

NASP ELECTIONS



President-Elect candidates Shawna Rader-Kelly and Peter Faustino



Secretary Candidates Karen Apgar and Sarah Lerch

Every Vote Counts

BY STEPHEN E. BROCK

The 2023 election cycle has begun, and it offers all NASP members an opportunity to play a role in the future of association leadership. This year, we are electing a President-Elect, Secretary, and 17 state delegates to NASP's Leadership Assembly. In the coming weeks, you will find more information on all candidates at www.nasponline.org/elections. Although turnout for these elections has improved

slightly in recent years, member participation is historically very limited. Thus, a single vote can, and in fact last year did, make a difference in election results. Once you have decided on a candidate, voting literally takes less than a minute. Simply click on the voting link sent to your email address and make your selections.

On the Elections webpage, you will find the NASP campaigning policies and frequently asked Q&A. NASP believes that all candidates and association members should be active stewards of the election process. Please help us maintain a fair election throughout the election cycle. All campaign- [CONTINUED ON PAGE 17]

TRANSITIONS

Considering a Midcareer Move From School-Based Practitioner to Faculty? Read on!

BY SARAH STEBBE ROWE & ERIN RAPPUHN

Graduates of doctoral school psychology programs have many professional choices upon graduation. Options include but are not limited to postdoctoral research or clinical positions, academic faculty positions, and traditional practice within school, community, or clinical settings. Shortages of practicing

school psychologists and school psychology trainers exist, and research suggests that retirement of school psychology faculty continues to outpace the replacement with new doctoral level graduates (Castillo et al., 2014). Some graduates of doctoral-level school psychology programs may wish to transition directly into an aca-

demie position within higher education. The traditional route into academia may be this transition from graduate school to academia, which yields advantages related to continuation of skills for teaching and research. However, midlife career transitions are becoming more common as universities replace retirees with those coming from careers in applied fields (Crane et al., 2009). This unrecognized pool of potential future professors is full of applicants with the advantage of real-world field experience, and Knoff et al. (1997) recommended that school psychology faculty obtain at least 2 years of full-time work as a [CONTINUED ON PAGE 20]

RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICE

Incorporating Student Self-Report for Progress Monitoring: Tapping Into Their Expertise

BY OLIVIA C. HECK, JACK KOMER, & HEATHER E. ORMISTON

The COVID-19 pandemic thrust the field of school psychology into uncharted territory—navigating how to continue to serve students in need via a virtual format while attempting to adhere to best practices. During this time, our team at Indiana University began implementing trauma-informed multitiered systems of support (TI-MTSS), more specifically Tier 2 social-emotional interventions, as part of a federally funded grant within a local school corporation. We quickly became familiar with the barriers to service brought about by the pandemic. Those initial months of implementing a large-scale training grant while navigating a global pandemic were largely trial and error: how to adapt evidence-based curricula to a virtual format, build rapport and group cohesion while masked and socially distant, and continue implementing services with constant changes in schedules and routines.

As the district moved back to in-person learning in fall 2020, we faced implementation challenges related to quarantined students, hybrid learning formats, and frequent switching between in-person and virtual instruction. Additionally, given that the adjustment to hybrid instruction was overwhelming, we found teachers had tremendous difficulty collecting progress monitoring data for their students receiving Tier 2 support. Thus, we were faced with the challenge of finding alternative, yet reliable, ways to progress monitor students receiving intervention.

While staying committed to applying evidence-based practices to best integrate students into the TI-MTSS process, we discovered the need to further evaluate the merits and potential of student self-report for progress [CONTINUED ON PAGE 30]

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Together We Shine!

BY CELESTE M. MALONE

Happy National School Psychology Week (NSPW), colleagues! This is a time to celebrate ourselves and highlight the important work that we do to help all children thrive in school and in life. We give so much of ourselves every day, but the past few years have truly tested our capacity. This year's NSPW theme *Together We Shine* reminds us that the light of hope resides within all of us.

We all possess an inner light grounded in our identity; that is who we are and all that makes us unique. Identity reminds me of light when it passes through a prism: It reveals a beautiful spectrum of colors. Our identities are similarly complex. Although we are often judged based on our visible identities, we actually hold multiple and overlapping social identities (e.g., race, gender) and cultural identities (e.g., religion, ethnicity) that shape who we are. School psychologists can help students connect with their inner light by encouraging identity exploration from an intersectional lens. This approach rejects identity as a singular notion and allows students to define themselves, identify the sociocultural identities most salient to them, and develop pride in their unique combination of sociocultural identities. Students' inner lights shine brightest when they have a healthy sense of identity. However, due to experiences of discrimination, students with marginalized identities may start to internalize negative messages about their sociocultural groups. To safeguard against this, school psychologists can develop students' critical consciousness so that they recognize their cultural strengths and empower students with self-advocacy skills to increase their sense of agency.

In addition to celebrating our unique individuality, the theme *Together We Shine* also highlights the strength we find through community. Our light shines even brighter when we come together to work toward a shared vision. Intersectionality can provide a framework for community building. Intersectionality goes beyond single-axis dimensions of diversity to describe how people's multiple and overlapping social identities lead to experiences of privilege and marginalization that, in turn, influence life experiences and outcomes. It informs coalition building by acknowledging the diversity within groups while also highlighting intertwined experiences of oppression to identify common advocacy goals. This coalition work is necessary for healing. By working together to resist oppression and address societal issues, we can come closer to a world in which all experience thriving and liberation.

A great example of intersectional youth-led advocacy is March for Our Lives (MFOL), the protest movement founded by the survivors of the 2018 shooting at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. This movement initially focused on preventing future school shootings. But as MFOL leaders traveled across the country, they learned that gun violence disproportionately impacts Black and Latinx communities, girls and women of color, and youth in urban areas. Despite their different life experiences, gun violence was an issue that united them all. Thus, to better represent all those impacted by gun violence, the mission of MFOL expanded to eradicate gun violence in all its forms, including community violence, police-involved shootings, intimate partner violence, and suicide by firearm. Through building coalitions with advocacy groups led by youth of color and others disproportionately impacted by gun violence, MFOL increased its impact, and on March 24, 2018, held the largest single-day protest against gun violence in United States history.

MFOL is part of a larger historical legacy of youth leadership and advocacy. Other examples of student-led advocacy include the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (civil rights movement), Fridays for Future (climate change), and United We Dream (immigration reform). Teaching students about these past and present movements of intersectional resistance can inspire hope and motivation to work toward a liberated future for themselves and communities. Moreover, psychological empowerment through consciousness raising and advocacy is associated with better mental and socioemotional health, positive youth development, and fewer risk behaviors (Maker Castro et al., 2022).

How will you help students, families, educators, and communities shine this NSPW? Share with me on Twitter (@cmonique1023) with the hashtag #SchoolPsychWeek. ■

Reference

Maker Castro, E., Wray-Lake, L., & Cohen, A. K. (2022). Critical consciousness and wellbeing in adolescents and young adults: A systematic review. *Adolescent Research Review*, 1-24. Advance online publication <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40894-022-00188-3>



In addition to celebrating our unique individuality, the theme *Together We Shine* also highlights the strength we find through community. Our light shines even brighter when we come together to work toward a shared vision.

Editor's Note

November Is for Voters

People sometimes ask me how they can be more broadly involved in their profession, or specifically, how they can be more involved in NASP. I can tell you one thing: Voting for your NASP delegates and officers is a good first step! The NASP election is in January, but the fact that we vote for all kinds of officials in November made me think about why voting for NASP leaders is important. Clearly, voting in a national election is a much higher stakes affair than voting for NASP leaders, but they are both expressions of the belief that leadership matters and that we are committed to the welfare of our community. Paying attention to the NASP election causes us to learn more about the profession and the challenges it faces, and in the process, encourages us to become more invested in its work. I sure do hope all of you vote in the midterm national elections, and that in January you vote in the NASP elections.

I have been in this profession for about 45 years, and except for the last few of them, have always worked in schools. When I read the "Presenters in Focus" feature (p. 24) about how two districts in Minnesota were implementing behavioral threat assessment and management (BTAM), I recalled how I always had the sense that November seemed to be the time when problems with social and emotional issues really began to ramp up among the students. So I decided to publish some of the key information that NASP has on BTAM (p. 26) and in the area of manifestation determinations (p. 28). Note also a new feature titled "Notables and Downloads" (p. 30), which describes a variety of resources available on the NASP website, including a podcast titled "Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management: Best Practices for a Defensible Process" with Dr. Melissa Reeves. I hope many of you find this information helpful. And remember: You will find even more information as you explore the website.

As usual, you will also find a wealth of information inside the pages of *Communique*. This month, we explore a variety of professional issues, ranging from "all areas of suspected disability" during IEP meetings (p. 14), to leadership (p. 10, 12), to using digital tools for counseling (p. 36). Articles on progress monitoring (p. 1), Turner syndrome (p. 4), and grade retention (p. 18) add to the mix.

We are heading into a season of family, friends, and celebration, and I wish you all a joyful Thanksgiving.

—JOHN E. DESROCHERS

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Communiqué

EDITOR

JOHN DESROCHERS | desroc@optonline.net

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

STEVEN LANDAU | selandau@ilstu.edu MARK ROTH | maryannmarkroth@gmail.com KAREN STOIBER | kstoiber@uwm.edu

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

STEPHEN BROCK, CA
MATTHEW K. BURNS, MO
KATHERINE C. COWAN, MD
SHEILA DESAI, MD
DAN FLORELL, KY
SALLY GRAPIN, NJ
SHELLEY HART, CA
BOB LICHTENSTEIN, MA
PAUL MCCABE, NY
BREEDA MCGRATH, IL
KATHERINE E. MCLENDON, GA
AMANDA B. NICKERSON, NY
RIVKA OLLEY, MD
STEPHEN POWELL, LA
ERIC ROSSEN, MD
STACY SKALSKI, MD
MICHAEL L. SULKOWSKI, AZ
RACHEL WIEGAND, CA
PERRY ZIRKEL, PA

ART DIRECTION/DESIGN

DAVID HERBICK DESIGN

PRODUCTION DIRECTOR

LINDA MORGAN | lmorgan@naspweb.org

NASP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

KATHLEEN MINKE | kminke@naspweb.org

ADVERTISING

MELISSA HICKMAN | advertising@naspweb.org

REPRINT INFORMATION

MARTHA SPATH | mSPATH@naspweb.org

EDITORIAL PRODUCTION MANAGER

BRIEANN KINSEY | bkKinsey@naspweb.org

NASP OFFICE: 4340 East West Highway, Suite 402, Bethesda, MD 20814
301-657-0270 Fax: 301-657-0275

www.nasponline.org

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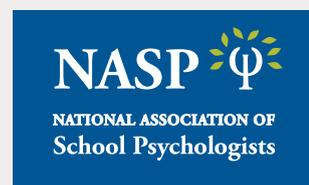
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EDITORIAL DEADLINES, Volume 51

Issue #	Month	Deadline
#1	September	July 5, 2022
#2	October	August 8, 2022
#3	November	September 6, 2022
#4	December	October 3, 2022
#5	January/February	November 14, 2022
#6	March/April	January 30, 2023
#7	May	March 13, 2023
#8	June	April 10, 2023

Turner Syndrome: What School Psychologists Should Know

BY MACKENZIE Z. NORMAN

Turner syndrome (TS) is a chromosomal disorder, caused by either complete or partial X monosomy (i.e., absence of one member of a pair of chromosomes) in some or all cells. It affects approximately 1 in 2,500 female live births. However, only about 1% of fetuses with 45, X karyotype (image of one's chromosomes) are carried to term, and up to 10% of spontaneous miscarriages are found to have a 45, X karyotype (Saenger et al., 2001). A number of articles have been published about topics such as medication management, diagnosis, and cardiovascular concerns (Davenport, 2010; Gravholt et al., 2019; Lyon et al., 1985), and research is emerging in the area of behavioral and psychological considerations for those with TS (see Hong et al., 2011; Lepage et al., 2013). This article will present an overview of TS in terms of diagnosis and symptoms. Then, the primary focus of the article will be to review developmental and behavioral concerns present in girls with TS and discuss how school psychologists can help support this population in the education system.

DIAGNOSIS

Some cases of TS may be detected prenatally through chorionic villous sampling or amniocentesis, typically performed due to advanced maternal age (Saenger et al., 2001). However, TS may also be detected postnatally. In this case, any individual with suspected TS should have a karyotype completed. There are also a number of physical clinical findings that may indicate a need to explore the diagnosis of TS. For example, some patients may have unexplained growth failure or delay in puberty, nuchal folds, left-sided cardiac anomalies, low hairline, low set ears, significantly elevated levels of follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH), absence of breast development by 13 years of age, primary or secondary amenorrhea, and more (see Saenger et al., 2001 for full list of indicators). Again, in these cases, a karyotype should be performed in order to differentially rule in or rule out a TS diagnosis. About 20% to 30% of girls with TS are diagnosed in the neonatal period due to a webbed neck anomaly (i.e., a skin fold that runs from the sides of the neck down to the shoulders) or lymphedema. Furthermore, approximately 35% of girls are diagnosed in childhood through an evaluation conducted due to short stature (Gonzalez & Witchel, 2012). The relatively high prevalence of diagnosis in childhood highlights how important it is for school psychologists to be aware of the physical presentation of TS. Having this knowledge can inform potential recommendations for the family, such as suggesting the family speak to their primary care physician.

