking care to minimize possible adverse effects. Social workers should assist in making appropriate arrangements for continuation of services when necessary.

(c) Social workers in fee-for-service settings may terminate services to clients who are not paying an overdue balance if the financial contractual arrangements have been made clear to the client, if the client does not pose an imminent danger to self or others, and if the clinical and other consequences of the current nonpayment have been addressed and discussed with the client.

(d) Social workers should not terminate services to pursue a social, financial, or sexual relationship with a client.

(e) Social workers who anticipate the termination or interruption of services to clients should notify clients promptly and seek the transfer, referral, or continuation of services in relation to the clients' needs and preferences.

(f) Social workers who are leaving an employment setting should inform clients of appropriate options for the continuation of services and of the benefits and risks of the options.

2. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO COLLEAGUES

2.01 Respect

(a) Social workers should treat colleagues with respect and should represent accurately and fairly the qualifications, views, and obligations of colleagues.

(b) Social workers should avoid unwarranted negative criticism of colleagues in communications with clients or with other professionals. Unwarranted negative criticism may include demeaning comments that refer to colleagues' level of competence or to individuals' attributes such as race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability.

(c) Social workers should cooperate with social work colleagues and with colleagues of other professions when such cooperation serves the wellbeing of clients.

2.02 Confidentiality

Social workers should respect confidential information shared by colleagues in the course of their professional relationships and transactions. Social workers should ensure that such colleagues understand social workers' obligation to respect confidentiality and any exceptions related to it.

2.03 Interdisciplinary Collaboration

- (a) Social workers who are members of an interdisciplinary team should participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the wellbeing of clients by drawing on the perspectives, values, and experiences of the social work profession. Professional and ethical obligations of the interdisciplinary team as a whole and of its individual members should be clearly established.
- (b) Social workers for whom a team decision raises ethical concerns should attempt to resolve the disagreement through appropriate channels. If the disagreement cannot be resolved, social workers should pursue other avenues to address their concerns consistent with client wellbeing.

2.04 Disputes Involving Colleagues

- (a) Social workers should not take advantage of a dispute between a colleague and an employer to obtain a position or otherwise advance the social workers' own interests.
- (b) Social workers should not exploit clients in disputes with colleagues or engage clients in any inappropriate discussion of conflicts between social workers and their colleagues.

2.05 Consultation

- (a) Social workers should seek the advice and counsel of colleagues whenever such consultation is in the best interests of clients.
- (b) Social workers should keep themselves informed about colleagues' areas of expertise and competencies. Social workers should seek consultation only from colleagues who have demonstrated knowledge, expertise, and competence related to the subject of the consultation.
- (c) When consulting with colleagues about clients, social workers should disclose the least amount of information necessary to achieve the purposes of the consultation.

2.06 Referral for Services

- (a) Social workers should refer clients to other professionals when the other professionals' specialized knowledge or expertise is needed to serve clients fully or when social workers believe that they are not being effective or making reasonable progress with clients and that additional service is required.
- (b) Social workers who refer clients to other professionals should take appropriate steps to facilitate an orderly transfer of responsibility. Social workers who refer clients to other professionals should disclose, with clients' consent, all pertinent information to the new service providers.
- (c) Social workers are prohibited from giving or receiving payment for a referral when no professional service is provided by the referring social worker.

2.07 Sexual Relationships

- (a) Social workers who function as supervisors or educators should not engage in sexual activities or contact with supervisees, students, trainees, or other colleagues over whom they exercise professional authority.
- (b) Social workers should avoid engaging in sexual relationships with colleagues when there is potential for a conflict of

interest. Social workers who become involved in, or anticipate becoming involved in, a sexual relationship with a colleague have a duty to transfer professional responsibilities, when necessary, to avoid a conflict of interest.

2.08 Sexual Harassment

Social workers should not sexually harass supervisees, students, trainees, or colleagues. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, sexual solicitation, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

2.09 Impairment of Colleagues

(a) Social workers who have direct knowledge of a social work colleague's impairment that is due to personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties and that interferes with practice effectiveness should consult with that colleague when feasible and assist the colleague in taking remedial action.

(b) Social workers who believe that a social work colleague's impairment interferes with practice effectiveness and that the colleague has not taken adequate steps to address the impairment should take action through appropriate channels established by employers, agencies, NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, and other professional organizations.

2.10 Incompetence of Colleagues

(a) Social workers who have direct knowledge of a social work colleague's incompetence should consult with that colleague when feasible and assist the colleague in taking remedial action.

