



CONNECTICUT SEED

**Student and Educator Support Specialists
Guidance Document**

School Social Workers

This document provides guidance to administrators and Student and Educator Support Specialists (SESS) on the application of the Connecticut SEED educator evaluation system to **Social Workers**. Student and Educator Support Specialists are those individuals who by the nature of their job description do not have traditional classrooms, but serve a “caseload” of students, staff or families. In addition, they often are not directly responsible for content instruction nor do state standardized assessments directly measure their impact on students. The following document provides guidance on the evaluation of **Social Workers** in public school settings.

OVERVIEW:

○ Roles of School Social Workers:

Social Workers in educational settings are charged with creating effective links between school personnel, families and communities for the purpose of meeting the psychological, behavioral, academic, and social needs of all students. They are also responsible for designing and implementing interventions for the students for whom they are directly responsible. Social Workers possess unique expertise in and knowledge about fostering social and behavioral self-management in students. They are often responsible for facilitating communication and action planning among all stakeholders in the service of individual and small groups of students, as well as entire learning communities, so that non-academic challenges to learning may be mitigated or removed. As part of their role in schools, social workers lead and participate in student services teams, advocate for students' needs as liaisons with families and social service organizations and the community, and work with appropriate school staff in helping students to reach developmentally appropriate milestones. Social workers seek, for their students, the capacity to attain age-appropriate learning, adapt to multiple environments and realize their full potential and personal value (CSDE, 2012).

In Connecticut, School Social Workers must possess a Masters in Social Work (MSW) degree from an accredited university in order to obtain the 071 endorsement for school social workers. Social workers may be assigned to specific schools or provide district-level services. Their caseload(s) typically include:

- students with social/emotional and/or behavioral IEP goals and objectives
- psycho-educational groups based on IEP goals and objectives, as well as, universal student populations and targeted populations
- students and families requiring short term crisis intervention

In working with students, families and the community, social workers are responsible for:

- facilitating, engaging in and demonstrating a variety of prevention, intervention and educational activities
- providing classroom and building level consultation and intervention
- providing student services in ways that build students' individual strengths and offer students maximum opportunity to participate in the planning and direction of their own learning experience
- facilitating trusting and cooperative relationships among parents, the school, and the community
- working collaboratively to mobilize resources in the local education agencies and communities to meet the needs of students and families
- writing comprehensive bio-psychosocial histories of individual student for intake and future planning (family, education, clinical, medical, legal)
- analyzing existing data systems (e.g., attendance, disciplinary and academic records), to craft appropriate interventions that will assist students in their overall functioning

- selecting, implementing and evaluating appropriate intervention methods based on theoretical perspectives such as behavioral, cognitive, psychodynamic, family systems, strength-based, ecological, crisis intervention and conflict resolution
- designing interventions to promote positive educational experiences and involving the student, family, school personnel and community services when appropriate

In general, review of the practice of student and educator support specialists may focus on a variety of available artifacts and data, such as individualized lesson plans, interventions, action plans, and associated data and documentation to support such artifacts. Equally (or, arguably, more) important are the data collected from pre-observation, and specialist self-reflection forms, which create foundations for professional conversations that drive the purposes of supervision and evaluation toward professional learning. Information from reviews of practice, such as communication with families, collaboration with colleagues, participation in data teams, professional learning presentations by faculty members, participation in mentoring, instructional rounds, Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meetings and action research, all provide rich data related to the Common Core of Teaching (CCT) and the effectiveness of education specialists' performance and practice.

Supervision and evaluation of School Social Workers may include a review of various pre-determined and mutually-agreed upon resources, including: case studies, progress notes, conversations, the implementation of treatment plans, and student outcomes. Specific artifacts that may be used include (but are not limited to):

- data on learning or achievement of learners
- lessons, intervention, treatment, or customer action plans and records
- artifacts from work of learners
- data team meeting minutes
- journals/notes documenting reflections on practice
- schedule of meetings/conferences
- survey data

In the context of the Connecticut SEED educator evaluation system, educators will work in conjunction with their evaluators to identify objectives for student learning and corresponding measures of student performance to evaluate progress made towards those learning objectives. Educators will draft Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) that specify:

1. a learning objective focus statement;
2. baseline or trend data relative to that objective;
3. the population of students that will be assessed on the objective (e.g. caseload, grade level, course, etc...);
4. the standards and learning content that are represented by the objective;
5. the length of time across which intervention will occur in order to support students in obtaining the objective;

6. assessments that will be used to evaluate student performance;
7. quantitative indicators of academic growth and development (IAGDs) based on student performance on assessments; and
8. instructional strategies that will be employed to support students in realizing the learning objective.

The following pages provide sample SLO focus statements and corresponding IAGDs that may be appropriate for **School Social Workers** given their unique role within school settings.

Sample 1

- **STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE (SLO) FOCUS STATEMENT**
 - **INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (IAGD)**
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Subject Area: Social Skills Instruction

Population of Students: 6th grade students targeted for intervention

Student Learning Objective Focus Statement:

As a result of participating in a 6-week targeted intervention using an evidence-based social skills curriculum, 6th grade students will improve their ability to respectfully greet peers and staff members.