SYMPTOMS

Two primary characteristics of TS are short stature and gonadal dysgenesis, or atypical development of the gonads in embryo (Bondy et al., 2007). Short stature is defined as height more than two standard deviations below the mean height for age. Clinical recommendations state that short stature should be treated with growth hormone until the individual reaches a bone age of 14 years (Hanton et al., 2003). Gonadal dysgenesis can also contribute to insufficient levels of female sex steroids and furthermore, to infertility (Gravholt, 2005). Other features include broad chest and nuchal skin folds (i.e., a fold of skin at the back of the neck) or web neck anomaly. Organ systems and tissues can also be affected in individuals with this syndrome.

Some of the most serious concerns for children with TS are abnormalities in the cardiovascular system. In fetal development, defects in cardiac and aortic development can result in a high rate of mortality in fetuses with a 45, X karyotype. In fact, congenital heart defect (CHD) affects approximately 30% of individuals with TS (Bondy et al., 2007). Individuals can present with a webbing of the neck which

is predictive of bicuspid aortic valve (BAV), a genetic condition that results in the aortic valve having two leaflets as opposed to three. Research indicates that about 16% of women and girls with TS have BAV (Bondy et al., 2007), and a broader range of cardiovascular abnormalities exist in individuals with TS than was previously thought. Studies are finding that there appears to be a dilation of major vessels in women with TS—this includes dilation of the brachial and carotid arteries and aorta (Loscalzo et al., 2005). Due to the aforementioned symptoms related to the cardiovascular system, all individuals diagnosed with TS should have a cardiac evaluation (including a physical examination and echocardiogram) at the time of diagnosis.

Another potential symptom of TS includes a congenital malformation of the urinary system. This is present in approximately 30% of individuals with TS (Bondy, 2007). A majority of these abnormalities do not result in clinical concerns; however, some individuals may have an increased risk of urinary tract infections, hypertension, or hydronephrosis (i.e., swelling of kidneys). Due to this fact, it is recommended that all patients with TS undergo a renal ultrasound at the time of diagnosis and that blood pressure is monitored at each physical examination.

Other symptoms include an increased risk for congenital hip dislocation, dental abnormalities, predisposition to obesity, increased risk of keloid formation, and increased risk of glucose intolerance (Bondy, 2007).

Aside from these medical symptoms, there are a range of symptoms that can be present in individuals with TS that are especially important for school psychologists to understand. As noted by Bondy (2007) these include:

- conductive and sensorineural hearing loss
- outer, middle, and inner ear related hearing problems as well as physical ear malformations
- speech and vision problems

While it is important that doctors are aware of the range of symptoms exhibited in those with TS, it is particularly important for school psychologists and educators to be aware of the developmental and behavioral concerns present in girls and young women with TS in order to best support these students.

DEVELOPMENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL ISSUES

During early infancy, girls with TS show no differences in psychological development from infants without TS (Culen et al., 2017). However, as these individuals age and begin to develop language skills and enter the school setting, differences in psychosocial and intellectual development begin to emerge.

Cognitive profile. Typically, the cognitive profile associated with TS is characterized by relative strength in verbal skills and relative weakness in visuospatial processing, executive functioning, and arithmetic (Hong et al., 2009). Deficits in executive functioning skills may influence one's ability to complete daily tasks because of difficulties with inhibition, flexibility, planning, and organization. Mazzocco (2009) notes that up to 75% of women with TS experience difficulties with math, including challenges with math calculation and applied skills. Young girls with TS may exhibit struggles with number recognition or understanding of 1:1 number correspondence and then, in early elementary school years, may exhibit longer response times for retrieving math facts (Dennis et al., 2009). This difficulty with recalling math facts may also be related to deficits in processing speed. Thus, educators might consider accommodations such as extended time for tests for individuals with TS (Hutaff-Lee et al., 2019).

While only about 10% of girls with TS will exhibit severe cognitive impairment (most often seen in individuals with a ring or marker chromosome—i.e., an aberrant or fragment of a chromosome; Sybert & McCauley, 2004), girls with TS are at a higher risk for having attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). This cognitive profile, in combination with other symptoms of TS, can lead to difficulties in the school setting. In fact, approximately 40%–70% of girls with TS are reported as having learning difficulties (Sybert & McCauley, 2004; Yeşilkaya et al., 2015).

Social skills. Research has shown that girls with TS often have difficulty understanding social cues and behaving appropriately in social situations. More specifically, girls with TS may have fewer close friends than unaffected peers, spend less time with peers, and appear to be less emotionally developed. Parents of girls with TS commonly report that their daughters are less socially competent than peers (Lepage et al., 2013). Women with TS are found to be less likely to have a romantic partner in adulthood than are females without TS (Nielson et al., 1977). Furthermore, individuals who do have a relationship entered the relationship at a later age (Rolstad et al., 2007) and are less likely to be married (Downey et al., 1989; Holl et al., 1994). Difficulties in social skills related to understanding social cues and ap-

MACKENZIE Z. NORMAN is a doctoral candidate in school psychology located in the Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology and Special Education at Michigan State University.

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appropriate social responses may be related to these patterns.

Differences in social skills as compared to their typically developing peers can emerge early in life for young girls with TS. A study conducted by Hong and colleagues (2011) investigated elements of social competence and cognition in a pre-estrogen population of girls ages 3 to 12 years. This sample included participants with TS and typically developing control participants. Results of this study found that girls with TS showed overall challenges with social competence and exhibited mild-to-moderate clinical concerns on the Social Cognition and Autistic Mannerisms domains of the Social Responsiveness Scale (Reynolds & Richmond, 1997), which assess one's ability to interpret social cues as well as the manifestation of restricted interests and stereotyped behaviors. Girls with TS in this study also showed some deficits in ability to detect reciprocal and social behaviors as well as use expressive social communication. Interestingly, researchers found no difference in scores on the Social Motivation subscale for girls with TS as compared to typically developing peers. Previous research has pointed to the fact that self-esteem and self-concept in girls with TS tend to decrease over time (Kilic et al., 2005; Lagrou et al., 1998). This observance of typical scores on the Social Motivation subscale could explain the link between impaired social performance and these decreases in self-esteem and self-concept (Hong et al., 2011). That is, individuals with TS are likely motivated to engage in social situations but may experience difficulties successfully doing so due to deficits in social skills. Multiple experiences of unsuccessful social performances may in turn be related to the observed decrease in self-esteem and self-concept.

Impaired social cognition in girls with TS can be seen in poor facial recognition, emotion identification, direction of eye gaze, and theory of mind (Hong et al., 2009; Reiss et al., 1993; Romans et al., 1998; Ross et al., 1997). In a study conducted by Mazzola et al. (2006), when participants with TS were asked to focus their attention on facial features, eye-tracking indicated that females with TS tended to look at the mouth, thus missing important cues provided by eyes in the task. Furthermore, in a study that asked women with TS to determine small distinctions in the direction someone is looking, women with TS were less accurate than controls (Elgar et al., 2002). Research shows that this population has difficulty inferring others' emotions and intentions from nonverbal behavior. Wolstencroft and Skuse (2019) suggest that the lack of estrogen and growth hormone early in life could contribute to this impairment in sociocognitive skills in adolescence.

There are many features of TS that are similar to that of individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). A study conducted by Lepage et al. (2014) investigated empathy, autistic traits, and motor resonance in adults with TS. Findings showed that women with TS scored lower on empathy and higher on autistic traits compared to controls. However, these differences did not reach significance. Lepage and colleagues (2014) suggest that it is plausible that social and emotional difficulties lessen from childhood to adulthood (some research supports this; see McCauley & Sybert, 2006) in individuals with TS, thus explaining the nonsignificance in the adult population in this study.

Another area of psychosocial functioning that must be monitored in individuals with TS is anxiety and depression. The lifetime prevalence of anxiety or depression in those with TS is reported to be as high as 52% (Cardoso et al., 2004). A variety of subtypes of anxiety have been reported including generalized anxiety, specific phobias, and obsessive-compulsive behaviors (Cardoso et al., 2004; Moonga et al., 2017). However, social anxiety is most frequently experienced by this population. Social anxiety in combination with social skills deficits may create a viscous cycle in which unsuccessful interactions with peers lead to increased social anxiety and isolation. Individuals with TS may also experience medical anxiety, due to frequent medical procedures and visits necessary because of their condition (Hutaff-Lee et al., 2019).

GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

The *Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Care of Girls and Women With Turner Syndrome* (Gravholt et al., 2017) provide guidelines for care providers in terms of diagnosis and genetics, growth and puberty, fertility, cardiovascular health, transition from pediatric to adult care, health surveillance for comorbidities, and neurocognitive and behavioral considerations. The guidelines for neurocognitive and behavioral aspects include: (a) integrated behavioral health services in the care for women with TS; (b) annual development and behavioral screenings until adulthood, with referrals as necessary; (c) the completion of neuropsychological assessments at critical transition stages in schooling; (d) academic and occupational adjustments/accommodations as needed; and (e) the use of evidence-based interventions for cognitive and psychosocial problems used with other populations, adapted to meet the needs of girls and women with TS (Gravholt et al., 2017). Thus, these clinical

practice guidelines, especially guidelines d and e, which are related to academic accommodations and evidence-based interventions, can act as guidelines for practicing school psychologists in both the schools and in clinical domains. In fact, in my own clinical practice working with girls with TS, I have had to adapt anxiety focused interventions to be more concrete and to include a combined focus on anxiety and social skills. I have also helped students with TS develop their planning, organization, and study skills, and helped families navigate requesting academic accommodations when needed.

To address deficits in social skills in girls with TS, Wolstencroft and colleagues (2019) conducted a pilot study examining the feasibility and acceptability of using the Program for Education and Enrichment of Relationship Skills (PEERS) intervention virtually. The PEERS program was implemented with seven women with TS (17 to 20 years of age) across 14 weekly lessons. Participants scored in the clinical range on the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire peers scale and the Social Competence with Peers (SCP) questionnaire as compared to norms for the typically developing female population. Participants, as well as their parents, reported being

In my own clinical practice working with girls with TS, I have had to adapt anxiety focused interventions to be more concrete and to include a combined focus on anxiety and social skills. I have also helped students with TS develop their planning, organization, and study skills, and helped families navigate requesting academic accommodations.

highly motivated to improve social skills as measured by the PEERS screening interview. Results of this study indicated that social performance significantly improved as measured via parent report on the SCP and gains were maintained at the follow-up time points. Significant gains were also seen in social knowledge and autistic symptomatology. No significant changes, however, were seen in self-report measures of anxiety and self-esteem.

Although this was a pilot study with a small sample size, the results indicate promising results of implementing the PEERS program with young women with TS (Wolstencroft et al., 2019). School psychologists should stay current with the recent literature as researchers such as Wolstencroft and others expand the research in the area of social skills interventions for young girls and women with TS. Furthermore,

this study suggests that other social skills programs that school psychologists may already be implementing in their work could be beneficial for this population as well. Of course, best practices in school psychology (Strein et al., 2014) suggest that interventions may need to be individualized to meet the unique needs of students with TS.

Many school-age girls with TS could benefit from accommodations in the education system. The Turner Syndrome Foundation website (<https://turnersyndrome-foundation.org>) offers useful information regarding this topic. In reading the following recommendations, school psychologists will likely note the overlap with these suggestions and common recommendations provided to students with ADHD, which is logical considering the commonality in executive functioning deficits. Specifically, this foundation recommends that individuals with TS benefit from planning study time with a schedule, prioritizing a to-do list, organizing each day and making sure materials are packed for school, setting up a workspace with good lighting and low noise, encouraging the student to ask for help from their teacher, and considering using a study buddy or homework partner. In terms of test-taking, the Turner Syndrome Foundation recommends that the student be allowed to take the test in another room, be provided with an additional piece of paper to write answers on directly if the test requires the use of a Scantron answer sheet, and suggests that the student consider enrolling in tutoring.

Additionally, the Turner Syndrome Foundation website explains that some individuals with TS may also qualify for services under a separate educational eligibility category. For example, some districts will recognize nonverbal learning disability or semantic pragmatic disorder as a diagnosis. The educational classification of other health impaired, in which students exhibit some kind of health condition, either short-term or chronic, which adversely influences their educational performance, may also fit well for girls with TS who could benefit from additional support in the school setting.

Although the main focus of this article is on TS, school psychologists can si-

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multaneously consider how they can best support children with sex chromosome aneuploidies (SCA; presence of extra or absence of chromosomes) more generally. Children with SCAs are at an increased risk for gross motor delays, learning disorders, expressive language delays, ADHD, autism spectrum disorder, executive function difficulties, and anxiety (Bender et al., 1993; Boada et al., 2009; Wigby et al., 2016). Thompson and colleagues (2020) conducted a national survey to examine understanding of early intervention services for young children with SCA in the United States. Findings from this survey indicated that over half of parents of children with SCAs (64% of infants and toddlers and 76% of preschoolers) noted that their child received therapies through early intervention or early childhood special education, with speech therapy being the most common service reported. While this finding is promising in that many of these children are receiving early intervention services, many parents reported that services were difficult to access. Reported reasons for difficulty accessing services included confusing qualification criteria, child's subclinical delays, as well as a lack of understating from early childhood educators (Thompson et al., 2020). This highlights the need for educators, and school psychologists specifically, to increase our understanding of these conditions in order to best support parents and children in receiving critical early intervention services.