(b) Social workers who believe that a social work colleague is incompetent and has not taken adequate steps to address the incompetence should take action through appropriate channels established by employers, agencies, NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, and other professional organizations.

2.11 Unethical Conduct of Colleagues

(a) Social workers should take adequate measures to discourage, prevent, expose, and correct the unethical conduct of colleagues.

(b) Social workers should be knowledgeable about established policies and procedures for handling concerns about colleagues' unethical behavior. Social workers should be familiar with national, state, and local procedures for handling ethics complaints. These include policies and procedures created by NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, employers, agencies, and other professional organizations.

(c) Social workers who believe that a colleague has acted unethically should seek resolution by discussing their concerns with the colleague when feasible and when such discussion is likely to be productive.

(d) When necessary, social workers who believe that a colleague has acted unethically should take action through appropriate formal channels (such as contacting a state licensing board or regulatory body, an NASW committee on inquiry, or other professional ethics committees).

(e) Social workers should defend and assist colleagues who are unjustly charged with unethical conduct.

3. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN PRACTICE SETTINGS

3.01 Supervision and Consultation

- (a) Social workers who provide supervision or consultation should have the necessary knowledge and skill to supervise or consult appropriately and should do so only within their areas of knowledge and competence.
- (b) Social workers who provide supervision or consultation are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.
- (c) Social workers should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with supervisees in which there is a risk of exploitation or of potential harm to the supervisee.
- (d) Social workers who provide supervision should evaluate supervisees' performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.

3.02 Education and Training

- (a) Social workers who function as educators, field instructors for students, or trainers should provide instruction only within their areas of knowledge and competence and should provide instruction based on the most current information and knowledge available in the profession.
- (b) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should evaluate students' performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.
- (c) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients are routinely informed when services are being provided by students.
- (d) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with students in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the student. Social work educators and field instructors are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

3.03 Performance Evaluation

Social workers who have responsibility for evaluating the performance of others should fulfill such responsibility in a fair and considerate manner and on the basis of clearly stated criteria.

3.04 Client Records

- (a) Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that documentation in records is accurate and reflects the services provided.
- (b) Social workers should include sufficient and timely documentation in records to facilitate the delivery of services and to ensure continuity of services provided to clients in the future.
- (c) Social workers' documentation should protect clients' privacy to the extent that is possible and appropriate and should include only information that is directly relevant to the delivery of services.
- (d) Social workers should store records following the termination of services to ensure reasonable future access. Records should be maintained for the number of years required by state statutes or relevant contracts.

3.05 Billing

Social workers should establish and maintain billing practices that accurately reflect the nature and extent of services provided and that identify who provided the service in the practice setting.

3.06 Client Transfer

- (a) When an individual who is receiving services from another agency or colleague contacts a social worker for services, the social worker should carefully consider the client's needs before agreeing to provide services. To minimize possible confusion and conflict, social workers should discuss with potential clients the nature of the clients' current relationship with other service providers and the implications, including possible benefits or risks, of entering into a relationship with a new service provider.
- (b) If a new client has been served by another agency or colleague, social workers should discuss with the client whether consultation with the previous service provider is in the client's best interest.

3.07 Administration

- (a) Social work administrators should advocate within and outside their agencies for adequate resources to meet clients' needs.
- (b) Social workers should advocate for resource allocation procedures that are open and fair. When not all clients' needs can be met, an allocation procedure should be developed that is nondiscriminatory and based on appropriate and consistently applied principles.
- (c) Social workers who are administrators should take reasonable steps to ensure that adequate agency or organizational resources are available to provide appropriate staff supervision.
- (d) Social work administrators should take reasonable steps to ensure that the working environment for which they are responsible is consistent with and encourages compliance with the *NASW Code of Ethics*. Social work administrators should take reasonable steps to eliminate any conditions in their organizations that violate, interfere with, or discourage compliance with the *Code*.

3.08 Continuing Education and Staff Development

Social work administrators and supervisors should take reasonable steps to provide or arrange for continuing education and staff development for all staff for whom they are responsible. Continuing education and staff development should address current knowledge and emerging developments related to social work practice and ethics.

