

Guidelines for the Practice of  
**School Psychology**



CONNECTICUT STATE  
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# Preface

The twenty-first century has proven to be both a time of great opportunity and challenges for the youth of today. To help students navigate the educational process, we must provide opportunities that are diverse and provide resources that enhance their experiences within the school environment and beyond. While it is clear that academic proficiency is our optimal goal, it is vital to recognize the importance of guiding students through the development of their whole selves. This encompasses not only strong academic rigor but also emotional and social skills that will yield productive and responsible members of an ever-changing world.

Academic success is influenced by a multitude of factors including equitable and effective instruction, motivation, interpersonal relationships (home and school), capacity to cope with emotional challenges, stress, resiliency, disabilities, socioeconomic latitude, and cultural and linguistic factors (Gore, Leuwerke, Metz, Brown, & Kelly, 2019; Schluter, Pinnow, Voelkle, Gunturkun, Genc, 2018; Stadtfeld, Elmer, Boda, & Raabe, 2019).

School psychologists:

- are uniquely positioned to prepare students to meet the changing demands of the world in which they live;
- have specialized training in both psychology and education, which extends their expertise far beyond the most familiar role of conducting evaluations to determine special educational needs;
- can support the social, emotional, and academic learning goals of all students, and provide services that impact learning at the individual, small group, classroom, building or school district level; and
- collaborate with administrators, teachers, school specialists, parents and other health professionals to ensure that every child learns in a safe, healthy, and supportive environment.

These guidelines delineate the many ways school psychologists can support the educational process. Given the challenges of contemporary education, we cannot afford to overlook or underutilize this important resource. Schools psychologists can make significant contributions to the learning and healthy development of children and adolescents.

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# Introduction to the Practice of School Psychology in Connecticut

The discipline of psychology is central to teaching, learning, and child development. School psychology is a specialized area of professional psychology concerned with the science and practice of psychology with children, youth, families; learners of all ages; and the schooling process.<sup>1</sup> School psychologists service children and youth as they develop and discover their educational world socially, emotionally, and academically.

The evolution of school psychology has transformed the focus of school-based psychological services to encompass best practices in assessment, behavioral interventions, and educational programming. Our current paradigm of school psychology is characterized by<sup>2</sup>:

- an emphasis on consultation, functional behavioral assessment, curriculum-based measurement, and ecological assessment of learner/environment systems applied to the design of instructional, social, emotional and behavioral interventions;
- a focus on service outcomes, accountability, and databased decision-making that links assessment directly to empirically supported interventions;
- a focus on wellness, social and emotional well-being, prevention, counseling and building competencies;
- a systemic approach to the enhancement of climate, culture and restorative practices that ultimately improve achievement outcomes; and
- a systemic orientation characterized by the provision of a comprehensive, integrated program of school psychological services to all learners, their families, and those who serve them.

School districts and practitioners are encouraged to review the National Association of School Psychologist's Practice Model (NASP Practice Model).<sup>3</sup> Understanding the standards and domains of practice helps inform the range of knowledge and skills school psychologists have and outlines how services are integrated to best meet the needs of students, families, and the school community.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.apa.org/ed/graduate/specialize/school.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.nasponline.org/about-school-psychology/who-are-school-psychologists>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nasponline.org/standards-and-certification/nasp-practice-model/nasp-practice-model-overview>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nasponline.org/x40589.xml>

## **Mission**

School psychologists partner with families, teachers, school administrators, and other professionals to create safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments that strengthen connections between home, school, and the community.

## **Philosophy**

All children and youth have the right to be educated in a safe and nurturing school environment that promotes positive educational and social-emotional development. School psychologists respect, engage, and challenge all students to become motivated, confident, and creative lifelong learners. School psychologists foster a climate that nurtures and values diversity, equity, and critical thinking. School psychologists collaborate with key stakeholders in families, schools, and communities to promote the healthy development of all children and youth. School psychologists have unique training that encompasses learning and cognition, as well as social and emotional development, providing an integrated perspective of service within the context of the school. School psychologists protect the rights of children and their families, respect individual differences, and recognize that diversity contributes to a strong and just society. School psychologists promote early interventions and databased decision-making to support children and families.

# Scope of Practice for Connecticut School Psychologists

School psychologists work with students and their families to support students' social, emotional, and behavioral health. School psychologists' broad training in the core areas of psychology and education place them in the unique and ideal position to integrate and coordinate educational, psychological, and behavioral health services.<sup>5</sup> Research has shown that students who receive this type of support achieve better academically in school (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011; Welsh, Parke, Widaman, & O'Neil, 2001; Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2004). The vast majority of school psychologists work in public school settings. However, some also provide services in universities, research organizations, public service agencies, and private practice (Castillo, Curtis, & Gelley, 2012). School psychologists also work with school-based teams to support the academic success of students through a variety of means including consultation and review of student performance data.

School psychologists are experts in addressing barriers to educational success and are critical members of school teams. As experts in both mental health and education, school psychologists are invaluable to students, schools, and families in providing a multitude of interventions that contribute to student success (e.g. supporting academic and social-emotional learning, addressing positive school climates, enhancing academic engagement, promoting positive behavioral supports). When school psychologists are supported in practicing the broad-based role as articulated by the NASP Practice Model, students and schools are more likely to have access to these professional activities and student outcomes are enhanced.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.apa.org/ed/graduate/specialize/school.aspx>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nasponline.org/x26834.xml>

# Standards and Domains of School Psychology Leadership and Function

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP),<sup>7</sup> the American Psychological Association (APA) Division 16,<sup>8</sup> and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)<sup>9</sup> outline the scope of practice of school psychologists to ensure delivery of comprehensive school psychological services. The organization of this section borrows directly from the NASP conceptualization of domains of school psychology practice, which promotes the shift toward a more comprehensive model of school psychological services that will have the effect of promoting better outcomes for all students.<sup>10</sup> Alignment with these domains is also consistent with the *Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (CCT) Rubric for Effective Service Delivery 2014, Evidence Guide for School Psychologist*.<sup>11</sup>

The scope of practice for school psychologists can be summarized under three standards with 10 general domains. School psychologists have competence and proficiency in all of the domains, though not all may have the highest level of expertise in all aspects of each domain. Individual school psychologists will have distinct subspecialties or areas of expertise across the 10 domains.