CONCLUSION

This article does not serve as a comprehensive review of the symptoms of TS. However, the information presented here was tailored in order to provide school psychologists with information relevant to working with children and adolescents with TS. As noted, females with TS exhibit a specific cognitive profile in which relatively strong verbal skills are seen in contrast with relative deficits in nonverbal skills, visuospatial processing, executive functioning, and arithmetic. Individuals with TS also often exhibit social skills deficits, which, in many cases, may be exacerbated by the presence of social anxiety.

School psychologists working with individuals with TS should advocate for regular screenings and neuropsychological assessments, classroom accommodations, and the implementation of evidence-based interventions. Psychologists might consider how interventions aimed at the development of social skills for individuals with ASD might be adapted to be relevant for this population. Furthermore, anxiety and depression in this population should be closely monitored and treated as indicated. ■

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The Future School Psychologists of Ohio: Lessons Learned in Year 2

BY ASHLEY E. SCHWENN, CAITLYN M. HANES, & ELANA R. BERNSTEIN

Among the multitude of solutions to our field's ongoing personnel shortage, many state associations have stepped in to commit time and resources to addressing it. One such example is in Ohio, where a joint initiative of the Ohio School Psychologists Association (OSPA) and Ohio's Inter-University Council of School Psychology programs, known as the Future School Psychologists of Ohio (FSPO), is now beginning its third year of implementation. As a follow-up to an article published in *Communiqué* last September (Bernstein et al., 2021), the FSPO leadership team would like to share the outcomes of the initiative and present a set of lessons learned for those across the country interested in replicating the club in their state.

The aims of FSPO are to spread awareness and garner the interest and early commitment of students to the field of school psychology by providing members related educational and professional outreach opportunities and by recruiting students from minoritized backgrounds to the field. FSPO's mission is grounded in the notion that establishing an early exposure and meaningful connection with the field and easy access to related mentoring opportunities is important and largely missing from many shortage initiatives (Bernstein et al., 2021).

FOCUS AND EXPANSION

Since its pilot year in 2020–2021, FSPO has maintained strong, ongoing partnerships with several national and state organizations including NASP, the NASP Exposure Project (NASP-EP), and the Ohio Department of Education, as well as leading experts on diversity, equity, and inclusion in school psychology, including members of the NASP Social Justice Committee, professors at Ohio State University and the University of Cincinnati, and Diversifying Black Excellence in School Psychology (DBESP), a nonprofit organization dedicated to extending resources to help students from HBCUs transition to school psychology programs.

The FSPO initiative has a 5-Phase implementation plan. Phase 2 of implementation, for which the focus was on expanding the club to each of the 11 regions across the state, was completed during the 2021–2022 school year. Following a series of targeted efforts to recruit and virtually train club facilitators across the state in June and July of 2021, the FSPO club successfully expanded its reach from one chapter to four chapters covering the southwest, northwest, Cleveland, and Kent/Akron regions of Ohio. Each chapter was sponsored by regional school psychology associations that hosted eight monthly virtual meetings with undergraduate students attending universities in their region, and maintained a parallel structure to the original pilot club. This year, we also encouraged members to bring a friend to engender feelings of safety. Our regional chapters were led by collaborative groups of university trainers, school psychology graduate students, and practitioners, all of whom are local to the region. This regional model allows for relationship building to occur where students may eventually reside, making mentoring and shadowing of practitioners easier to coordinate. We see this as a key to the club's long-term success in recruiting and retaining school psychologists, particularly those from minoritized backgrounds. Retention of graduate students is an important factor in sustaining the number of practitioners needed in the field going forward.

EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION

To disseminate FSPO as an accessible strategy among many for remedying the

school psychologist shortage, we presented the initiative in several capacities. We provided updates at NASP's Central Region Assistance to States meetings and at the NASP Regional Leadership meeting in January 2022. We also participated in a symposium with the NASP-EP and several other state association leaders at the NASP 2022 Annual Convention in Boston last February.

Given the novelty of FSPO, a program evaluation was warranted to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement of the initiative. A graduate student at the University of Dayton, who served as a member of FSPO's leadership and planning team for the southwest region, conducted a mixed method program evaluation in the spring of 2022. As part of this evaluation, undergraduate student members who were regular attendees were interviewed to gain deeper insight into their experiences with the club and the impact it has had on them.

Six undergraduate student members were interviewed in a semi-structured format, providing valuable insights to improve the club going forward. All interviewees indicated that their time in the club this year was well worth it and that they learned a lot about the field and what it takes to become a school psychologist. When asked about their overall feelings of the club, one interviewee stated, "It's been super helpful because I don't really know anyone else who's in the field that I can like talk to." Among the interviewees' favorite things about the club was the practitioner panel where undergraduate members listened to practitioners from across Ohio discuss the field and what their jobs look like. When referring to the practitioner panel and talking about how helpful it was, one interviewee said, "You get all over the spectrum of what their career has been like, and their highs and lows, and what their day-to-day is."

BARRIERS AND SOLUTIONS

While FSPO has celebrated much success in its implementation to date, barriers have emerged along the way. In order to proactively support FSPO's growth, quarterly meetings were held with all regional chapter leaders and biannual meetings with Ohio's Interuniversity Council of School Psychology Programs to discuss the club's successes, barriers to implementation, and ideas for improvement. In terms of barriers, timely and efficient recruitment of members, cost-effective dissemination of FSPO t-shirts and other SWAG (i.e., laptop stickers, buttons, pop-sockets) to members across multiple universities within the region, the date/time of the Zoom meeting, and issues logging on to the Zoom meeting were experienced by most chapters.

In order to address these barriers, FSPO leadership engaged in a variety of proactive strategies, including:

- Providing chapter leaders with stock emails for university trainers to communicate with other faculty members, in lieu of a graduate student contacting faculty in the same manner. Doing so resulted in greater response rates from undergraduate students interested in joining the club.
- Establishing an email address (fsपो@ospaonline.org) that is monitored by one FSPO member (i.e., a graduate student who connects interested students with their regional chapter representative) and a centralized website (<https://www.ospaonline.org/index.php/early-career/future-school-psychologists-of-ohio>) with links to regional FSPO pages to further ease the process of connecting with, and ultimately joining, a club. Each regional website contains a "Join" button that is monitored by a designated member of each chapter on a weekly basis.
- To assist in timely and cost-effective t-shirt and SWAG dissemination, FSPO asked the t-shirt printing company to send members everything directly, instead of sending both separately. Given the popularity of the t-shirts and laptop stickers, these items will continue to serve as FSPO SWAG in the future.
- In order to best accommodate both undergraduate student members' and facilitators' academic and personal schedules, most Zoom meetings were held in the evening after 7:30 p.m. One chapter even conducted a Doodle poll to determine members' preferred meeting date (i.e., day of the week) and alternated meeting dates each month (i.e., met on Tuesday in January, Wednesday in February, etc.).

NEXT STEPS

Over the past 2 years, we have been excited by the enthusiastic support FSPO has garnered from NASP, state leaders across the country, and OSPA members from across Ohio as we work to expand FSPO's reach. At present, the authors have collaborated with several state association leaders interested in starting a Future School Psychologists organization in their state; for example, Pennsylvania is implementing a future school psychologists club this year. We are also very excited to share that NASP recently featured FSPO on its NASP advocacy sites for recruiting undergraduates (<https://www.nasp.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-psychology/shortages-in-school-psychology-resource-guide/recruitment/recruiting-practitioners/>)

ASHLEY E. SCHWENN, ABSNP, is a school psychologist in Dayton, OH, and a past president of the Ohio School Psychologists Association. CAITLYN M. HANES is a school psychology intern in Waverly, OH. ELANA R. BERNSTEIN, PhD, NCSP, is an assistant professor in the school psychology program at the University of Dayton.

recruiting-undergraduate-students) and high school students (<https://www.nasp.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-psychology/shortages-in-school-psychology-resource-guide/recruitment/recruiting-practitioners/recruiting-secondary/high-school-students>), linking FSPO's website where curriculum materials and information on starting an FSP are easily accessed!

At the state level, FSPO is fortunate to have the continued support of OSPA and FSPO facilitators (faculty members, practitioners and graduate students) and members. Many graduate students and early career professionals have taken on active leadership roles within FSPO. In fact, two early career practitioners and a doctoral graduate student just volunteered and independently hosted FSPO's two trainings for clubs for the 2022–2023 school year. Additionally, OSPA's Early Career Committee has absorbed FSPO and plans to use it as a leadership pipeline in the future. Furthermore, in response to popular demand by practitioners eager to support the initiative, OSPA started selling FSPO t-shirts at state conferences, and offered to donate 40% of the proceeds from the sale to fund future FSPO chapters.

All current regional FSPO clubs are planning for the 2022–2023 school year. Two additional regional associations in central Ohio will work together to form a new FSPO chapter. In the coming year, FSPO will prioritize recruitment and member engagement. FSPO will continue to enact innovative strategies (i.e., making a video summary of FSPO meetings and posting it on various forms of social media, contacting directors of special education, etc.). We also plan to explore assigning members small tasks, encouraging them to present on a topic at meetings, and engaging them in more hands-on or in-person activities throughout the year.

Recruitment of students from minoritized backgrounds. FSPO will also continue to engage in strategic recruitment of individuals from minoritized backgrounds, a key priority of our initiative. We aim to do this via the FSPO mentor program and its newly formed Diversity Recruitment Committee. This committee plans to develop a master list of all university contacts across Ohio, including those representing HBCUs and community colleges. As an outgrowth of collaboration with the NASP-EP and DBESP, the committee includes practitioners from minoritized backgrounds who volunteered to present the NASP-EP materials and talk about FSPO at HBCUs, in university classes focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) issues, and in graduate research classes or events. Additional efforts to recruit and retain students

from minoritized backgrounds include:

- Working toward a goal of 40% of FSPO membership from minoritized backgrounds.
- Ensuring that the club's leaders represent minoritized backgrounds so student members “see themselves” in the field.
- Developing and enacting a microaggression policy.
- Contacting university chairs from a variety of departments (i.e., those focused on DEI issues, offices of disability or career services, etc.) and other professional organizations (e.g., Psi Chi, Undergraduate Research, Pre-educator Programs, Association of Black Psychologists, ethnic programs and services, diversity-focused student organizations) to expand recruitment efforts.
- Focusing on the collective orientation (i.e., family unit) of school psychology training programs.
- Highlighting DEI coursework in school psychology and the opportunity to work with students from minoritized backgrounds and act as social justice agents in the schools.
- Providing opportunities for building résumé writing and interview skills.
- Being visible (e.g., career fairs, hosting volunteer and service activities in high need areas, maintaining a presence on social media).

High school FSPO. We are in the beginning stages of piloting FSPO at the high school level at a large, urban district in southwest Ohio and developing an associated curriculum. The curriculum will highlight school psychology as a profession using NASP-EP materials, practitioner and graduate student panels, and important topics in the field (e.g., disabilities, mental and behavioral health, social justice), and will provide opportunities for mentoring and garnering related experience in educational and community settings. Materials will be made available on FSPO's high school website in June of 2023.

CONTACT US

Check out the FSPO website and follow us on Facebook and Instagram. ■

Reference

Bernstein, E. R., Lockemer, A. E., & Justice, A. F. (2021). Future school psychologists clubs. *Communiqué*, 50(1), 24–25.

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You Are Not Just an Early Career School Psychologist. You Are a Leader!

BY KATYA SUSSMAN-DAWSON, ANDREW SHANOCK, & CATHERINE PERKINS

As we begin a new academic year, teachers, children, and families have a high level of excitement and angst. Many look forward to getting back into a regular routine, being with friends, being in the classroom, and being part of a larger community. However, we know that many routines were and continue to be disrupted by COVID-19: mental health issues in children are on the rise, and too many students have fallen behind academically and socially. Leadership within our schools is more important than ever, and it is a role that school psychologists can proudly take on. Leadership can take on many forms and can occur at all different stages of a career. This article is designed to provide guidance and support for the early career school psychologist on how to exhibit and build their leadership skills. The following contains information as to how to readily get involved at the local, state, and national levels to further hone your leadership skills. Lastly, we will introduce you and encourage you to take advantage of the many resources offered by the NASP Leadership Development Committee (LDC), whose main mission is to develop leadership skills of school psychologists, as well as recruit and identify potential leaders, such as yourselves.

WHAT YOU BRING TO YOUR POSITION

Early career school psychologists are vital to the profession and the field of education. While you may be just starting out, your voice, your ideas, and your perspective has value. When one reviews the NASP Professional Standards, there is much to the role of a school psychologist. To be great at any one of the standards, much less multiple areas all at once, takes time, practice, lots of errors, listening, and learning. However, through your training program you have built a solid base from which to evolve and grow. Your leadership, even in these first few years of an exciting career, is valued and needed.

Initially, we all have practice areas that we are passionate about. It is in those areas that you can begin to engage in leadership to varying degrees. Each small step will have a positive impact, including building your confidence in your skills and abilities. As you gain expertise in an area or areas, you can expand your knowledge base to other practice areas and apply and shape your leadership skills within each new area. While it is true that that there is much to learn and experience, it is also true that you bring a fresh set of eyes and ears to help solve problems, consult, and develop early interventions. You can be a bridge between the research you have learned (or are learning) and the practice within your school district, professional organization, or community agency.