3.09 Commitments to Employers

- (a) Social workers generally should adhere to commitments made to employers and employing organizations.
- (b) Social workers should work to improve employing agencies' policies and procedures and the efficiency and effectiveness of their services.
- (c) Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that employers are aware of social workers' ethical obligations as set forth in the *NASW Code of Ethics* and of the implications of those obligations for social work practice.
- (d) Social workers should not allow an employing organization's policies, procedures, regulations, or administrative orders to interfere with their ethical practice of social work. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that their employing organizations' practices are consistent with the *NASW Code of Ethics*.
- (e) Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate discrimination in the employing organization's work assignments and in its employment policies and practices.

- (f) Social workers should accept employment or arrange student field placements only in organizations that exercise fair personnel practices.
- (g) Social workers should be diligent stewards of the resources of their employing organizations, wisely conserving funds where appropriate and never misappropriating funds or using them for unintended purposes.

3.10 LaborManagement Disputes

- (a) Social workers may engage in organized action, including the formation of and participation in labor unions, to improve services to clients and working conditions.
- (b) The actions of social workers who are involved in labormanagement disputes, job actions, or labor strikes should be guided by the profession's values, ethical principles, and ethical standards. Reasonable differences of opinion exist among social workers concerning their primary obligation as professionals during an actual or threatened labor strike or job action. Social workers should carefully examine relevant issues and their possible impact on clients before deciding on a course of action.

4. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES AS PROFESSIONALS

4.01 Competence

- (a) Social workers should accept responsibility or employment only on the basis of existing competence or the intention to acquire the necessary competence.
- (b) Social workers should strive to become and remain proficient in professional practice and the performance of professional functions. Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work. Social workers should routinely review the professional literature and participate in continuing education relevant to social work practice and social work ethics.
- (c) Social workers should base practice on recognized knowledge, including empirically based knowledge, relevant to social work and social work ethics.

4.02 Discrimination

Social workers should not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate with any form of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical disability.

4.03 Private Conduct

Social workers should not permit their private conduct to interfere with their ability to fulfill their professional responsibilities.

4.04 Dishonesty, Fraud, and Deception

Social workers should not participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonesty, fraud, or deception.

4.05 Impairment

(a) Social workers should not allow their own personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have a professional responsibility.

(b) Social workers whose personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties interfere with their professional judgment and performance should immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action by seeking professional help, making adjustments in workload, terminating practice, or taking any other steps necessary to protect clients and others.

4.06 Misrepresentation

(a) Social workers should make clear distinctions between statements made and actions engaged in as a private individual and as a representative of the social work profession, a professional social work organization, or the social worker's employing agency.

(b) Social workers who speak on behalf of professional social work organizations should accurately represent the official and authorized positions of the organizations.

(c) Social workers should ensure that their representations to clients, agencies, and the public of professional qualifications, credentials, education, competence, affiliations, services provided, or results to be achieved are accurate. Social workers should claim only those relevant professional credentials they actually possess and take steps to correct any inaccuracies or misrepresentations of their credentials by others.

4.07 Solicitations

(a) Social workers should not engage in uninvited solicitation of potential clients who, because of their circumstances, are vulnerable to undue influence, manipulation, or coercion.

(b) Social workers should not engage in solicitation of testimonial endorsements (including solicitation of consent to use a client's prior statement as a testimonial endorsement) from current clients or from other people who, because of their particular circumstances, are vulnerable to undue influence.

4.08 Acknowledging Credit

(a) Social workers should take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they have actually performed and to which they have contributed.

(b) Social workers should honestly acknowledge the work of and the contributions made by others.

5. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION

5.01 Integrity of the Profession

(a) Social workers should work toward the maintenance and promotion of high standards of practice.

(b) Social workers should uphold and advance the values, ethics, knowledge, and mission of the profession. Social workers should protect, enhance, and improve the integrity of the profession through appropriate study and research, active discussion, and responsible criticism of the profession.

(c) Social workers should contribute time and professional expertise to activities that promote respect for the value, integrity, and competence of the social work profession. These activities may include teaching, research, consultation, service,

legislative testimony, presentations in the community, and participation in their professional organizations.

(d) Social workers should contribute to the knowledge base of social work and share with colleagues their knowledge related to practice, research, and ethics. Social workers should seek to contribute to the profession's literature and to share their knowledge at professional meetings and conferences.

(e) Social workers should act to prevent the unauthorized and unqualified practice of social work.

5.02 Evaluation and Research

(a) Social workers should monitor and evaluate policies, the implementation of programs, and practice interventions.

(b) Social workers should promote and facilitate evaluation and research to contribute to the development of knowledge.