## Standard 1: Practices That Permeate All Aspects of Service Delivery

### Domain 1: Databased 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. 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 direct interventions, psychological services, and programs.

Examples of professional practices include:

- Using the problem-solving framework as the basis for all practices.
- Systematically collecting data from multiple sources and using ecological factors as the context for all assessment and intervention decisions.
- Using assessment data to understand students' problems and to implement evidence-based instructional, mental, and behavioral health services.
- Using data to analyze progress toward meeting academic and behavioral goals.
- Evaluating treatment fidelity of student interventions.
- Evaluating the effectiveness and/or need for modifications to school-based interventions or programs.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.nasponline.org/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.apa.org/about/division/div16.aspx>

<sup>9</sup> [https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Talent\\_Office/Talent-Office-home-page](https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Talent_Office/Talent-Office-home-page)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.nasponline.org/standards-and-certification/nasp-practice-model/nasp-practice-model-implementation-guide/section-i-nasp-practice-model-overview/nasp-practice-model-10-domains>

<sup>11</sup> [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/SEED/Evidence\\_Guides/school\\_psychologist.pdf?la=en](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/SEED/Evidence_Guides/school_psychologist.pdf?la=en)

- Conducting valid and reliable assessments to identify students' eligibility for special education services.

## **Domain 2: Consultation and Collaboration**

School psychologists have knowledge of varied models and strategies of consultation, collaboration, and communication applicable to individuals, families, schools 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 include:

- Using a consultative problem-solving process for planning, implementing, and evaluating all instructional, and mental and behavioral health services.
- Facilitating effective communication and collaboration among families, teachers, community providers, and others.
- Using consultation and collaboration when working at the individual, classroom, school, or systems levels.
- Advocating for needed change at the individual student, classroom, building, district, state, or national levels.

## **Standard 2: 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. 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 professional practices include:

- Implementing evidence-based interventions to improve student engagement and learning.
- Using assessment data to develop and implement evidence-based instructional strategies that will improve student performance.
- Working with other school personnel to ensure attainment of state and local benchmarks for all students.
- Sharing information about research in curriculum and instructional strategies.
- Promoting the use of instructional strategies for diverse learners and to meet individual learning needs.

#### **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 and behavioral 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, mental and behavioral health.

Examples of professional practices include:

- Providing a continuum of mental and behavioral health services, including individual and group counseling, behavioral coaching, positive behavioral supports, and parent education.
- Integrating behavioral supports and mental health services with academic and learning goals for students.
- Facilitating the design and delivery of curricula to help students develop effective skills, such as self-regulation, planning, organization, empathy, social skills, and decision-making.
- Using systematic decision-making to consider the antecedents, consequences, functions, and causes of behavioral difficulties.
- Developing and implementing behavior change programs at individual, group, classroom, and school-wide levels.
- Evaluating evidence-based interventions to improve individual student social, emotional, and behavioral wellness.

#### *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 and behavioral 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.

Examples of professional practices include:

- Using knowledge of universal screening programs to identify students in need of instructional and behavioral support services.
- Promoting policies and practices that support effective discipline, instructional support, grading, home-school partnerships, student transitions, and more.
- Collaborating with other school personnel to create and maintain a multi-tiered continuum of services to support academic, social, emotional, and behavioral goals for students.
- Advocating for policies and practices that promote positive school environments.

#### **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 multi-tiered prevention, and evidence-based strategies for effective crisis response. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to promote services that enhance learning, mental and behavioral health, safety, and

physical well-being through protective and adaptive factors and to implement effective crisis preparation, response, and recovery.

Examples of professional practices include:

- Using knowledge of risk and protective factors to address problems such as school completion, truancy, bullying, youth suicide, and school violence.
- Developing, implementing, and evaluating prevention and intervention programs that address precursors to severe learning and behavioral problems.
- Participating in school crisis prevention and response teams.

### **Domain 7: Family and 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, mental and behavioral 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 include:

- Collaborating with and engaging parents in decision-making about their children.
- Promoting respect and appropriate services for cultural and linguistic differences.
- Promoting strategies for safe, nurturing, and dependable parenting and home interventions.
- Creating links among schools, families, and community providers.

## **Standard 3: 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. School psychologists provide professional services that promote effective functioning for individuals, families, and schools with diverse characteristics, cultures, and backgrounds and across multiple contexts. 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 include:

- Addressing individual differences, strengths, backgrounds, and needs in the design, implementation, and evaluation of all services.
- Using a problem-solving framework for addressing the needs of English language learners.
- Promoting fairness and social justice in school policies and programs.

## **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. 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 include:

- Using research findings as the foundation for effective service delivery.
- Using techniques of data collection to evaluate services at the individual, group, and systems levels.
- Assisting teachers in collecting meaningful student data.
- Applying knowledge of evidence-based interventions to evaluate the fidelity and effectiveness of school-based intervention plans.

## **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. 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 professional practices include:

- Remaining knowledgeable about ethical and professional standards.
- Assisting administrators, other school personnel, and parents in understanding regulations relevant to general and special education.
- Engaging in professional development and life-long learning.
- Using supervision and mentoring for effective practices.