Good leadership at any career stage includes the ability to communicate, motivate, delegate, self-reflect, listen, and elicit feedback. In various instances, leadership can require the courage to forge ahead while knowing you do not have all the answers. This can be difficult, especially if there is a sense of “imposter syndrome,” or a fear

that one’s abilities will be publicly exposed as inadequate. As noted in the NASP Fact Sheet “Recognizing and Overcoming Imposter Syndrome” (<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/early-career-professionals/early-career-resources/recognizing-and-overcoming-impostor-syndrome>), impostor syndrome can negatively impact your self-care, compromise how you are delivering your services as a school psychologist, and even increase your chances of leaving the field altogether. Some features of this syndrome can include negative self talk, comparing oneself to others, and struggling to say no or yes to additional responsibilities. The fact sheet lists ways to address these symptoms and allow yourself to grow into a leadership role, including connecting with positive mentors and colleagues to know that you are not alone and catching yourself in negative talk. (Comedian Sarah Silverman told a story of a colleague who had heard her engage in negative self-talk, upon which the colleague told Sarah, “Stop talking about my friend like that.”) It is also important to be cognizant of workplace environments that foster bias and systemic racism that can cause individuals to feel like imposters. This is where you can be a positive force in advocating for systemic change.

Ultimately, leadership comes in many forms and exhibits itself in different ways. Be patient. Build positive relationships both within and outside the workplace. Be the leader that you would want to follow. As John Quincy Adams noted, “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader.”

OPPORTUNITIES AND AVENUES FOR EARLY CAREER LEADERS

There are a range of volunteer options for early career school psychologists who are interested in leadership roles. The profession of school psychology has opportunities at all systemic levels that allow a variety of stakeholders to have an influential voice in the forward progression of the profession. Despite the many paths to leadership that exist, the majority of entry-level school psychologists express a lack of knowledge about potential leadership opportunities. The list below provides an overview of the multiple leadership roles that are available to early career school psychologists at varying systemic levels. As noted above, be patient. You do not need to do all the things listed. This is simply a place to start, understanding that this list is not exhaustive and other spaces for sharing your voice may be available and appropriate.

University/Program Level

- Act as faculty representative for program’s student association.
- Participate in graduate program panels and talk with current graduate students.
- Serve as a university liaison with state association.
- Model and encourage student participation in state advocacy and social justice efforts.
- Get involved in the NASP Exposure Project and tell undergraduates about the profession: [https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/diversity-and-social-justice/cultural-competence/multicultural-affairs-committee/nasp-exposure-project-\(nasp-ep\)](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/diversity-and-social-justice/cultural-competence/multicultural-affairs-committee/nasp-exposure-project-(nasp-ep))

School/District Level

- Participate on school leadership teams.
- Participate on student intervention teams.
- Actively engage with or run for local school board.
- Provide professional development to school or district.
- Become a site supervisor for practicum or internship students (after 3 years of practice).
- Get involved in the NASP Exposure Project and tell high schoolers about the profession: [https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/diversity-and-social-justice/cultural-competence/multicultural-affairs-committee/nasp-exposure-project-\(nasp-ep\)](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/diversity-and-social-justice/cultural-competence/multicultural-affairs-committee/nasp-exposure-project-(nasp-ep))

State Level

- Join your state association and ask how you can get involved.
- Join your professional union and ask how you can get involved.
- Participate in state legislative advocacy events/activities.

National Level

- Apply to join a NASP committee or reach out to a committee chair/cochair.
- Attend NASP Public Policy Institute: <https://www.nasponline.org/research-and-policy/>
- Present at the NASP convention or write an article for *Communiqué* or other professional publication.

While it is true that that there is much to learn and experience, it is also true that you bring a fresh set of eyes and ears to help solve problems, consult, and develop early interventions. You can be a bridge between the research you have learned and the practice within your school district, professional organization, or community agency.

KATYA SUSSMAN-DAWSON, PhD, NCSP, is the cochair, and Andrew Shanock, PhD, NCSP, and CATHERINE PERKINS, PhD, NASP, are members, of the NASP Leadership Development Committee.

Each leadership role will vary in the level of commitment, responsibility, and time that is required of the individual. Additionally, depending on the leadership opportunity, different skill sets or interests may be highlighted.

FINDING THE LEADER IN YOU

Numerous practices can be implemented to assist early career professionals in enhancing their leadership skills. Whether the work is done at the school, district, state, or national level, school psychologists are continuously engaging in activities that allow for both personal and professional growth. Specifically in the area of leadership, entry level school psychologists have a plethora of opportunities to expand and refine the skills necessary to become effective leaders. The opportunities listed below have been divided into personal level and professional level activities that entry-level school psychology professionals can engage in immediately.

Personal-level activities to enhance leadership

- Become familiar with current research on the skills needed to be an effective leader.
- Identify personal strengths and weaknesses and create a personal plan to advance skills that need further development.
- Explore one's own biases and engage in practices that allow for the possibility to enhance self-awareness and confront prejudices.
- Become a Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) and engage in professional development and continuing education credits to maintain that level of certification.
- Utilize resources available through NASP to refine specific personal skills that will increase one's competency in the area of leadership.
- Identify others that hold common values and interests and engage in networking activities to enhance collaboration and build rapport.

Professional-level activities to enhance leadership

- Present to peers, parents, community partners, or other educators at the school, district, state, or national levels.
- Serve as a guest lecturer in psychology classrooms at the high school, undergraduate, or graduate level.
- Write and submit articles to *Communique* or other professional publications.
- Engage in research or district-wide data collection and share those findings with stakeholders.
- Get involved with your state association by either becoming a part of the board or volunteering for committee work.
- Advocate for the profession and students by contacting and collaborating with legislators, school boards, administrators, counselors, or the state department of education.
- Utilize one's own capital to give those without a voice a space to express their knowledge, views, and beliefs.
- Join school teams and take on an active role on those teams. These teams can include, but are not limited to PBIS, data teams, crisis response teams, leadership teams, etc.

RESOURCES

NASP offers numerous resources for school psychologists interested in professional growth in the area of leadership. In addition to those previously discussed, resources identified here are intended to support early career individuals interested in developing leadership skills and engaging in leadership opportunities at the local, state, or national level.

NASP Leadership Structure (<https://www.nasponline.org/utility/about-nasp/nasp-leadership>)

Become familiar with the leadership structure of the association including information regarding committees and committee chairs.

Leader Resources (<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-psychology/leader-resources>)

This webpage has a range of leadership resources subdivided into categories: Leadership Development, Leadership Through Advocacy, Leadership Through Practice, Tools for State Association Leaders, and Topical Resources for State Leaders.

Get Involved: Want Ads/Volunteer Leadership Opportunities (<https://www.nasp>

[online.org/membership-and-community/get-involved/volunteer-leadership-openings](https://www.nasp.org/membership-and-community/get-involved/volunteer-leadership-openings))

Check out this site for information on current openings on NASP committees. Opportunities to join committees are posted on the Member Exchange in the spring with most appointments beginning July 1.

Interest Groups

The Collaborative Leadership Interest Group provides an opportunity for individuals interested or involved in leadership at the local, state, or national levels to share resources, activities, and ideas related to leadership, and provides support to those seeking assistance to pursue leadership opportunities or looking to enhance their existing leadership skills.

Leadership Development Strand at the Convention

Series of presentations during the annual convention designed to help participants identify and hone their leadership skills. Go to the following website in November for more information: <https://www.nasponline.org/professional-development/nasp-annual-convention-x38308>

Leadership Podcasts (<https://apps.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/podcasts/index.aspx>)

The Pathways to Leadership—Presidential Podcast Series is sponsored by the NASP Leadership Development Committee and hosted by Katherine Campbell, committee member. Association past presidents are interviewed and share their unique pathway to national leadership and service.

The podcast *Leadership in Transforming the Role of School Psychologists* features Chase McCullum, Chair of the Leadership Development Committee, presenting at the NASP convention in 2022.

NASP Leadership Institute (<https://nasp.inreachce.com>)

The Leadership Institute is a five-part online module course offered by the NASP Leadership Development Committee through the Online Learning Center. The course is designed to help school psychologists improve their leadership skills whether they serve in an official leadership role within their district or simply want to improve their ability to impact systems change for an enhanced role. The institute incorporates asynchronous videos with live webinar discussion groups, application activities, and reflection questions. The modules include visionary leadership, ethical leadership, communication, collaboration, and personal engagement.

CONCLUSION

As previously stated, the continued growth of the profession demands identification and support of a diverse group of young leaders who can bring their unique voices to ongoing discussions. The NASP Leadership Development Committee is committed to this effort, and to sharing information relative to pathways to leadership for early career professionals. In this article, we highlight the value you add, opportunities and avenues for leadership for early career school psychologists, personal and professional activities that you might engage in now, and NASP resources that you can begin exploring as you embark on your own leadership journey. ■

COMPLETE YOUR NCSP APPLICATION ONLINE

View a checklist on our website.

NASP  www.nasponline.org/NCSP

The advertisement features a woman in a blue shirt smiling. It includes the text 'COMPLETE YOUR NCSP APPLICATION ONLINE' and 'View a checklist on our website.' The NASP logo is present, along with the URL 'www.nasponline.org/NCSP'. A circular seal for 'National School Psychology Certification' is also visible.

The IDEA Obligation to Evaluate “All Areas” of Suspected Disability

BY PERRY A. ZIRKEL

The purposes of evaluation, as shown in its definition in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act’s (IDEA) regulations (2019, § 300.15), concern eligibility and free appropriate public education (FAPE). For the initial evaluation, the focus of the IDEA legislation is to determine whether the child is eligible and, if so, the nature and extent of the child’s needs as the foundation for FAPE (§ 1414[a][a][C]). For reevaluation, the focus is to determine whether the child continues to be eligible and whether there have been any changes in the child’s individual foundational needs (§ 1414[c][1][B]).

A perplexing requirement for evaluation in the IDEA that has led to an unending line of litigation is the obligation to “assess all areas.” The ambiguous formulation of this requirement in the IDEA legislation (2018) is to assess the child in “all areas of suspected disability” (§ 1414[b][3][B]). The interpretive questions include, for example, whether “areas” in this context is broad, such as additional disability classifications, or narrow, such as particular needs within the suspected classification. The IDEA regulations provide a more detailed formulation that suggests the narrower interpretation. More specifically, the relevant regulation requires assessing the child 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” [emphasis added] (§ 300.304[c][4]). Adding to the interpretive complexity is the information that the formulation in the regulations dates back to 1977, whereas the statutory formulation first appeared in the 1997 amendments (Weber, 2013, p. 299), suggesting that the versions may purposely have overlapping but not the same coverage.

The purpose of this relatively brief, exploratory, and practice-oriented analysis is to examine the focus and other primary features of the federal appeals court rulings to date that are specific to the “all areas” evaluation obligation. The reasons for the choice of federal appellate case law are that these decisions (a) amount to a manageable critical mass, (b) have high precedential weight (albeit to a more limited extent for those that are not officially published), and (c) cover broad multistate regions. However, they represent the proverbial tip of the iceberg as compared to the lower court decisions, hearing and review of officer decisions, and settlements that ex-

PERRY A. ZIRKEL is university professor emeritus of education law at Lehigh University. He shares his work in special education law, including his publications, a monthly legal update, and special supplements, via his website (perryzirkel.com).

DATA COLLECTION

The procedure for data collection consisted of two successive steps: (a) a Boolean search of the Westlaw electronic database that included both the statutory and regulatory versions of the “all areas” evaluation requirement and that applied to federal appellate cases, and (b) selection among the resulting cases for those that both contained a ruling specific to the “all areas” evaluation obligation and were not “pure” child find cases. Thus, the primary exclusions were cases that mentioned assessing “all areas” but were resolved on threshold adjudicative grounds, such as statute of limitations or exhaustion of administrative remedies, or limited to subsequent adjudicative issues, such as remedies or attorneys’ fees (e.g., *Jodlowski v. Valley View Community Unit School District*, 1997). Also excluded were cases that mentioned the “all areas” requirement that fit instead within the usual (herein referred to as “pure”) meaning of child find (e.g., *C.M. v. Department of Education*, 2012), which is the ongoing obligation to initiate an initial evaluation within a reasonable period of time upon reasonable suspicion of eligibility (e.g., Zirkel, 2017, 2020). In contrast, in these cases the child had an IEP and initial eligibility was not at all at issue. Instead, fitting under an unofficial rubric of “partial child find,” the issue was whether the evaluation, whether it was initial or reevaluation, met the “all areas” requirement.