(c) Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work and fully use evaluation and research evidence in their professional practice.

(d) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should carefully consider possible consequences and should follow guidelines developed for the protection of evaluation and research participants. Appropriate institutional review boards should be consulted.

(e) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should obtain voluntary and written informed consent from participants, when appropriate, without any implied or actual deprivation or penalty for refusal to participate; without undue inducement to participate; and with due regard for participants' wellbeing, privacy, and dignity. Informed consent should include information about the nature, extent, and duration of the participation requested and disclosure of the risks and benefits of participation in the research.

(f) When evaluation or research participants are incapable of giving informed consent, social workers should provide an appropriate explanation to the participants, obtain the participants' assent to the extent they are able, and obtain written consent from an appropriate proxy.

(g) Social workers should never design or conduct evaluation or research that does not use consent procedures, such as certain forms of naturalistic observation and archival research, unless rigorous and responsible review of the research has found it to be justified because of its prospective scientific, educational, or applied value and unless equally effective alternative procedures that do not involve waiver of consent are not feasible.

(h) Social workers should inform participants of their right to withdraw from evaluation and research at any time without penalty.

(i) Social workers should take appropriate steps to ensure that participants in evaluation and research have access to appropriate supportive services.

(j) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should protect participants from unwarranted physical or mental distress, harm, danger, or deprivation.

(k) Social workers engaged in the evaluation of services should discuss collected information only for professional purposes and only with people professionally concerned with this information.

(l) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should ensure the anonymity or confidentiality of participants and of the data obtained from them. Social workers should inform participants of any limits of confidentiality, the measures that will be taken to ensure confidentiality, and when any records containing research data will be destroyed.

(m) Social workers who report evaluation and research results should protect participants' confidentiality by omitting identifying information unless proper consent has been obtained authorizing disclosure.

(n) Social workers should report evaluation and research findings accurately. They should not fabricate or falsify results and should take steps to correct any errors later found in published data using standard publication methods.

(o) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest and dual relationships with participants, should inform participants when a real or potential conflict of interest arises, and should take steps to

Standards of Practice for School Nursing

- Standard 1. Assessment
- Standard 2. Diagnosis
- Standard 3. Outcomes Identification
- Standard 4. Planning
- Standard 5. Implementation
- Standard 5A. Coordination of Care
- Standard 5B. Health Teaching and Health Promotion
- Standard 5C. Consultation
- Standard 5D. Prescriptive Authority and Treatment
- Standard 6. Evaluation
- Standards of Professional Performance for School Nursing
- Standard 7. Ethics
- Standard 8. Education
- Standard 9. Evidence-Based Practice and Research
- Standard 10. Quality of Practice
- Standard 11. Communication
- Standard 12. Leadership
- Standard 13. Collaboration
- Standard 14. Professional Practice Evaluation
- Standard 15. Resource Utilization
- Standard 16. Environmental Health
- Standard 17. Program Management

tri-fold brochure available through NASN's bookstore

Preamble: Acknowledging the diversity of the laws and conditions under which school nurses practice, NASN believes in a commonality of moral and ethical conduct.

1. Client Care

The school nurse is an advocate for students, families and members of the school community. To that end, school nurses facilitate positive responses to normal development, promote health and safety, intervene with actual and potential health problems, provide case management services, and actively collaborate with others to build student and family capacity for adaptation, self-management, self-advocacy, and learning. Each individual's inherent right to be treated with dignity and confidentiality is respected. All clients are treated equally regardless of race, gender, socio-economic status, culture, age, sexual orientation, disability or religion.

Interpretive Statements

- A. School nurses deliver care in a manner that promotes and preserves student, family and community client autonomy, dignity and rights.
- B. School nurses support and promote individuals' and families' ability to achieve the highest quality of life as understood by each individual and family.
- C. School nurses deliver care in an inclusive, collaborative manner that embraces diversity in the school community.
- D. School nurses maintain client confidentiality within the legal, regulatory and ethical parameters of health and education.
- E. School nurses advocate on behalf of clients' needs.

2. Professional Competency

The school nurse maintains the highest level of competency by enhancing professional knowledge and skills, and by collaborating with peers, other health professionals and community agencies while adhering to the standards of school nursing practice.