# Principles for Professional Ethics of School Psychologists

As a core value, all school psychologists adhere to ethical standards of practice at all levels of service delivery. The two major professional associations in school psychology, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and the American Psychological Association (APA), have developed codes of ethics and professional standards for the delivery of service. The National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, and other professional organizations have their own codes of ethics. All members of these organizations agree to abide by these ethical principles and professional standards. School psychologists who are members of the Connecticut Association of School Psychologists (CASP) or the National School Psychology Certification System are bound to abide by the NASP's Principles for Professional Ethics.<sup>12</sup> School psychologists who are members of the Connecticut Psychological Association are bound to abide by APA's Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct.<sup>13</sup> Members of APA and NASP also agree to consider the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing<sup>14</sup> in judging whether their assessment procedures meet technical standards. Consistent with applicable law, these principles serve as a basis for decisions on issues pertaining to certification and employment.

## Adjudication

NASP will investigate and adjudicate violations of the Principles for Professional Ethics. The Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services represent the position of NASP regarding best practices in the delivery of comprehensive school psychological services but are not adjudicated. The APA will adjudicate violations of its Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct.

## Other Resources

Aside from the ethical codes and standards of NASP and APA, school psychologists sometimes consult other sources of guidance for ethical and professional practice. Articles in professional journals published by NASP and APA provide timely information and discussion of specialized topics. NASP and APA publish position statements that represent the official views of those organizations on a variety of subjects.

## Best Practices

School psychologists who are members of at least one professional organization abide by its ethical principles and guidelines. All school psychologists, whether they are members of a professional association or not, should be familiar with these principles and guidelines.

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.nasponline.org/standards-and-certification/professional-ethics>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.teststandards.org/>

# Making Optimal Use of School Psychological Services

Although school psychology is not currently listed as a shortage area in Connecticut, longstanding shortages of school psychologists nationally has continued to threaten students' access to school psychological services.<sup>15 16</sup> School district leaders should think strategically on how best to maximize the use of this valuable resource. While school psychologists will continue to fulfill the critical need for evaluation, greater emphasis should be placed on prevention, consultation, collaboration, and indirect services to proactively support students in an effort to prevent students from failing and obviate the need for more costly, more intrusive interventions.

For a greater understanding of the comprehensive nature of school psychological services, school district leaders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the domains of practice outlined within this document. School district leaders and school psychologists are encouraged to work together to pilot innovative deployment of school psychologists in their districts. To ensure that resources are being used effectively and efficiently, school district leaders can make use of school psychologists' skills in databased decision-making and program evaluation, and their knowledge of empirically supported interventions.

Examples of strategies to optimize use of school psychological services include but are not limited to:

- Providing support for clerical or paperwork activities that do not require professional skills or oversight.
- Using timesaving technology (e.g., laptop computers, test-scoring software).
- Enabling school psychologists to expand, and make full use of, expertise in specialized areas (e.g., neuropsychology, positive behavioral supports, and autism).
- Reviewing district requirements and practices that yield relatively little value per time invested.
- Prioritizing staff assignments strategically to support and protect mandated services and/or large impact projects and activities.

## Staffing Ratios

The ratio of School Psychologist to Students should be informed by consideration of both workload and caseload. NASP recommends a ratio of 1 school psychologist to 500-700 students (1:500-700) for a comprehensive service delivery model depending upon the level of need within the student population.<sup>17</sup>

## Caseload vs. Workload

Unlike the regular education program in which staffing needs are predicated on projected student enrollment, class size limits, and/or budgetary constraints, assigning school psychologists is based not

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<sup>15</sup> [https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Talent\\_Office/Talent-Office-home-page/Shortage-Areas](https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Talent_Office/Talent-Office-home-page/Shortage-Areas)

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-psychology/shortages-in-school-psychology-resource-guide>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.nasponline.org/standards-and-certification/nasp-practice-model/nasp-practice-model-implementation-guide/section-i-nasp-practice-model-overview/nasp-practice-model-organizational-principles>

only on the number of children attending a school or program, but also on the intensity and duration of the individual services prescribed for those students needing special education and related services. Federal law does not specify requirements for caseload with regard to students requiring special education and related services. Likewise, state statute does not prescribe staffing ratios but specifies only that “the number and age range of children requiring special education and related services assigned to a class shall be such that the specifications of each child’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) can be met.”<sup>18</sup>

When making decisions regarding the work of the school psychologist, it is important to distinguish between caseload and workload (Feinberg, Nuijens, & Canter, 2005). Caseload refers to the number of students who are provided direct services. School psychologists typically define their caseload by the number of students assigned to them and/or the number of evaluations they complete in an academic year. This is different from the ratio of enrolled students per school psychologist, which could be viewed as a school psychologist’s potential caseload. Workload, on the other hand, includes all activities required and performed by the school psychologist. This includes the caseload (e.g., number of individual students served) as well as all other activities that are necessary and important to support students’ educational programs, implement best practices for school psychological services, ensure compliance with educational mandates, and fulfill the responsibilities that are associated with working in a school setting.

Factors that affect workload include IEP mandates, service to nondisabled students who need support from the school psychologist, state and local regulations, state certification requirements, student factors, unfunded mandates, and state and local budgets.<sup>19</sup> In addition, many school psychologists are actively involved with individual and group counseling, staff and parent consultation, in-service training and development, community liaison work, and a host of other activities that help serve the needs of the identified “client,” which can be the student, the school or the school district.

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<sup>18</sup> Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA) Section 10-76d-5

<sup>19</sup> According to the National Association of School Psychologists, school psychologists continue to report that a substantial percentage of their time is dedicated to special education activities at an average of 47% for evaluations and 11% towards participation in a Planning and Placement Team (PPT).