CASE LAW RESULTS

The federal appellate decisions that met the selection criteria are listed in chronological order in Table 1. The column headings identify the case name and the rest of the citation, the child’s undisputed eligibility, the area or areas at issue, and the court’s ruling for this issue. More specifically, in the same order of the columns, (a) the citation included the circuit and, via asterisks, whether the decision was not officially published; (b) the classification abbreviations were ED=emotional disturbance, OHI=other health impairment (including but not limited to ADHD=attention deficit hyperactive disorder), SLD=specific learning disability, and SLI=speech or language impairment; and (c) the ruling was in favor of the parents (P) or the school district (SD). The comments column summarized the court’s approach to its ruling, includ-

Table 1. Federal Appellate Rulings Specific to the “All Areas” Evaluation Obligation

Case Name	Case Citation (court + year)	Child’s eligibility	Area(s) at issue	Ruling for	Clarifying Comments
Park v. Anaheim Union High Sch. Dist.	464 F.3d 1025 (9th Cir. 2006)	OHI?	hearing +vision	SD	no procedural violation – vision and hearing assessments were sufficient [marginal]
N.B. v. Hellgate Elementary Sch. Dist.	541 F.3d 1202 (9th Cir. 2008)	SLI	autism	P	district had undisputed suspicion but put the evaluation burden on the parents – procedural violation that denied FAPE
Fort Osage R-1 Sch. Dist. v. Simas	641 F.3d 996 (8th Cir. 2011)	OHI	autism	SD	even if procedural violation, the IEP met the needs-based substantive standard for FAPE
Phyllene W. v. Huntsville City Sch. Bd.	630 F. App’x 917 (11th Cir. 2015)*	SLD	hearing impairment	P	district had requisite notice – procedural violation that resulted in IEP lacked necessary substantive elements
Timothy O. v. Paso Robles Unified Sch. Dist.	822 F.3d 1105(9th Cir. 2016)	SLI	autism	P	district had requisite notice – procedural violation that resulted in requisite loss to both the parents and the student
Avila v. Spokane Sch. Dist. 81	686 F. App’x 384(9th Cir. 2017)*	autism	dyslexia + dysgraphia	SD	district sufficiently evaluated reading and writing (under SLD rubric) – no procedural violation
S.P. v. E. Whittier City Sch. Dist.	735 F. App’x 320 (9th Cir. 2018)*	SLI	hearing impairment	P	procedural violation that denied FAPE (w/o explanation) (cursory affirmance) [marginal]
Butte Sch. Dist. v. C.S.	817 F. App’x 321 (9th Cir. 2020)*	autism + ED	SLD	SD	parental refusal to consent and, in any event, harmless procedural error; IEP appropriately addressed the child’s needs [marginal]
Amanda P. v. Copperas Cove Indep. Sch. Dist.	838 F. App’x 104 (5th Cir. 2021)*	OHI+SLI	SLD	SD	no procedural violation and, even if so, no resulting substantive harm (cursory affirmance) [marginal]
Crofts v. Issaquah Sch. Dist.	22 F.4th 1048 (9th Cir. 2022)	SLD	dyslexia	SD	no procedural violation for using SLD rather than dyslexia – IEP met substantive standard for FAPE
N.F. v. Antioch Unified Sch. Dist.	81 IDELR ¶ 6 (9th Cir. 2022)*	OHI	SLI + autism	SD	no procedural violation (including delays beyond district’s control and defaults via parents’ actions)
Heather H. v. Nw. Indep. Sch. Dist.	81 IDELR ¶ 32 (5th Cir. 2022)*	autism	ED	SD	no procedural violation: not requisite notice and, even if so, sufficient assessment of anxiety and behavior
Minnetonka Pub. Schs. v. M.L.K.	42 F.4th 847(8th Cir. 2022)	autism	dyslexia + ADHD	SD	evaluation included reading and attention w/o formal diagnoses – even if violation, the IEP met substantive standard for FAPE*

* not officially published (thus, less precedential weight)

ing whether this issue within the case was relatively marginal or the court's analysis of this issue was rather cursory.

As an overall matter, Table 1 reveals that 13 appellate decisions included a ruling specific to the "all areas" evaluation obligation. The second column shows that the Ninth Circuit, which encompasses the nine states in the far West, including Alaska and Hawaii, accounted for the majority (n=78) of the decisions and that the frequency has increased in recent years. The third column reveals that the child's previously established eligibility was among five classifications, led by autism and SLI. The fourth column shows that the "areas" in dispute were amounted to either additional classifications, such as SLD, or major diagnoses within an IDEA classification, such as dyslexia. The fifth column reveals that the outcomes distribution of the relevant rulings were: four (31%) for parents and nine (69%) for school districts, with the prodistrict skew more pronounced in the most recent few years. Finally, the comments column shows that in every case, the court used the two-step analysis for procedural FAPE, as applicable in pure child find cases and which requires (a) a procedural violation, and, if so, (b) a resulting loss in terms of either the child's right to substantive FAPE or the parents' opportunity for meaningful participation.

The table does not include two other significant findings. First, all of these appellate rulings relied on the statutory version of the "all areas" evaluation obligation. A few of the cases additionally mentioned the version in the IDEA regulations either directly or via reference to a state special education regulation that repeated the same language, but none of the rulings discussed or applied the narrowed scope of this version in comparison to the broad statutory version upon which they all relied.

Second, although a few of the cases peripherally mentioned "child find" and none specifically referred to what I have translated as "partial" child find, they indirectly applied the underlying two-step harmless-error analysis by referring at step 1 to the requisite "notice" that equates to reasonable suspicion or by focusing on the step 2 ultimate issue of FAPE, usually in terms of whether the IEP addressed the child's dispute needs according to the applicable substantive standard.

LEGAL INTERPRETATION

At least for the federal appellate rulings, which account for the primary but not total framework of judicial precedents for the "all areas" obligation, the predominant approach is to follow the broad-based focus of the statutory formulation, which amounts to what may be thought of as a partial child find approach. More specifically, these decisions start with a step 1 determination of whether the district had reasonable suspicion of possible additional eligibility of the child either as a classification, such as SLD, or a major diagnostic indicator, such as dyslexia, and, if so, whether the district sufficiently addressed this additional area upon reevaluation. If the court determines or the parties effectively stipulate that the school district violated step 1, then the court determines whether it resulted in the requisite step 2 loss of FAPE, usually by applying the substantive standard for FAPE to the child's IEP although occasionally by addressing whether the violation significantly impeded the parents' opportunity for meaningful participation in the IEP process.

The subsidiary findings in the successive columns of the table are not particularly surprising. For example, the Ninth Circuit is one of the most active federal regions of IDEA judicial activity (e.g., Karanxha & Zirkel, 2014), and its early appellate decisions provided an initially hospitable home for parents' procedural claims (e.g., *Amanda J. v. Clark County School District*, 2001, p. 895). Similarly, the approximately 2:1 outcomes ratio in favor of school districts reasonably aligns with judicial rulings more generally for child find cases (e.g., Zirkel, 2017, 2020) and for overall IDEA cases (e.g., Karanxha & Zirkel, 2014), especially in considering variations in time periods, outcome scales, and units of analysis.

Nevertheless, an occasional case seemed to present the narrower and potentially in-depth interpretation of the "all areas" obligation. For example, in the more straightforward evaluation decision in *J.W. v. Fresno Unified School District* (2010), the Ninth Circuit denied the parents' request for reimbursement of their independent educa-

tional evaluation, ruling that the district's reevaluations of a child with hearing impairment or deafness adequately assessed the child's audition skills. It may be that a more comprehensive analysis extending to lower court decisions will reveal some blurry boundaries and variations to the partial child find approach of these appellate rulings.

PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS

Understanding that court rulings typically represent an individually varying but relatively low level for the minimum legal requirements, practitioners have ample professional latitude to choose among proactive best practices that take into consideration local resources and culture. Knowing that litigation will most likely analyze the "all areas" criterion for evaluation in a rather holistic and unnuanced two-step approach, school psychologists should determine the scope and depth of their IDEA evaluations in accordance with their higher professional norms. In cases of potential dispute, they should appropriately explain to parents, other members of the IEP team, the service providers, and the district administrators the difference between legal requirements and their professional recommendations in a mutually respectful way that includes listening and learning. Thus, the ultimate focus is on collaborative, effective practice rather than preoccupation with the often misconceived perceptions of case law. ■

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Understanding that court rulings typically represent an individually varying but relatively low level for the minimum legal requirements, practitioners have professional latitude to choose among best practices that take into consideration local resources and culture.

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Effective Communication Strategies for New Teams

BY ALEXANDRA FRANKS-THOMAS

Change in our role as school psychologists is inevitable. Regulations, policies, assessments, office locations, and legal precedents evolve throughout our career regardless of whether you are starting your career in the field or you are a 30-year veteran. Often, the most subtle change that can impact our role is the change of team members. School psychologists are well connected in school and district communities and may consult or collaborate with just about everyone: school and district administrators, family and community members, general education and special education teachers, and related service providers such as speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, audiologists, nurses—the list goes on! Therefore, it is critical for school psychologists to have effective communication strategies, specifically when a new team forms, whether it is a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, a building-level positive behavior intervention and support team, or a district-wide multitiered system of supports team.

Professional communication, consultation, and collaboration are key components of effective school psychological practice and are embedded within the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Practice Model within both an organizational principle and domain of practice. As a consistent team member at the student, building, and district level, school psychologists are critical to ensuring “that policies and practices exist that result in positive, proactive communication among employees at all administrative levels” (NASP, 2020).

Each new team member brings with them a unique and exclusive perspective based on their experiences in training and professional experience. Welcoming new team members informally prior to any meetings or work can help to build a collegial relationship and to learn about their experiences and potential perspectives on the task at hand. Additionally, school psychologists may benefit by asking new team members specifically about how they have previously worked with school psychologists and what they may need from you. While school psychologists may all have similar training, our profession is utilized differently across districts and states; a new speech-language pathologist may have previously worked with a school psychologist purely in an assessment role, while a new special education teacher may be used to developing an IEP with counseling services provided by a school psychologist. Learning about team members' past experiences will help to establish roles and avoid any potential miscommunication or frustrations about your current role as a school psychologist should it not align with their expectations (NASP, 2019).

School psychologists can effectively support team efforts by ensuring that all team members have consistent, accurate, timely, and reliable information to support their processes. Knoster and colleagues (2000) explain that sustainable change and successful implementation require consistent and accurate information on the vision, skills, incentives, resources, and plan needed. Without all of these factors, team members may experience confusion, anxiety, or frustration, among other challenges. Effective communication of this information can be homed in on by school

psychologists who understand the type of information needed by team members, how detailed the information needs to be, and how to best convey the message. Team members' availability and communication preferences are important pieces to note when establishing working relationships. Related service providers may work at multiple locations around the building and prefer email correspondence, while a parent team member may have limited internet access and may best access information through phone calls or notes sent home with a student. Additionally, school psychologists should be thoughtful about how to structure or word information to be communicated to team members by communicating at an accessible level and potentially reducing field-specific terminology. Teams who will be regularly meeting will benefit from consistent meeting times, agenda, and meeting norms or agreements. School psychologists can draw upon effective collaboration skills to set up effective meeting or teaming structures and work to ensure consistency of agreed upon meeting procedures.

Team members' availability and communication preferences are important pieces to note when establishing working relationships. Related service providers may work at multiple locations around the building and prefer email correspondence, while a parent team member may have limited internet access and may best access information through phone calls or notes sent home with a student. Additionally, school psychologists should be thoughtful about how to structure or word information to be communicated to team members by communicating at an accessible level and potentially reducing field-specific terminology. Teams who will be regularly meeting will benefit from consistent meeting times, agenda, and meeting norms or agreements. School psychologists can draw upon effective collaboration skills to set up effective meeting or teaming structures and work to ensure consistency of agreed upon meeting procedures.

School psychologists are often the unsung heroes that hold teams and systems in place through skilled communication and collaboration. The NASP Practice Model acknowledges that these practices, sometimes referred to as soft skills, are critical to ensuring a systematic and comprehensive process of effective decision-making and problem-solving (NASP, 2020). Building a solid foundation with new team members can go a long way to ensure positive outcomes for children, families, and communities regardless of whether the team meets for an hour, a week, a month, or for years. ■

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National School Psychology Week: Sharing How You Shine

BY KELILA ROTTO

Happy November! By now you have been back in school for a while, and the “shiny” newness of the school year may be fading a bit. The excitement and energy that marks the first weeks of school naturally wanes a few months in, a reality that may feel particularly true this year as most of us are still coping with the consequences of the past few challenging years. What better time to look forward to the positive light of National School Psychology Week (NSPW), coming November 7–11. The theme, “Together We Shine,” recognizes that people's individual strengths are essential to their personal growth and resilience and that we are better able collectively to find hope and possibility when we come together and combine those strengths for a common purpose and the good of the whole.

Although NSPW is just around the corner, it's not too late to take advantage of the

Make Your Voice Heard on Advocacy Action Day

Be sure to participate in Advocacy Action Day, Wednesday November 9, 2022. Your advocacy is more critical than ever as we prepare for next year's congressional and state legislative sessions. We have a few brief steps you can take to make a difference—and they shouldn't take more than 5 minutes of your time. Learn more at [https://www.nasponline.org/research-and-policy/advocacy/national-school-psychology-week-\(nspw\)/advocacy-action-day](https://www.nasponline.org/research-and-policy/advocacy/national-school-psychology-week-(nspw)/advocacy-action-day)

many resources NASP has online to help you shine a light on the vital work you do to help students thrive in school, in their communities, and at home. While we have many concrete suggestions for getting engaged during the week, feel free to be creative and adapt NSPW resources to be most impactful in your schools and communities. You know the best ways to connect the activities and concepts with your school, and we look forward to seeing what you do.

NSPW IN SCHOOLS

Through the NSPW homepage ([nasponline.org/nspw](https://www.nasponline.org/nspw)), practitioners can find counseling activities that support students' abilities to build connections, identify and grow their

strengths, and practice gratitude as a way to bring people together. Suggested classroom activities help create dialogue among students, while the Student POWER award recognizes individual students' efforts and growth, but can also include an emphasis on how they contribute to the wider school community. The Possibilities in Action Partner program is a great way to increase positive relationships among adults in the school community by recognizing those who, either through their own efforts or by encouraging the efforts of others, make an exceptional difference in the lives of students and families by supporting the possibilities within each student. Additionally, there are suggested school-wide activities to connect with students, invite advocates to schools, and create school-wide announcements sharing what the theme "Together We Shine" means and how it can empower all students.