Interpretive Statements

- A. The profession of nursing is obligated to provide competent nursing care. The school nurse must be aware of the need for continued professional learning and must assume personal responsibility for currency of knowledge and skills.
- B. School nurses must evaluate their own nursing practice in relation to professional practice standards and relevant statutes, regulations and policies.
- C. School nurses must have knowledge relevant to meet the needs of clients within the school setting. Since individual expertise varies, nurses consult with peers and other health professionals with expertise and recognized competencies in various fields of practice. When in the client's best interest, the school nurse refers clients to other health professionals and community health agencies.
- D. Nurses are accountable for judgments made and actions taken in the course of nursing practice. The scope and standards of school nursing practice reflect a practice rounded in ethical commitment. The school nurse is responsible for establishing and maintaining a practice based on these standards.

3. Professional Responsibilities

The school nurse participates in the profession's efforts to advance the scope and standards of practice, expand the body of knowledge through nursing research and improve school nursing practice work environments.

Interpretive Statements

- A. The school nurse is obligated to demonstrate adherence to the profession's standards by monitoring these standards in daily practice, participating in the profession's efforts to improve school health services and promoting student health and academic success.
- B. The school nurse utilizes available research in developing the health programs and individual plans of care and interventions.
- C. The school nurse participates in and promotes research activities as a means of advancing school health

services and the health of students. This is done as appropriate to the nurse's education, position and practice environment and in adherence to the ethics that govern research, specifically:

- 1) Right to privacy and confidentiality,
 - 2) Voluntary and informed consent and
 - 3) Awareness of and participation in the mechanisms available to ensure the rights of human subjects, particularly vulnerable populations (minors, disabled, etc.)
- D. The school nurse recognizes that practice environments impact the quality of client care and is cognizant of the need to work with others to improve these environments.

National Association of School Nurses (2010)

NASN CODE OF ETHICS

Acknowledging the diversity of the laws and conditions under which school nurses practice, the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) believes in a commonality of moral and ethical conduct. As such, NASN adopts the American Nurses Association's (ANA) *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements* (2015), which establishes an ethical foundation for all nurses. Furthermore, this foundation is supported by the *School Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice, 3rd Edition* (ANA & NASN, 2017) and ethical guidelines provided by state boards of nursing. School nursing practice, built upon these ethical foundations, is grounded in the NASN core values of child well-being; diversity, equity, and inclusion; excellence; innovation; integrity; leadership; and scholarship (NASN, 2020). The school nurse is responsible for complying with applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, ordinances, executive orders, policies, and any other applicable sources of authority, including any applicable standards of practice (NASN, 2016b).

SCHOOL NURSE ETHICS

"School nurses straddle two statutory and regulatory frameworks, health and education. Because school nurses practice nursing in an educationally focused system, they face unique legal, policy, funding, and supervisory issues that may also have ethical dimensions" (ANA & NASN, 2017, p. 37). Examples of challenges to school nurses' ethical foundation include:

- Unsafe school nurse to student workloads,
- Accountability for care delegated to Unlicensed Assistive Personnel (UAP),
- Documentation expectations that do not align with the standards of nursing practice,
- Assignment of nursing tasks to UAP without the input of the school nurse, and
- Attempts by non-licensed school administrators to direct practice.

As such, school nurses must have not only the skills to communicate within both the healthcare and education arenas, but also the requisite knowledge and skills to interpret applicable laws, regulations, and professional standards, as well as apply ethical theories and principles common across all nursing specialties (ANA & NASN, 2011).

PROVISION 1

The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person (ANA, 2015, p.1).

School nurses deliver care in a manner that promotes and preserves student autonomy, dignity, and rights, delivering care in an inclusive, collaborative manner to embrace diversity in the school community. School nurses promote equitable treatment of all students, regardless of health, race, gender, socio-economic status, culture, age, sexual orientation,

gender identity, ability, or religion. The school nurse supports and promotes each student's unique abilities to achieve the highest quality of life. School nurses develop long-term trusting relationships and recognize the necessity to maintain clear boundaries that support student and family inclusion in decisions surrounding care (ANA & NASN, 2017). In the same light, school nurses recognize the value of input from and collaboration with their educational colleagues to facilitate student health planning with the classroom in mind. Respect, collegiality, and civility serve clear communication and improved student health outcomes.

PROVISION 2

The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population (ANA, 2015, p.5).

School nurses provide primary, secondary, and tertiary interventions to support individual students, groups of students, and entire school populations at a micro and macro level. As public health practitioners, school nurses are aware of social needs, social determinants of health, and partner with families and other community members to reduce health disparities. School nurses work within educational institutions to define and implement professional nursing standards of practice and development of school health policy to meet the needs of the school community.