# Supervision, Professional Development, and Evaluation

## Administrative vs. Clinical Supervision

Supervision for school psychologists is necessary to ensure ethical, non-biased, competent best practices in the delivery of school psychology services and includes both administrative and clinical supervision.

### Administrative Supervision

Administrative supervision typically focuses on issues such as personnel matters, legal, contractual, or other organizational matters specific to the school district. Rather than discipline-specific skills, administrative supervision includes things such as staff assignments and performance of job-related responsibilities in accordance with labor agreements. This level of supervision is made available to the school psychologist to help solve problems related to job performance and/or conflicting personal factors. Administrative supervision is performed by a certified school administrator who may or may not be credentialed as a school psychologist.

### Clinical Supervision

The primary focus of clinical supervision is the development of discipline-specific professional skills and welfare of the client (Simon & Swerdlik, 2017). It involves professional oversight with the goal of:

- promoting effective growth and exemplary professional practice across all the roles and functions of school psychologists;
- protecting the welfare of all clients;
- safeguarding the profession through monitoring and gatekeeping;
- empowering supervisees to develop self-monitoring skills;
- promoting self-care;
- preparing for the supervisee's future role as a supervisor.

Practice standards recommend that, initially, credentialed school psychologists and new hires with less than a professional level certificate be afforded direct and/or indirect clinical supervision and/or mentoring by the district a minimum average of 1 hour per week.<sup>20</sup> It is common for this supervision to involve consultation, review of assessment practices and for a more experienced psychologist to review and co-sign psychological reports during this time period, which can frequently last for 6 months to 1 year or more as needed. More experienced school psychologists may utilize alternative methods for ongoing supervision. For example, monthly staff meetings allow for peer-based supervision groups or communities of practice, mentoring and ongoing peer support that will ensure continued professional growth and support for complex and difficult situations. In order to ensure best practice in school psychological service delivery, every school district should allow time for their district school psychologists to participate in ongoing clinical supervision and mentoring. In smaller districts where clinical supervision in school psychology practices may not be available, school districts should both allow and encourage their school psychologists to seek supervision and/or peer support from more experienced school psychologists

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<sup>20</sup> <https://www.nasponline.org/x26834.xml>

outside the school district through available school psychology networks. Anytime a school psychologist is working outside their previous experience or skills set (i.e., specific and/or unique student population, culture, new testing instrument), it is incumbent on the school psychologist to seek out supervision, resources and/or assisted expertise. Consistent peer mentoring is also a very effective way to provide strong professional growth and development to all school psychologists. Additionally, the Connecticut Association of School Psychologists, the National Association of School Psychologists, and the Connecticut State Department of Education school psychology consultant are available as resources.

### **Qualifications and Training of Clinical Supervisors**

The discipline-specific nature of clinical supervision requires that clinical supervisors be provided by an appropriately credentialed licensed and/or certified professional for the setting in which they are employed.<sup>21</sup> It is recommended that clinical supervisors also have a minimum of three years of full-time experience working as a school psychologist.<sup>22</sup>

In their leadership role, the clinical supervisor helps to improve understanding of the roles that school psychologists employ across the district. The school psychology supervisor is a strong advocate for competent school psychology practices and can assist in resolving disputes regarding school psychological services. The school psychology supervisor encourages staff to seek advanced knowledge and training and assists in the recruitment of new school psychology staff. School Psychology supervisors should be evaluated on their leadership skills and supervision of staff and solicit anonymous formal feedback from the school psychology staff with regard to his/her annual performance to promote effective leadership in the field of school psychology. In order to adhere to best-practices in clinical supervision, it is important that ongoing and consistent training and professional development activities also be provided for supervisors of school psychology that addresses the supervision of practices that permeate all aspects of service delivery, student-level services, and systems-level services (Simon & Swerdlik, 2017). Using the framework of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), it is recommended that professional development and training activities for clinical supervisors include the following areas:<sup>23</sup>

- Clinical Supervision as Leadership
- Importance of having a vision for systems change and using clinical supervision to advance a strategic plan for that vision.
- Necessity for activities across Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)—i.e., student-level and systems-level services.
- Using clinical supervision to build capacity within the district.
- Using clinical supervision to expand roles and support systems change.
- Clinical Supervision as a Developmental Process
- Clinical vs. administrative supervision.
- Clinical supervision vs. evaluation.
  - Negotiating conflicts inherent in these roles.
- Formats for supervision (e.g., individual supervision, learning communities, peer supervision, group supervision).

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<sup>21</sup> Appropriately credentialed licensed and/or certified professional means an individual holding certification by the Connecticut State Department of Education (070), national certification as a school psychologist (NCSP), or board certification in school psychology (ABSP).

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.nasponline.org/x26834.xml>

<sup>23</sup> Falender, C.S. & Shafranske, E.P. (2004). *Clinical Supervision: A Competency-Based Approach*. American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C. 59-80.

- Supervision looks different depending on the developmental level of the supervisee.
  - How to offer clinical supervision in areas where the supervisee is more expert than the supervisor.
  - Supervision for the supervisor.
- Clinical Supervision of Databased Decision-Making and Accountability
- Clinical supervision of databased decision-making at each level of a MTSS.
- Clinical supervision of:
  - Evaluation reports.
  - Ethical and legal issues.
  - Use of progress monitoring data to guide interventions.
  - SRBI implementation.
- Clinical Supervision of Consultation and Collaboration
- Clinical supervision of consultation and collaboration at each level of MTSS.
- Clinical supervision of:
  - Evidence-based methods of consultation and collaboration.
  - Ethical and legal issues.
  - Clinical Supervision of Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills
- Clinical supervision of instructional support at each level of MTSS.
- Clinical supervision of:
  - Use of evidence-based interventions.
  - Use of outcome data to guide interventions.
  - SRBI implementation.
  - Ethical and legal issues.
- Clinical Supervision of Interventions to Develop Social and Life Skills
- Clinical supervision of interventions and services at each level of a MTSS.
- Clinical supervision of:
  - Use of assessment and goal setting.
  - Use of evidence-based interventions.
  - Use of progress-monitoring data to guide interventions.
  - SRBI implementation.
  - Ethical and legal issues.
  - Personal issues impacting counseling and supervision.