Baseline Data:

Students targeted for intervention demonstrated at least 3 inappropriate interactions or greetings when entering or leaving school, entering or exiting a classroom or passing in the hallway.

Rationale:

Increasing students' positive social skills – specifically, their ability to use appropriate social greetings – creates a learning environment that is safe, engaging and conducive to independent interaction with one another.

Indicator(s) of Academic Growth and Development:

Pre and post- assessment data on appropriate social greetings, as articulated in an evidence-based curriculum

1. 80% of students will not demonstrate incidents of inappropriate greetings following the 6th week of intervention when entering or leaving school, when entering and exiting a classroom and when passing in the hallway.
2. 20% of students will demonstrate a 50% decrease in the use of inappropriate greetings following the 6th week of intervention when entering or leaving school, when entering and exiting a classroom and when passing in the hallway.

Standards and Learning Content:

Common Core of Teaching (CCT):

Rubric Domain/Indicator addressed: 2.b. Promoting student engagement and shared responsibility for learning

Sample 2

- **STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE (SLO) FOCUS STATEMENT**
 - **INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (IAGD)**
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Subject Area: Behavior Management

Population of Students: 4th grade students who have been referred for Tier II interventions and explicit social skills instruction

Student Learning Objective Focus Statement:

Students will increase respectful behaviors within a classroom environment.

Baseline Data:

Students targeted for intervention received an average daily point range of 3 – 5 out of 12 points over the course of 2 weeks.

Rationale:

Students at Tier II have exhibited some maladaptive behaviors that require a more targeted level of intervention in order to acquire developmentally appropriate skills. Students will be exposed to social skills instruction within a classroom environment in order to understand the importance of being respectful within that environment.

Indicator(s) of Academic Growth and Development:

1. Tier II 4th grade students will achieve an average 30% increase in daily points earned for following the positively stated behavioral expectations of being respectful in the classroom as measured by Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) data from the fall to the spring of the academic year.

Standards and Learning Content:

Common Core of Teaching (CCT):

Rubric Domain/Indicator addressed: 4.a. Delivery of services, 4.b. Intervention strategies

Sample 3

- **STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE (SLO) FOCUS STATEMENT**
 - **INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (IAGD)**
-

Subject Area: Behavior Management

Population of Students: 8th grade students receiving Tier III behavioral interventions

Student Learning Objective Focus Statement:

Students will decrease the number of physical aggressions towards peers in the school environment.

Baseline Data:

Twelve students targeted for intervention had at least one emergency restraint or seclusion on a monthly basis during the previous school year. Twelve students targeted for intervention had at least 5 office referrals a month during the previous school year.

Behavior tracking, per individualized behavior plan

First quarter of behavioral data, FBA and BIP

Rationale:

Targeted students have exhibited explosive behaviors in the school that could impact the whole school environment and could lead to suspension/expulsion.

Indicator(s) of Academic Growth and Development:

1. Students targeted for intervention will decrease the incidents of seclusion or restraint by at least 50% by May.
2. Students targeted for intervention will decrease the number of office discipline referrals by 70% by May.

Standards and Learning Content:

Common Core of Teaching (CCT):

Rubric Domain/Indicator addressed: 5.b. Comprehensive data analysis, interpretation and communication

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CUSTOMIZING THE OBSERVATION RUBRIC:

The annual performance evaluation of Professional School Social Workers should accurately reflect the unique professional training and practices of social workers working within a comprehensive program. It is recommended that observation of School Social Workers be conducted using the modified *Common Core of Teaching Rubric for Effective Teaching for Student Educator and Support Specialists*.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENT, PARENT AND PEER FEEDBACK:

Student, parent and peer feedback provide important information for school social workers that can be used to improve delivery of services and professional practice. Data from feedback sources are used to inform professional learning plans for all educators and support specialists in schools; therefore, it is important to seek multiple sources of such data to create a comprehensive view of school social workers' practice and efficacy such as:

- school climate surveys, which provide feedback from students, parents and peers;
- feedback measures that may be used during school-sponsored family engagement activities in which social workers participate;
- feedback from the monitoring and adjusting of social work interventions; and
- anecdotal feedback from noted stakeholders.

RESOURCES:

Connecticut State Department of Education. (2012). Practice guidelines for delivery of school social work services: promoting the social-emotional competencies of students – linking families, schools and communities. Retrieved from <http://ctserc.info/2-bts/Additional%20Resources/School%20Social%20Work%20Guidelines.pdf>

Connecticut's System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED). (ND). Retrieved from <http://www.connecticutseed.org>

National Association of Social Workers. (2013) Best practices in social work supervision. Retrieved from <http://www.socialworkers.org/practice/naswstandards/supervisionstandards2013.pdf>

National Association of Social Workers. (2001). *NASW standards for cultural competence in social work practice*. Retrieved from www.socialworkers.org/practice/standards/NASWCulturalStandards.pdf

National Association of Social Workers. (2012). *NASW standards for school social work services*. Retrieved from <http://www.naswdc.org/practice/standards/NASWSchoolSocialWorkStandards.pdf>

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