PROVISION 3

The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient (ANA, 2015, p. 9).

School nurses are student advocates and support student rights in navigating the educational environment. Regardless of the setting or the situation, the school nurse endorses and understands that the primary commitment is to the student. School nurses support transition planning as students navigate multiple transitions during a PK-12 education - from classroom to classroom, school-to-school, and PK-12 education to college or adult life. School nurses actively promote student health, safety, and self-worth. In order to safeguard student privacy, school nurses maintain confidentiality within the legal, regulatory, and ethical parameters of health and education, and inform others about student health record protection in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Protection Act (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 1974), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, 1996), and other applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

PROVISION 4

The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and takes action consistent with the obligation to promote health and provide optimal patient care (ANA, 2015, p. 15).

School nurse workplace environments impact the quality of health care; therefore, school nurses collaborate to improve these environments. Working within educational institutions, and in collaboration with education partners, school nurses inform, define, and implement professional standards of practice and school health policy. School nurses must have knowledge relevant to meet the needs of students and maintain the highest level of competency by enhancing professional knowledge and skills. Self-evaluation as well as evaluation by administrators with healthcare experience, based on applicable laws, regulations, and policies; professional standards of practice; and the Framework for 21st Century School Nursing Practice™ assists the school nurse in identifying areas to grow competence and expand practice (NASN,

2016a). As allowed by state nurse practice acts, and in accordance with established best practice, school nurses assume responsibility and accountability for the delegation or assignment of tasks. School nurses take appropriate action when encountering illegal, unethical, or inappropriate behavior that places student health and safety at risk.

PROVISION 5

The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth (ANA, 2015, p. 19).

As lifelong learners, school nurses must have knowledge relevant to meet the needs of the individual students and entire student populations. Maintenance of high levels of competency is enhanced through collaboration with peers, other health professionals, and community agencies. National school nurse certification recognizes school nurse competence and expertise (ANA & NASN, 2017). School nurses recognize that wholeness of character extends to students, families, school staff, school leaders, and all others with whom they engage. Personal and professional integrity are maintained via careful attention to verbal, non-verbal, and written communication that is culturally informed, unbiased, truthful, accurate, and well-planned. Supervisory evaluation by an experienced school nurse informs continuous improvement of each school nurse's practice. The potential tension between administrators and school nurses can result in ethical dilemmas resulting in moral distress for the nurse (ANA & NASN, 2017, p. 37; Savage, 2017). It is incumbent upon the school nurse to advocate for evidence-based practice decisions that are based on respect of self and others.

PROVISION 6

The nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality health care (ANA, 2015, p. 23).

School nurses exert a positive impact on the quality of healthcare via collaborative decision making within the educational setting to establish work environments that are supportive of student health, safety, and learning. School nurses work within educational institutions to define and implement professional standards of nursing practice as well as school health policy development, implementation, and evaluation.

PROVISION 7

The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy (ANA, 2015, p. 27).

School nurses are life-long learners in pursuit of knowledge, training and experiences that enhance the quality of their nursing practice. They work within PK-12 education institutions to define and implement professional standards of nursing practice and school health policy development. School nurses utilize available evidence in developing health programs, individual plans of care, and interventions. School nurses engage in quality improvement projects in pursuit of better health outcomes for students. With school district approval, school nurses may collaborate with researchers in research activities that will advance student health and school health services.

PROVISION 8

The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities (ANA, 2015, p. 31).

School nurses are aware of social determinants of health impacting the school community, provide healthcare to all students, support school staff, and partner with families and other community members to reduce health disparities. They utilize evidence-based interventions designed to mitigate the effects of adverse childhood experiences and other social determinants of health. School nurses refer students to other health professionals and community health agencies as needed to promote health and well-being. Lastly, school nurses are advocates for policy change to protect and promote health rights to reduce health disparities.

PROVISION 9

The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy (ANA, 2015, p. 35).

Engagement with professional associations, such as the National Association of School Nurses, and state affiliate organizations allows the school nurse to work collaboratively to ensure evidence-based professional practice aligned with nursing values focused on student education, health equity, and social justice. School nurses work within educational institutions to define and implement professional standards of practice and school health policy. To ensure equitable access to school health services and in accordance with state nurse practice acts, school nurses delegate or assign nursing tasks, while retaining accountability for these tasks.

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