NSPW IN THE COMMUNITY

While much of practitioners' work is focused within the school building, we also suggest that you share more widely with your community the many ways in which school psychologists contribute to positive outcomes for students, families, and schools. Use the customizable sample letter to send to administrators and school board members to raise awareness about NSPW and the role of school psychologists in your schools. You can also work with your district's communications department or pub-

lic information officer to disseminate information of your school's NSPW activities to local media using an adaptable press release. We have these and more resources available on the NASP website ([https://www.nasponline.org/research-and-policy/advocacy/national-school-psychology-week-\(nspw\)/sample-resources](https://www.nasponline.org/research-and-policy/advocacy/national-school-psychology-week-(nspw)/sample-resources)).

NSPW ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Also take this time to share how you shine with your fellow school psychologists. You inspire us, and we want to see what you are doing for National School Psychology Week! If you are on social media, take a photo or video and show the highlights of your week and use #schoolpsychweek on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram and tag us @nasponline. Some ideas to share include: pictures of your NSPW posters and bulletin boards, activities you share with students, a message of support from your school or district, and messages to colleagues and mentors you admire in the profession.

Follow NASP (@nasponline) on social media to stay up to date with updates about National School Psychology Week and new resources, and to engage in advocacy during the week.

Questions or comments can be sent to NASP Director of Communications, Kathy Cowan (kcowan@naspweb.org). ■

KELILA ROTTO is NASP Manger for Communications and Social Media.

Elections

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]

ing must be positive, and candidates will have several opportunities to make personal statements to the membership through postings on the NASP website and emails sent by NASP. As long as candidates meet specified submission deadlines, NASP sends personal statements to the membership for all officer and delegate candidates.

Candidates and their supporters may contact any member about the election. Individual contact is the preferred method of campaigning whether in person, by phone, or via email. However, written electronic communications may include more than one email address as long as the blind carbon copy (or "bcc") option is used and recipients cannot see who else is copied on the email. It is important to mention that candidates and supporters may not use Listservs, NASP Communities, social networking (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram), or broadcast telephone messages to campaign. We also ask that state associations not endorse any specific candidate. However, it is very much appreciated when state associations encourage participation in NASP elections. If you have a question or are uncertain about a campaign activity, please contact the Nominations and Elections Committee through the chairperson (brock@csus.edu) before implementing the activity.

As you will see listed below, this year's published ballot includes three races (Alabama, Colorado, and Wisconsin delegate) with more than two candidates. In these situations, NASP uses a ranked choice voting system. Winning an election requires 50% + 1 of all valid votes. Thus, when there are more than two candidates you are asked to rank candidates in order of preference (1st choice, 2nd choice, 3rd choice, etc.). If after initial voting one candidate gets 50% + 1 or more of all valid first-choice votes, that candidate is declared the winner. If no candidate receives 50% + 1 of first-choice votes, the candidate with the lowest number of first-choice votes is eliminated and ballots cast for this candidate are redistributed to the higher rank candidates (the second choice votes offered by the eliminated candidate's voters are assigned to the remaining candidates). This process is repeated until one candidate has 50%+1 of the votes.

This year's election begins on January 4, 2023, at 8:00 a.m., and closes at 5:00 p.m. on January 25, 2023 (Eastern time). Members will be sent email reminders to vote online. If you have any questions about voting procedures, please consult elections@naspweb.org. And remember, every vote counts!

Individuals who self-nominated for a NASP leadership role (by the September 15, 2022, deadline) and whose names will appear on the ballot are as follows (with the exception of elections with three or more candidates, write-in votes are allowed):

ABOUT THE CANDIDATES

Shawna Rader Kelly (MT)

Shawna Rader Kelly is a school psychologist in Bozeman, Montana. She has worked as an adjunct professor, served state association leadership and as NASP Delegate and Delegate Representative. Shawna is a Strategic Liaison on the NASP Board of Directors. In 2017, Shawna was recognized as NASP School Psychologist of the Year.

Peter Faustino (NY)

Dr. Peter Faustino has worked in public schools for over 25 years. He serves on NASP's Board of Directors, is a Regional Representative of GPR, and previously was NASP's Autism Interest Group Coordinator. Peter has led his home state as President, NASP Delegate, and in several other positions since graduate school.

Karen Apgar (OR)

Currently NASP Secretary, Dr. Apgar previously served as Western Delegate Representative to the NASP Board and NASP Delegate for Oregon. She is her district's school psychological services coordinator and crisis response lead. She also teaches graduate research methods and writing. Dr. Apgar enjoys researching genealogy and talking about her kids.

Sarah Lerch (IN)

My name is Sarah Lerch and I am from Portage, Indiana. I am married and have two dogs. I have two nieces who are a big part of my life. My school psychology passions include MTSS, autism, and mentorship. I am the 2022 Indiana School Psychologist of the Year.

President-Elect Candidate (Term: President-Elect, July 1, 2023–2024; President, 2024–2025, Past President, 2025–June 30, 2026)

Shawna Rader Kelly (MT), Peter Faustino (NY)

Secretary Candidates (Term: July 1, 2023–June 30, 2026)

Karen Apgar (OR), Sarah Lerch (IN)

State Delegate Candidates (Term: July 1, 2023–June 30, 2026):

CENTRAL REGION

Illinois**

**Carrie Emrikson
Tiffani A. Farrow**

Iowa

Teresa Moery

Michigan

Jim Corr

Minnesota*

Annie Hansen-Burke

Wisconsin**

**Brooke Soupenne
James LeDuc**

NORTHEAST REGION

Maine

Mary MacLennan

New Hampshire

Kate O. Salvati

Pennsylvania

David Lillenstein

Rhode Island

Erica Perkins

SOUTHEAST REGION

Alabama

**Stephanie Corcoran
Tricia Daniel
Laneaka Turner-Miller**

Georgia

Susan Bryant

Louisiana*

Brandon Wilks

Mississippi**

Rachel Mitchell

WESTERN REGION

Colorado

**Sarah K. Killion
Morgan Bruss
Julie Bolding**

Montana

Andy Mogan

New Mexico

Isai Navarrete

Wyoming

Keri Prichard

*incumbent terming out

**incumbent not running

STEPHEN E. BROCK, PhD, NCSP, is chair of the NASP Nominations and Elections Committee.

Grade Retention and Social Promotion

Repeating a grade level for the second time (i.e., grade retention) has been a long-standing practice in public schools in the United States. Despite its frequent use, the practice of retaining students who fail to meet grade level standards has limited empirical support. However, simply promoting students to the next grade when they have not mastered the curriculum of their current grade (i.e., social promotion) is not an educationally sound alternative. For these reasons, the debate over the dichotomy between grade retention and social promotion must be replaced with efforts to identify and disseminate evidence-based practices that promote academic success for students who struggle behaviorally, whose academic skills are below grade-level standards, or who demonstrate chronic absenteeism. NASP urges educators to consider the long-term costs of retention for students and to use other strategies such as multitiered systems of supports (MTSS; Shinn & Walker, 2012), an individualized plan of study for struggling students (Meador, 2018), or early educational interventions, as these have greater potential to positively affect both long-term educational achievement and employment successes (Peguero et al., 2021).

RATIONALE

Grade retention in American schools has a long history characterized by fluctuations in the frequency and application of this educational practice. Nationally, approximately 2% of all students were retained in 2016 (de Brey et al., 2019) and 10% of students report having repeated a grade at some point (Goos et al., 2021; Planty et al., 2009). However, given the recent trend in many states requiring retention of third graders not reading at grade level (National Conference of State Legislatures [NCSL], 2019), it is likely retention rates will increase. It is also critical to note that there is evidence of significant ethnic and racial disparities in retention rates. Both Black and Hispanic students are retained at higher rates than their White peers (de Brey et al., 2019; Peguero et al., 2021). This is the case regardless of school characteristics, such as availability of school resources or whether the school is in an urban, suburban, or rural community (Peguero et al., 2021). Overrepresentation has also been documented among retained students for both English learners (e.g., Buckmaster, 2019; Duran, 2008) and those with learning disabilities (e.g., Barnett et al., 1996). Research does not indicate benefit for these groups; in fact, retention is associated with high drop-out rates in English learners and does not positively impact their language development (Buckmaster, 2019). A paucity of research is available regarding the impact of retention on American Indian, Pacifica Islander, and Alaskan Native students. Clearly, additional retention research is needed with a broader range of minoritized populations.

Furthermore, social promotion has received much less attention in the literature than retention, as statistics are more readily available for the practice of retaining students. In fact, virtually no statistics are kept on the practice of social promotions (Thompson & Cunningham, 2000).

Goos et al. (2021) summarized a number of potential disadvantages of grade retention. These include simple repetition of content without adequate cognitive stimulation, negative impact on social-emotional well-being (e.g., self-concept, self-confidence, academic motivation, behavior, and interpersonal relationships), and the extra costs associated with retention to both families and the government. Given these potential disadvantages, examination of the actual effects of retention is critical.

Most studies conducted over the past 4 decades on the effectiveness of grade retention fail to support its efficacy in remediating academic deficits (e.g., Andrew, 2014; Fruehwirth et al., 2016). However, many of these studies had methodological weaknesses, such as a lack of random assignment to retention and nonretention groups and a failure to adequately control for preexisting differences between retained and promoted students. Such factors may affect students' academic and social-emotional trajectories. Consequently, some researchers question if preexisting vulnerabilities—rather than retention—are at the root of poor postretention outcomes (e.g., Wu et al., 2008). Such premorbid factors include family poverty, limited English proficiency, low cognitive competence or low achievement, and poor learning-related skills (Bowman-Perrott et al., 2010; Hughes et al., 2018).

Consistent with this possibility, recent studies using more rigorous methods to control for preexisting vulnerabilities are less likely to report negative effects or to report different types of impacts for various student groups, such as those from mar-

ginalized backgrounds (e.g., Allen et al., 2009; Hinojosa et al., 2019; Hong & Yu, 2008; Hughes et al., 2010; Hughes et al., 2018; Mariano et al., 2018; Wu et al., 2008). Nevertheless, in general, findings from more recent studies examining the academic and psychosocial impact of retention have been mixed at best. For example, in a meta-analysis of 84 studies conducted by Goos et al. (2021), 35% of effects were found to be significantly negative, 41% were nonsignificant, and 24% of effects were significantly positive. The studies included in this meta-analysis used more rigorous methodology than prior reviews. Based on the data, the authors concluded that in general, grade retention has no (positive or negative) effect on development. It is important to note, however, that most studies examining the effects of retention on academic achievement have focused on the practice in elementary schools, despite the fact that a greater percentage of high school students are retained, primarily because of the failure to attain the credits necessary for graduation (1.9% versus 2.3%; de Brey et al., 2019).

Although evidence concerning short-term impacts of grade retention has been mixed, the long-term impacts for students who are retained are concerning. There is evidence to suggest that students who are retained have higher rates of special education placement, absenteeism, suspensions, and dropping out (Goos et al., 2021; Hughes et al., 2018; Jacob & Lefgren, 2009; Stearns et al., 2007). The likelihood of students with disabilities dropping out of school also substantially increases when they have been retained, with the odds increasing as much as 33% for those with learning disabilities and 73% for those with emotional and behavioral disorders (Reschly & Christenson, 2006). Moreover, retained students from minoritized backgrounds have disproportionately lower school completion rates compared with White students who have been retained (Hughes et al., 2018). Notably, the negative effects of retention appear to carry over beyond the pre-K–12 years, with retained students less likely to enroll in any type of postsecondary education and more likely to have lower socioeconomic status and receive governmental financial assistance (Goos et al., 2021).

Given the considerable risks and lack of documented effectiveness of grade retention, as well as the considerable evidence that targeted interventions help struggling students improve their academic performance and improve attendance (Peguero et al., 2021), schools should consider alternatives to grade retention that target the specific needs of students who are struggling socially, emotionally, behaviorally, or academically.

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

Although there are multiple reasons why students may be retained, failure to master grade-level academic skills is the primary reason (Picklo & Christenson, 2005). Children may also be retained because of a lack of social competence or immaturity (Hong & Yu, 2008; Renaud, 2013). Chronic absenteeism is also a significant risk factor for academic failure (Bartholomay & Houlihan, 2014) and retention. Regardless, students whose performance is substantially below that of their grade-level peers need a culturally responsive, intensive, individualized intervention plan with frequent progress monitoring (Stevenson & Reed, 2017). Consistent with an MTSS, a targeted approach that addresses students' academic, social, and mental health challenges and links specific evidence-based interventions to a student's individual needs is recommended (Shinn & Walker, 2012). Such an approach requires data-based decision making.

School psychologists can participate in the assessment of student needs, facilitate the development of individualized learning plans, and support teachers with implementing classroom interventions and progress monitoring. Learning plans should include involvement of specialists and relevant related services providers as indicated by need. School psychologists are also well positioned to create interventions that address the underlying causes associated with learning difficulties and truancy and provide direct counseling or teacher and parent consultation to decrease difficulties that may be connected to chronic absenteeism, learning challenges, and mental health issues. The implementation of MTSS may also result in a referral to special education if learning difficulties are suspected to be a function of an underlying disability and appropriate progress is not being made with tiered support.