## Professional Development

The aim of professional development (PD) is to afford opportunities for school psychologists to participate in continuous discipline-specific learning activities that support excellence in the delivery of school psychological services. It is important that district leadership collaborate with both the school psychologist(s) to develop procedures that standardize school psychology practices for their district and will develop a PD plan annually. The school psychology supervisor in conjunction with district leadership helps identify needs and coordinate activities aligned with district priorities for psychological services.

PD involves much more than training and activities and typically falls within three broad categories but with differing focus: standardized, school-centered and individual or self-directed.<sup>24</sup> Standardized PD

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<sup>24</sup> [https://www.infodev.org/infodev-files/resource/InfodevDocuments\\_294.pdf](https://www.infodev.org/infodev-files/resource/InfodevDocuments_294.pdf)

focuses on rapid dissemination of information. This type of PD is most often done by attending workshops or training sessions conducted by a presenter either face-to-face or through other media presentation. School-centered professional development is a locally facilitated process focusing on longer-term change and meant to solve problems experienced during implementation of new skills. The focus of individual or self-directed PD is self-guided, self-directed learning. Although there is little formal structure, this approach allows the individual to pursue an identified area of study at their own pace.

Like all professional educators, it is essential for school psychologists to engage in a variety of PD activities, either standardized, school-centered, or self-directed aligned with their professional standards of practice. Examples of relevant PD activities include participation in communities of practice, planned conferences, department meetings and select local, state, or national committees all of which afford school psychologists opportunity to exercise their leadership skills. Taken together, these types of activities encourage school psychologists to remain current with trends in both research and practice to the benefit of the school community as a whole.

Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-220a subsection (b) requires that school districts establish a professional development and evaluation committee (PDEC). The PDEC participates in the development or adoption of the educator evaluation and support plan, as well as the development, evaluation and annual updating of a comprehensive professional development plan for certified educators in the district. School psychologists are encouraged to let the PDEC be aware of their professional development needs and are eligible to be members of the PDEC.

## Evaluation

C.G.S. Section 10-151b subsection (a) requires, in part, that school districts

continuously evaluate or cause to be evaluated each teacher, in accordance with guidelines established by the State Board of Education...<sup>25</sup>

In most districts, school psychologists are included with teachers under the collective bargaining agreement, and therefore, would be evaluated accordingly. As there is a significant difference between administrative supervision and clinical supervision of the practice of school psychology, it is best practice but not required that the supervisor conducting the evaluation be a certified school psychologist.<sup>26</sup>

Evaluation systems that succeed over time involve the professionals within a discipline in the creation of the performance appraisal systems by which these individuals are judged (Danielson, 2011). School psychologists are well qualified to contribute to the design of their performance evaluations. In addition to their knowledge of school psychology preparation and practice, they have expertise in measurement theory, databased decision-making, and knowledge of a variety of applicable evaluation methods (e.g., direct observation, rating scales, surveys).

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<sup>25</sup> [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Press-Room/Press-Releases/2012/Adopted\\_PEAC\\_Guidelines.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Press-Room/Press-Releases/2012/Adopted_PEAC_Guidelines.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> Although not required, it is permissible to appoint a complementary evaluator who is a certified school psychologist to inform the evaluation process. The complimentary evaluator can be part of the observation process to provide input to the final summative report submitted by the designated district administrator.

Personnel evaluations are most meaningful when relevant feedback is provided and both the evaluator and those being evaluated have opportunities for input. Furthermore, personnel evaluations can serve to reward exemplary practice as well as to identify specific areas and personnel in need of improvement. When evaluation systems are aligned with job descriptions, accountability is enhanced and clear expectations for practice are reinforced.

According to the Personnel Evaluation Standards compiled by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (Gullickson & Howard, 2009), a variety of data gathering methods (observation checklists, interviews, products) and tools should be used to help ensure comprehensive and consistent indicators of performance. Four key elements are identified as critical to a credible performance evaluation system: (a) the use of multiple measures, including at least one measure of impact on student outcomes; (b) reliability and validity, with validity anchored to the NASP Standards for Professional Practice;<sup>27</sup> (c) utility for distinguishing different levels of proficiency; and (d) linked to professional development and improvement. As a result, performance measures that are limited to high-stakes test scores or that simply count activities performed by school psychologists are strongly discouraged. Research supports that performance assessment systems are most reliable when evaluators utilize multiple measures for the evaluation of professional performance as opposed to narrow indicators such as single-shot student standardized test scores. Other measures such as visual observation, student progress monitoring data, psychological reports, and student work samples before and after interventions, and surveys of interactions with families, community, peers, and staff, contribute to a more reliable measure for professional performance. When services are primarily delivered collaboratively, a team's assessment of student progress should be considered as a component of the multi-faceted personnel performance evaluation.

When determining the impact of the school psychologists' performance on student, school, and/or district outcomes, standardized test score gains and value-added models (VAM) are discouraged. While test score gains and VAM are components of numerous evaluation systems, their use for the evaluation of school psychologists and all other personnel where the use of these scores in personnel evaluation has not been validated is strongly discouraged.<sup>28</sup> To date, there is no empirical evidence that applying student standardized academic testing scores to the individual performance evaluations of school psychologists is a valid or reliable method for personnel appraisal. School psychologists, in large part, are providers of both direct and indirect services to children and often provide these services to multiple schools, grade levels, and populations. Therefore, outcome measures should be sensitive to the overall growth of students and stakeholder benefits as a result of receiving these direct and indirect services. For example, improvement in social-emotional functioning, behavior, academic engagement, and family involvement are areas correlated with student learning outcomes that can and should be monitored for growth in response to services delivered by the school psychologist.

Because areas of service delivery vary (due to non-classroom based psychological services), review of professional practice can serve as an acceptable substitute for direct observation.<sup>29</sup> Thus, advocacy for this area has long-centered on greater flexibility and innovation with regard to how the professional

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<sup>27</sup> [https://www.nasponline.org/Documents/Standards%20and%20Certification/Standards/V41N3\\_Aframeworkfortheper  
sonnelEvaluation.pdf](https://www.nasponline.org/Documents/Standards%20and%20Certification/Standards/V41N3_Aframeworkfortheper<br/>sonnelEvaluation.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> [https://www.nasponline.org/standards-and-certification/nasp-practice-model/nasp-practice-model-implementation-  
guide/section-iv-evaluating-school-psychological-services-utilizing-the-nasp-practice-model/part-1-individual-level-  
embedding-the-nasp-practice-model-in-personnel-evaluation](https://www.nasponline.org/standards-and-certification/nasp-practice-model/nasp-practice-model-implementation-<br/>guide/section-iv-evaluating-school-psychological-services-utilizing-the-nasp-practice-model/part-1-individual-level-<br/>embedding-the-nasp-practice-model-in-personnel-evaluation)

<sup>29</sup> [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/SEED/Evidence\\_Guides/school\\_psychologist.pdf?la=en](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/SEED/Evidence_Guides/school_psychologist.pdf?la=en)

evaluation process is applied to the direct provision of psychological services across the field of school psychology. The Connecticut State Department of Education has given latitude to school districts to select between state and locally developed rubrics. Either way, it is important to give deference to the Connecticut Evidence Guide for School Psychologists as a resource.<sup>30</sup> The professional evaluation of school psychologists should accurately reflect the school psychologists varied roles across the school district in an effort to encourage equity in the evaluation process. It is also advisable that school psychologists, in collaboration with district leadership, review the delivery of school psychological services as a whole across the school district.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> In either case, the Connecticut Evidence Guide for School Psychologists is a valuable resource for professional development and growth as well as guiding observations ([https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/SEED/Evidence\\_Guides/school\\_psychologist.pdf?la=en](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/SEED/Evidence_Guides/school_psychologist.pdf?la=en))

<sup>31</sup> Administrators, faculty teachers, special education teachers, student support services personnel, parents and stakeholders may provide input to this process through survey or other forms of direct or indirect feedback.

# Future Trends and Best Practice in School Psychological Services

## Overview

School psychology as a professional practice has greatly evolved over this century, with cohesion over the last fifty years. The profession has been identified by its ability to formulate and emerge as one that protects the right of children, families, and learners of all ages. This goal has been accomplished by conducting evidence-based assessments, intervention, and practice through a systematic ecological approach. To ensure that every child has access to a free and public education, it is necessary that the field of school psychological services continues to evolve as an exemplary representative of best practice in meeting the changing needs of these populations. It is important to be cognizant of how school psychological services have advanced based on changes in population need and public law. For example, the formulation of what is currently known as Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), originally known as the Education of Handicapped Children Act, passed in 1975, has become so due to amendments to the original law that ensure a free and public education for all. It guides how school psychologists advocate for and safeguard access to education for all. As we look to the future, it is important to contemplate some of the areas that will affect school psychological services.

## Evaluation in the 21st Century

The foundation and history of the development of school psychologists is evaluation (Fagan, 1987). Although school psychologists today recognize the historical and theoretical roots of intelligence testing, they are also aware of its limitations and advocate for a comprehensive, holistic approach to assessment of student learning that is grounded in empirically based practice.<sup>32</sup> Consistent with state and federal regulations, school psychologists employ a wide variety of scientifically validated assessment measures including but not limited to: cognitive, behavioral, and social and emotional. They are also aware of and sensitive to environmental and socio-cultural factors that impact student performance and how others may view their learning potential.<sup>33</sup>

Evaluation provides a standardized profile that forms the basis for greater decision-making and the provision of school psychological services. The number and types of assessment instruments have increased dramatically in recent years, and the advent of technology has allowed school psychologists greater accessibility to digital means by which tests can be administered and scored. The benefits of time-efficiency and cost-effectiveness offered by digital formats, however, must be counterbalanced with concerns regarding student data privacy and confidentiality. School psychologists, as any other (certified) employee of the school district, must comply with all state and federal requirements pertaining to student privacy including, but not limited to, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> <https://www.nasponline.org/x36851.xml>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.nasponline.org/x32086.xml>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

## **Reciprocity for School Psychology Certification**

As a response to the nation-wide shortage in school psychologists, it is imperative for school psychologists, school psychology leadership, and governing organizations and certification bureaus to work collaboratively to adopt the Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) credential as the accepted standard for reciprocity for school psychologists fully credentialed by another state who is or is considering moving to Connecticut. The National School Psychology Certification System (NSPCS) was created by NASP to establish a nationally recognized standard for credentialing school psychologists. The standards for the credentialing of school psychologists are used by the NSPCS and the NCSP is bestowed upon individuals in recognition of meeting national standards. Adopting the NCSP would allow for greater recruitment of highly qualified school psychologist to Connecticut in order to address identified shortages of school psychologists in different regions of the state.