NASP encourages school psychologists to actively collaborate with other professionals by assuming leadership roles in their school districts to implement models of service delivery that ensure:

- Equitable learning opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds
- Universal screening for academic, behavioral, and social-emotional difficulties
- Culturally relevant and trauma-informed approaches to education that support the development of key academic and social-emotional competencies
- Multitiered systems of support models with frequent progress monitoring to provide early, intensive, evidence-based instruction and intervention to meet the needs of all students across academic, behavioral, and social-emotional domains

Furthermore, NASP urges schools to maximize students' opportunities to learn both in and outside of school through effective teacher professional development on research-based curricula and interventions. Additionally, schools are encouraged to implement strategies such as the use of research-based interventions during the school day, individualized tutoring, after-school and summer programs, and more intensive interventions for struggling students that target specific academic weaknesses (Jimerson et al., 2005), as well as behavioral and mental health needs. School psychologists should also develop opportunities for parent collaboration through which information regarding retention and more effective alternatives can be shared. Given that parent involvement in interventions may improve outcomes (Jimerson et al., 2006), such collaboration may be helpful in effectively supporting students at risk for academic failure.

Should retention be considered despite the lack of evidence of its efficacy, the retention year should not be a simple repeat of instruction and content; instead, retained students should receive enhanced instruction that accelerates learning in the areas in which they lag and challenging curricula in the areas where they are skilled (Goos et al., 2021). It is critical that systematic and targeted assessment be used to identify both the specific areas in which the student is struggling and the underlying causes of these challenges so that instruction and supports can address student needs.

SUMMARY

Whereas the effects of social promotion have been sorely underinvestigated, the practice of grade retention has significant limitations. In general, this strategy does not yield positive outcomes for students (Andrew, 2014), particularly in the long term. Continuing to implement retention without research support for this approach is costly and ineffective. Moreover, there is evidence that retention is disproportionately used with students of color, those with disabilities, and English learners. This practice may contribute to further negative outcomes, such as dropping out of school. Given that some states now require retention of elementary school students whose reading scores are below standards (NCSL, 2019), it is important for school psychologists to advocate at the local, state, and national levels to raise awareness regarding the potential negative outcomes associated with retention. MTSS is an evidence-based strategy that can be used in lieu of retention to address underlying academic weaknesses and social-emotional difficulties (Jimerson & Renshaw, 2012). Furthermore, school psychologists are in a position to share information with parents, administrators, and lawmakers regarding the potential negative outcomes associated with retention. School psychologists are urged to work with their school systems and legislators to consider the underlying disparities and challenges that undermine the development and demonstration of academic and social-emotional competencies that are key to success in school. Investing in trauma-informed approaches, early childhood and early intervention programs, and evidence-based, school-wide programs that provide a seamless set of supports across classrooms and intervention tiers is recommended. Using existing structures such as response to intervention and positive behavioral interventions and supports facilitate the type of problem solving and progress monitoring approaches needed (Jimerson & Renshaw, 2012). Such strategies will help all students receive interventions designed to address areas of identified need in order to promote student success.

RELATED RESOURCES

Additional information concerning grade retention and social promotion practices can be found in the following two NASP documents:

- *Grade Retention and Social Promotion* (White Paper)
- *Integrated Model of Academic and Behavioral Supports* (Position Statement)

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EARLY CAREER SPOTLIGHT

A Focus on MTSS

Q&A WITH ABIGAIL DIXON

Abigail Dixon is a school psychologist with the Richland-Bean Blossom Community School Corporation, Ellettsville, Indiana, providing a comprehensive array of services to her students and families. In this article, she shares some of her experiences at this point in her career.

How did you adjust to becoming a new school psychologist during the COVID-19 pandemic? What contributed to your success?

My internship year was cut short with the first round of lockdowns, which forced me to quickly pivot and utilize the technology that was available. I took advantage of the extra time at home to participate in as many online trainings as possible, lean into the experience and advice of my mentors/supervisors, and discover virtual platforms to stay connected with students. Once I was working as an independent psychologist, I continued to use the knowledge of the school psychology team in my district. I met regularly with my team to coordinate student supports and align our goals to keep students engaged even throughout the changing school schedule.

How have you gotten involved with MTSS implementation in your schools? What recommendations do you have for other school psychologists who want to help improve MTSS implementation in their settings?

My first year out of graduate school I

joined a team working on the Trauma-Informed Multi-tiered Systems of Support (TIMS) Grant, which enabled me to engage in the multitiered systems of support implementation process in my district. The collaborative training grant was written to connect Indiana University and Richland-Bean Blossom schools to increase the school psychology presence in the district, improve student functioning (mental health, achievement, and discipline), and improve the district's knowledge of trauma-informed practices. Working for a grant-based team, I am able to fully engage in developing and expanding the MTSS implementation in my schools. As a new psychologist, I learned the key to improving any system in a school is to first build relationships with your colleagues and learn as much as possible about the systems that are already in place. Change can be uncomfortable and impossible if you are not working as a team, so continually connecting with key team members and moving toward a mutually agreed upon plan is crucial. Additionally, having each colleague work within their area of strength can help the MTSS implementation be more efficient and beneficial to students. Once new



district-wide MTSS implementation, and conduct special education evaluations. My schedule looks different each day, which provides for a challenging but rewarding experience. I use research and look to my mentors to help develop skills and systems in all these areas. As an early career school psychologist, I have learned that trust-based relationships with colleagues, students, and parents is necessary prior to making any progress toward a goal, especially when working to support a community with a trauma-informed focus. Another key to being successful is using technology to keep my schedule efficient and to organize my intervention materials and data.

What specific aspects of NASP membership have benefited you in your career thus far? Why is membership in NASP important to you?

While the grant I work under is focused on increasing the presence of school psychologists in my district, it can still be a lonely field at times. In a district of hundreds of employees, there are a handful of individuals who truly understand my perspective as a school psychologist. NASP membership has allowed me to connect with other individuals who share a similar vision and focus. I regularly look to the online forums to get updated information on the field and current research to help improve my skills and knowledge. I particularly utilize the online resources and handouts to share with colleagues and parents on specialized topics. Lastly, I can't leave out the conferences, whether they are in person or virtual; I enjoy the opportunity to connect with like-minded peers and grow in my knowledge of the field. ■

systems are in place, data collection is an essential component to analyzing the effectiveness and fidelity of the MTSS implementation process. MTSS implementation continues to improve as research and school communities change, so it is important for the MTSS leadership team to make adjustments as the systems evolve.

Tell us more about your role. What is it like to wear many hats as a school psychologist? What are keys to your success with this?

My role under the TIMS grant allows me to experience many facets of school psychology. I provide direct social, emotional, and behavioral interventions to students both in individual and group settings, provide crisis support for behavioral and mental health needs, directly collaborate and consult with teachers, work within a systems approach to plan for the school-wide and

Midcareer Move

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]

practitioner before moving into a school psychologist trainer role. Therefore, another career choice for doctoral school psychologists is to accept a position in the public-school setting upon graduation to gain experience as a practitioner before a move to academia later in their career.

The authors of this article both worked for several years (8 and 7 years respectively) within school settings before transitioning to higher education during the COVID-19 pandemic, accepting positions in academia for the start of the 2021–2022 academic year. The first author obtained a role as an assistant professor in the Psychology Department at a private university teaching undergraduate psychology and specialist level school psychology courses. The second author obtained a role as an assistant professor in the College of Education at a private university, with a focus on teaching across a variety of programs at the undergraduate level and at the graduate level. Additionally, this author continues selected contract work in the schools as a school psychologist to maintain her applied skills. This article blends personal experience with published resources to provide guidance for practicing

SARAH STEBBE ROWE, PhD, worked as a school-based practitioner for 8 years prior to transitioning to an academic position. Dr. Rowe is currently an assistant professor of psychology at University of Detroit Mercy (MI). ERIN RAPPUHN, PhD, worked as a school-based practitioner for 7 years prior to transitioning to an academic position. Dr. Rappuhn is currently an assistant professor of education at Eastern University (PA).

school psychologists who wish to prepare for and successfully make a midcareer transition to higher education.

WHY MAKE THE MOVE

You may have spent 3–5+ years in graduate school and believe that you have a firm grasp of what an academic role would entail, but the lifestyle and expectations of a student are different from the professional life of an academic. Our goal is to outline some of the benefits of a career in higher education and to outline major differences between school-based practitioner roles and higher education academic roles. Table 1 draws comparisons between these two types of positions.

PREPARING FOR THE TRANSITION

In preparing for the application process for a transition into academia, it is important to consider the adjustment in the professional expectations for this new role. Academic positions, especially tenure-track positions, focus on three major pillars: research, teaching, and service (Harris & Sullivan, 2012; Kaufman & Valley-Gray, 2016). Each college/university position is different, however, so the allocation of time and the importance placed on research versus teaching will vary depending on whether it is a primarily teaching-focused university or a research-focused institution (Harris & Sullivan, 2012).

Remain engaged in (and reframe your thinking about) scholarship. As a school-based practitioner, the concept of describing your research interests and practice may

seem daunting. First, we recommend generating a list of research activities completed during your graduate training. Many doctoral-level programs promote engagement in research dissemination through presentations and publications. This will demonstrate research competencies and skills necessary to plan, conduct, and publish research. Admittedly, those moving midcareer from practitioner roles to faculty positions may have less early career research productivity than those coming from post-doctoral research positions. The key here is to demonstrate research potential for re-engaging in research upon transition to academia. One way to demonstrate this research skill set is to highlight your graduate school research assistantships, grant work, presentations, and publication of work (Boysen, 2020). Additionally, you may stay active as a scientist-practitioner while practicing within the school setting by presenting at local, state, or national conferences on areas of expertise. It is also suggested that you highlight within your application materials and interviews the role that school psychologists play within the schools as an active consumer of research in efforts to apply science-to-practice and promote evidence-based practices.

Develop teaching and presentation skills. Teaching may be a skill that was developed during graduate school through a teaching assistant or instructor position. After graduation, there are several ways to continue developing these skills. First, consider opportunities to teach undergraduate or graduate level psychology or education courses as an adjunct. This will allow you to continue to learn, develop, and reflect on the field of teaching and training future professionals in the field, as well as give you further insight into whether this might be a career you want to pursue. Through this teaching experience, you will also gain evidence of teaching effectiveness such as sample syllabi, assignment descriptions, and student evaluation data, all of which may strengthen your application for a faculty position. The authors of this article taught undergraduate psychology courses as adjunct professors at universities before transitioning to full-time faculty work. Additionally, consider supervising a school psychology graduate student while working as a school-based practitioner. If you have developed skills as a site-based supervisor specifically related to mentoring, demonstrating and teaching specific skills, and providing constructive and detailed feedback, this will translate well to an academic position.

It is also recommended that you reconceptualize your knowledge, training, and expertise as it applies to various fields. As a school psychologist, you obviously have knowledge and training that fits securely within the field of school psychology training programs; however, you also have strong knowledge and experience in consulting, teaching/training, and collaborating with educators and mental health professionals in various settings. Therefore, you may want to consider expanding your search criteria beyond school psychology graduate programs. Faculty roles within under-

Some graduates of doctoral-level programs may wish to transition directly into an academic position within higher education. However, midlife career transitions are becoming more common as universities replace retirees with those coming from careers in applied fields.

graduate education programs, psychology programs, or graduate psychology or counseling programs may be appropriate matches as well.

Provide service and leadership to the field. Service to the program department, university, community, and profession at large is another expectation for faculty in higher education. While opportunities for university service are limited for practicing school psychologists prior to obtaining a position in academia, there are ways to stay involved in the field and demonstrate commitment to service. Membership in various state and national associations can also support your ongoing professional development for research and content

knowledge. You may consider branching out from solely joining school psychology organizations, although these are highly recommended as well. For example, the second author has a special interest in early childhood; this author is a member of the National Association for the Education of Young Childhood. Find your areas of interest and expertise, and engage in these organizations in a meaningful way. Staying active in these professional associations (e.g., state school psychology or education associations or NASP) is one way to demonstrate an interest in service. Examples of this might include serving as an association delegate, participating in the NASP Exposure Project, or serving as a NASP conference proposal reviewer. These activities provide the added benefit of maintaining and extending your professional network as well as staying current within the field.

Additionally, seek out leadership opportunities within your current work position. For instance, the first author sought to support and implement systems' change through multitiered systems of support (MTSS) in her district and worked several years as the MTSS coordinator. The second author served on several teams throughout her building and district, and served as a member of a county-wide committee for new eligibility guidelines. You are likely already demonstrating strong dedication to supporting and improving your school community through various volunteer, service, and leadership roles. These types of activities will demonstrate your interest in and ability to engage in service at various levels.

Table 1. Comparing School Psychology School-Based Practitioner With Academic Positions

	School Psychologist	Higher Education Faculty
Schedule	Often in the school building 5 days a week during school hours. Some are 10-month employees, others 11 or 12. Breaks are often consistent with local school districts.	May teach one to four, 3-credit classes per semester. Many positions are 9- or 10-month contracts; however, research/writing activity may occur across the summer, so potentially less "time off."
Flexibility	May be less flexible and require taking time off for doctor appointments, family events, etc.	High flexibility. Outside of teaching, there is more flexibility to set your own schedule.
Main work responsibilities	Assessment/evaluation, consultation, intervention.	Teaching, research, and service.
Pay	Pay varies based on geographic location and is typically based on degree and years of experience. In areas with unions, salary ranges may be publicly available. NASP reports median salary for school psychologists by region (including those practicing in a variety of settings). For instance, median salary in the central region (including all years of experience) was reported to be \$72,000 (NASP, 2021).	Pay also varies by geographic location. APA has publications discussing median salaries for new assistant professors that may be useful (Christidis et al., 2019). The median starting salary for new assistant professors in 2018-2019 was reported to be \$63,375 with a range from \$42,317 to \$88,784. Median salary for associate professors was \$68,648 and for full professor was \$85,907.
Advancement	Often few options for direct advancement as a school psychologist other than leadership positions such as department chair. Some move into administration, which may require further education.	Tenure-track positions begin as an assistant professor, with opportunities for promotion to associate professor and full professor over time.