# School Psychology in the Private Sector

Although most school psychologists practice within the public schools, it is permissible for school psychologists to practice within the private sector to the extent that the unlicensed, but certified, person can justify that the activities performed fall within their scope of expertise and within the parameters set by the C.G.S. Practice in the private sector is regulated by the C.G.S. and informed by the Principles for Professional Ethics.<sup>35</sup> C.G.S. Section 20-195(b)<sup>36</sup> governs the activities of psychologists, restricts the use of the title “psychologist,” and specifies those professional services that school psychologists may provide in the private sector:

(b) Nothing in this chapter shall prevent any person holding a certificate as school psychologist or school psychological examiner, granted by the State Board of Education, from using such title to describe his activities within an elementary or secondary school. Nothing in this chapter shall prevent any person who holds a standard or professional educator certificate, granted by said board, as school psychologist or school psychological examiner from using such title to describe his activities within the private sector. Such activities within the private sector shall be limited to: (1) Evaluation, diagnosis, or test interpretation limited to assessment of intellectual ability, learning patterns, achievement, motivation, or personality factors directly related to learning problems in an educational setting; (2) short-term professional advisement and interpretive services with children or adults for amelioration or prevention of educationally-related problems; (3) educational or vocational consultation or direct educational services to schools, agencies, organizations or individuals, said consultation being directly related to learning problems; and (4) development of educational programs such as designing more efficient and psychologically sound classroom situations and acting as a catalyst for teacher involvement in adaptations and innovations. . .

It is incumbent upon the school psychologist to act within their scope of expertise and knowledge. If a complaint is received by the Department of Public Health that an unlicensed person, who is certified as a school psychologist, is performing broader psychological services than outlined in state statute and scope of certification, consultation would be sought from a licensed psychologist (preferably a licensed school psychologist) to inform an investigation. Section 10-145b and regulations adopted by the State Board of Education concerning revocation of a standard or professional educator certificate shall apply to a school psychologist who uses such title to describe activities within the private sector.

In accordance with ethical principles, a school psychologist in private practice would not accept referrals from families residing in the school district in which the school psychologist is employed. A school psychologist who also holds a license as a psychologist from the State Department of Public Health may perform additional functions under that license consistent with his or her areas of competence. A school psychologist who is certified by the State Department of Education may provide school psychological services to a school district on a contractual basis for the purpose of procuring specialized services not available within the school district (e.g., bilingual evaluation, neuropsychological evaluation, program planning for a child with autism, clinical supervision) or to provide coverage for a leave of absence.

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<sup>35</sup>[https://www.nasponline.org/Documents/Standards%20and%20Certification/Standards/1\\_%20Ethical%20Principles.pdf](https://www.nasponline.org/Documents/Standards%20and%20Certification/Standards/1_%20Ethical%20Principles.pdf)

<sup>36</sup>[https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_383.htm#sec\\_20-195](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_383.htm#sec_20-195)

# Self-Care: The Missing Link in Best Practice

Self-care is an ethical imperative of the utmost importance (Gil-López, 2016). The conversation begins in the field of ethics itself. Regardless of the field of practice, the universal ethical principle across all professions is “Do No Harm.” Specifically, “school psychologists have a legal as well as an ethical obligation to take steps to protect all students from reasonably foreseeable risk of harm.”<sup>37</sup>

Several authors writing in the area of clinical psychology have urged to “[b]egin self-care at the top” (Norcross & Guy, 2013, p. 752), by petitioning professional associations to explicitly include self-care in their ethics, accreditation standards, and beyond (Barnett, Baker, Elman, and Schoener, 2007; Norcross & Guy, 2013; Wise, Hersh & Gibson, 2012).

The NASP Principles for Professional Ethics (NASP, 2010) hold school psychologists to the highest standards. Jacob et al. (2011) define ethics as a “system of principles of conduct that guide the behavior of an individual” (p. 1). We require school psychologists to employ best practice; to accomplish this they must be at their absolute best. If this is true, it follows that one of the principles of conduct that guides behavior in the field of school psychology without question must be to proactively practice self-care.

Stress that is not mitigated effectively can lead to burnout. Those who practice in the mental health field have very high burnout rates due to the stressful nature of the work (Barnett et al., 2007, Shapiro, Brown & Biegel, 2007, Wise et al., 2012). Moreover, school psychologists may have the highest burnout rates among all helping professionals (Burden, 1988, Huebner, Gilligan, & Cobb, 2002, Wise, 1985). Perhaps, this is due in part to the fact that “psychologists employed by the schools may have less control over aspects of service delivery than practitioners in private practice” (NASP, 2010, p. 2).

Compassion Fatigue and Burnout can be realities to the practice of school psychology that every professional should be aware of and monitor as needed. To counteract the negative mental health effects of stress and burnout, practitioners must take care of themselves before they can care for others.

In the literature on burnout prevention in mental health professionals, several authors address pre-service interventions. The importance of emphasizing and practicing self-care in pre-service training programs increases the odds that self-care will be practiced in-service (Barnett et al., 2007; Bamonti, Keelan, Larson, Mentrikoski, Randall, Sly, & McNeil, 2014; Huebner et al., 2002; Newell & MacNeil, 2010; Shapiro et al., 2007).

To address concerns about maintaining well-being and practicing effectively given the current stressful educational landscape, efforts to promote self-care and its subsequent outcomes should take place during graduate school training, as well as while working for local education association.

A healthy school psychologist maintains appropriate boundaries, objective insight into the issues of those with whom they work, the ability to self-regulate their behaviors, and is a model for wellness and adaptive coping. Proactively practicing self-care is a necessity for school psychologists to productively manage stress, prevent burnout and compassion fatigue.

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<sup>37</sup>[https://www.nasponline.org/Documents/Standards%20and%20Certification/Standards/1\\_%20Ethical%20Principles.pdf](https://www.nasponline.org/Documents/Standards%20and%20Certification/Standards/1_%20Ethical%20Principles.pdf)

# Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students

## Overview

The English learner (EL) is, by definition, a student whose dominant language is other than English and whose proficiency in English is not sufficient to assure equal educational opportunity in the regular school program.<sup>38</sup> It is, however, important to appreciate the unique and diverse nature of this group of learners both linguistically **and** culturally.<sup>39</sup> Although language is an essential part of culture, culture is more than language and includes beliefs, customs, traditions, etc. Language, however, often overshadows other aspects of culture because it is so prominent. Educating a culturally and linguistically diverse student, nevertheless, requires attention to the whole child.<sup>40</sup>

The need for Connecticut's school psychologists to have competence in nonbiased assessment of ELs is paramount given the projected trends in state demographics. The most recent data published by the CSDE Bureau of Data Collection and Evaluation indicates that ELs speak 139 different non-English languages (Spanish being the most prevalent) and account for nearly 7% of the total school population. Of those, over seventy-five percent are eligible for free or reduced lunch.<sup>41</sup>

## Assessment Practices

Linguistically and culturally responsive assessment practice is critical to closing the achievement gap and decreasing overrepresentation and underrepresentation of ELs in special and gifted education, respectively. School psychologists recognize the significant impact of linguistic and cultural differences and that they can go unnoticed to the detriment of a student. Consequently, school psychologists advocate for the rights of ELs to be assessed in their native languages to the degree that the information is useful and will yield the development of effective interventions.<sup>42</sup>

The NASP Principles for Professional Ethics state, "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."<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, 34 CFR §300.304<sup>44</sup> of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) states that:

- a) The public agency must provide notice to the parents of a child with a disability, in accordance with §300.503, that describes any evaluation procedures the agency proposes to conduct.
- b) In conducting the evaluation, the LEA must:

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<sup>38</sup> Conn. Gen. Stat. Sec. 10-17e. ([https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_164.htm#sec\\_10-17e](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_164.htm#sec_10-17e))

<sup>39</sup> <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Evaluation-and-Support/Professional-Learning---Cultural-Competence>

<sup>40</sup> [https://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/39272\\_2.pdf](https://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/39272_2.pdf)

<sup>41</sup> <http://edsight.ct.gov/relatedreports/Condition%20of%20Education%202016-17.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.nasponline.org/x32086.xml>

<sup>43</sup> [https://www.nasponline.org/Documents/Standards%20and%20Certification/Standards/1\\_%20Ethical%20Principles.pdf](https://www.nasponline.org/Documents/Standards%20and%20Certification/Standards/1_%20Ethical%20Principles.pdf)

<sup>44</sup> <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/d/300.304>

1. Use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, including information provided by the parent, that may assist in determining:
    - i. Whether the child is a child with a disability under §300.8; and
    - ii. The content of the child's IEP, including information related to enabling the child to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum (or for a preschool child, to participate in appropriate activities);
  2. Not use any single measure or assessment as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining an appropriate educational program for the child; and
  3. Use technically sound instruments that may assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical or developmental factors.
- c) Each public agency must ensure that:
1. Assessments and other evaluation materials used to assess a child under this part:
    - i. Are selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis;
    - ii. Are provided and administered in the child's native language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information on what the child knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is clearly not feasible to so provide or administer;
    - iii. Are used for the purposes for which the assessments or measures are valid and reliable;
    - iv. Are administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel; and
    - v. Are administered in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of the assessments.
  2. Assessments and other evaluation materials include those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those that are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient.
  3. Assessments are selected and administered so as best to ensure that if an assessment is administered to a child with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the assessment results accurately reflect the child's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factors the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the child's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (unless those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure).
  4. The child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, if appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, and motor abilities;
  5. Assessments of children with disabilities who transfer from one public agency to another public agency in the same school year are coordinated with those children's prior and subsequent schools, as necessary and as expeditiously as possible, consistent with §300.301(d)(2) and (e), to ensure prompt completion of full evaluations.
  6. In evaluating each child with a disability under §§300.304 through 300.306, the evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the child's special education and related service needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified.
  7. Assessment tools and strategies that provide relevant information that directly assists persons in determining the educational needs of the child are provided.

It is not uncommon for some children seen as English-language dominant to have daily and ongoing exposure to a language in their home environment.<sup>45</sup> The educational implications of this exposure is often overlooked and these students are able to “slip under radar” with regard to their English proficiency. Because school records do not typically identify this group of students, the educational implications of the linguistic and cultural characteristics of these students may not be fully recognized and/or understood by educators (Saunders & Marcelletti, 2013). Thus, special education evaluation of these students may be imprecise leading to incorrect identification.<sup>46</sup>

It is incumbent on the school psychologist to investigate and have awareness of all relevant background information to best inform the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) when designing an evaluation and interpreting data. Consideration of student factors such as the history of immigration, acculturative status and stress, socio-economic status, and history of educational programs and language assessment provide helpful information for the selection of appropriate assessment instruments in the evaluation process. For the school psychologist, culturally competent assessment requires the integration of culturally sensitive attitudes, knowledge, interview skills, intervention strategies and evaluation practices (Fujii, 2017).

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<sup>45</sup> <https://ncela.ed.gov/files/uploads/3/BiennialReportToCongress.pdf>

<sup>46</sup> [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/English-Learners/CAPELL\\_SPED\\_resource\\_guide.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/English-Learners/CAPELL_SPED_resource_guide.pdf)

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