MANAGING THE TRANSITION

These authors had a unique experience of navigating the transition from practitioner to academic during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has impacted the culture of higher education, the modality of instruction, and the social support and relationship-building with colleagues and students, which presents unique challenges. Regardless of the timing of your anticipated transition, you will be well positioned to make a career change from practitioner to academic by thoughtfully considering the above-mentioned activities. The change from one setting to another may come with its own challenges and adjustments; however, there will also be several benefits and joys to be found in this new chapter. As with any change, the authors remind you to practice self-care and to acknowledge that there will be a substantial learning curve as you navigate a completely new career field. Below are some suggestions for ways to utilize resources and supports to maximize success during the transition.

Access university resources. Upon making a shift to academia, we suggest taking all opportunities offered for orientation of new faculty. Some may be offerings from the university, or it may be necessary to reach out to various offices or individuals to get oriented. For instance, meeting with a university librarian or staff in the teaching and learning office may be beneficial. The second author had the rewarding experience of participating in a year-long new faculty seminar with all new faculty. This seminar provided ample opportunities for training, resources, advice from seasoned faculty, and collaboration with others in the same position. It is also recommended to find and review all documentation provided for faculty including handbooks, teaching materials, and tenure process documentation.

Although you may be hesitant to ask for help or admit a lack of knowledge in various areas as a new employee (e.g., "imposter syndrome"), it is strongly encouraged to take advantage of the resources available to you and to not be afraid to ask for mentoring and assistance. Especially with the transition in and out of virtual learning platforms during the pandemic, many new and seasoned faculty found themselves

in the position of needing to learn completely new instructional approaches and technologies. The authors found that a benefit of transitioning into academia during the pandemic was that many additional training videos and resources were made widely available (and often required) for all faculty to support their needs during the constantly changing world of teaching.

We encourage you to seek support and resources from other faculty members and colleagues for the courses you are teaching. It can be daunting to feel as though you need to start from square one in planning for a course, but seeking resources from others can help provide guidance for where to start and spark ideas for teaching. Also, remember that as a practitioner joining the world of higher education, you bring invaluable experiences and knowledge to the classroom. You have a rich volume of stories, cases, and experiences that you can draw from to connect with students and enrich the concepts taught. Additionally, you also have direct knowledge of the frustrations faced by schools and the challenges of navigating best practices in situations where resources, knowledge, or support may be lacking.

Seek social support. Additionally, seeking social support from other new tenure-track faculty at the university is beneficial. For example, the first author participates in a group of new tenure-track faculty members from across the university that meets weekly to discuss goals and seek support on a variety of research and teaching matters. A recent new faculty member started the group, so if the setting you enter does not currently have a needed support, consider creating it yourself. Connecting or reconnecting with faculty outside your new university will also be useful. This may include connecting and collaborating with your previous faculty and cohort members, some of whom may have already made the transition into academia and can provide helpful tips. They may provide resources or guidance for common issues facing higher education in general and school psychology programs specifically. For example, these authors are involved in a collaborative forum with previous graduate cohort members across various years who are in academia; this platform serves as a place for each member to reach out to colleagues for ideas and resources.

Making connections with more established faculty at the new institution can help you to understand expectations, culture, and norms. This may exist in the form of formal or informal mentorship, which may present multiple benefits, including improving the experience of transitioning to academia (Zellers et al., 2008). Transitioning to academia during the pandemic can present a unique challenge in regard to social support and relationship-building, particularly in the development of informal mentorship and collegial relationships. Changes in social distancing and masking requirements, as well as meetings being held virtually, likely led to an increase in colleagues working in isolation within their closed offices and fewer opportunities to get to know faculty within natural contexts. An academic role can lend itself to more individualized work time and the potential for feelings of isolation (particularly during the pandemic), which is often in direct contrast to the frequent collaboration and social opportunities found within the school settings. An extra level of intentionality will be needed to set up meetings, create social opportunities if none exist, and to seek support. The second author overcame this potential isolation by becoming as involved as possible in the department, making time to socialize and connect with colleagues in the hallway or via virtual meetings when possible, and putting in the “face time” while on campus to connect with others. Service involvement is another way to make connections within the university even during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as through volunteering for projects, volunteering to review accreditation materials, committee involvement, and so forth.

Another important area to consider as a new faculty member is the type of mentoring relationship you want to build with your students. There may be times as a faculty member when your social interactions with others primarily involve the connections you make with your students, and taking time to get to know your students and connect with them can help you to feel more established in your role and in the culture of the department/program/university. Whether your role involves directly supervising or advising students, or whether you develop an informal mentoring relationship with students, this can be a rewarding experience for all.

Making connections with faculty at a new institution can help you understand expectations and norms. This may exist in the form of mentorship, which may present benefits, including improving the experience of transitioning to academia.

Continue professional development. One of the differences and potential challenges between a practitioner role and a university faculty position is that you will need to be diligent about making sure that you stay current and aware of changes and developments in your field(s). This may be harder to do when you are disconnected from the everyday situations and practice within the field. There are various ways to stay current in the field: You can continue to engage in some practical work on the side (e.g., contract school psychologist, clinical work, private practice), remain an active participant in annual conferences/conventions, maintain personal or professional relationships with prior school-based colleagues or graduate-school cohort members, and continue your relationship with schools through supervision of fieldwork. Additionally, you may be able to collaborate with local schools for future data collection/research endeavors. Some higher education institutions will be interested in how you plan to remain current and involved in the field, although you are transitioning out of the daily practitioner role.

Pursue support for scholarship. A move from practitioner to academic may result in a gap of several years without active research participation. To overcome this, the authors suggest obtaining and reading research methodology books and seeking out further research training if available. The National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity is a useful organization for professional learning and mentoring to catapult scholarship development. Virtual trainings with various research or statistical departments at large universities may be another resource. For example, the first author has attended virtual training with the Center for Statistics Training and Consulting at Michigan State University. You may also reach out to colleagues or graduate cohort members for support and guidance as you refresh your knowledge regarding active engagement in research. Becoming involved in grant-writing, grant-funded research projects, or collaborative scholarly activities with colleagues can also help you to gain momentum and comfort in reentering the research field. It is also important to remember that scholarship does not solely involve publications. Depending on the guidance outlined by your university, scholarship efforts can include publications of research or nonresearch works, presentations (e.g., conferences, training seminars), grant-writing, and more.

CONCLUSION

Transitioning midcareer from a practitioner role to an academic role is not only possible but may provide new opportunities and professional fulfillment. While there are unique challenges that a midcareer professional may face when transitioning during COVID-19, there are equally as many opportunities to flourish and develop new skills. ■

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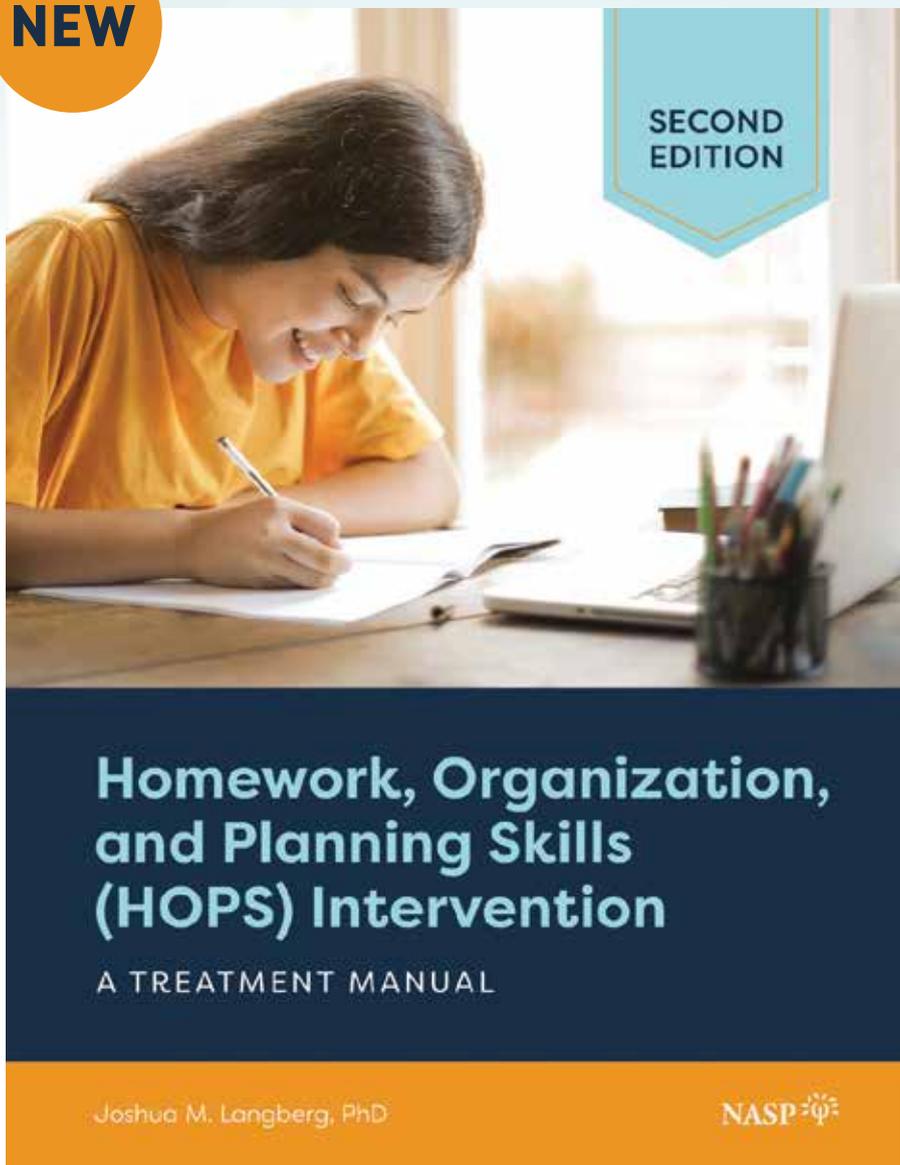
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2023 Convention News

DENVER, COLORADO, FEBRUARY 7–10, 2023

PRESENTERS IN FOCUS

Behavioral Threat Assessment: Restorative Practices and Racial Harm

Q&A WITH JENNIFER MCINTYRE & SCOTT HARE

Our nation's public schools, as microcosms of the larger society, have a responsibility to teach children and adolescents how to function in a society that lives up to its founding ideals, a society that is welcoming, inclusive, socially just, respectful, and equitable for everyone. Stopping racism and racial harm as it arises in schools is a critical component to creating the positive school climates that serve as the foundation of this work. This requires addressing the practices and systems that contribute to systemic inequities and harm. In schools, behavioral threat assessment and management (BTAM), when conducted incorrectly, can result in disproportionate and punitive discipline and exclusion for minoritized students and is known to fuel the school-to-prison pipeline. However, ensuring proper implementation of BTAM through a social justice lens can help to dismantle inequitable and racist processes and improve outcomes for these students.

In this "Presenters In Focus" Q&A, convention presenters Jennifer McIntyre and Scott Hare will share a unique approach to BTAM being implemented in two Minnesota school districts with success. They will discuss various elements school psychologists and other BTAM team members should consider when integrating this approach as but one strategy to address racism and racial harm in schools. They will describe specific considerations and strategies in more depth during their documented session (DS003: Behavioral Threat Assessment: Restorative Practices and Racial Harm) that will be delivered on Thursday of convention week in Denver. (Most relevant NASP Practice Model Domains: 6 and 8.)

Applying behavioral threat assessment and management (BTAM) procedures for addressing racial harm in schools is a unique approach. What inspired you to institute this process in the districts in which you work? Where might others find information to guide such an approach?

The inspiration for change in our two districts' threat assessment procedures is to create safe educational environments for all students that are devoid of discriminatory and disproportionate discipline procedures, and instead uphold civil rights for all students, especially those with disabilities and students of color. The goal of connecting students with necessary interventions and supports is the primary focus of the overall BTAM process.

As part of both of our districts' equity journeys, we completed a thorough review of our threat assessment process and discipline referrals

over the past several years. A majority of our referrals and threat assessments involve students of color and students receiving special education services. This matched closely with the disproportionate rates of suspensions issued to students of color and students receiving special education services. Both districts reviewed the membership of the teams facilitating the BTAM process and those involved in providing information for threat assessments, as well as the decision-making process related to the level of threat and management following this determination, all through an equity lens. As we reviewed this along with student, parent, and staff feedback, we determined that we were not considering all variables that may be impacting a student and the situations around the incidents.

What facilitators (i.e., implementation drivers) do you believe are

necessary to carry out a BTAM process in addressing racial harm? What barriers have you encountered in this process and what wisdom would you share with others to prevent or to overcome such barriers?

We believe in the necessary implementation drivers recommended by NASP, which includes that the core BTAM team must include an administrator, at least one school mental health professional (school psychologist, school counselor, school social worker), and a public safety advisor. In addition, as a result of our district's equity journey, we have started to become more inclusive of our behavioral mental health staff along with our equity specialists, health service providers, and community members to assist in understanding the complexities within a given situation. Team members are responsible for the review of completed threat assessments, consequences, and how they correlate with other areas of disproportionality, such as suspension rates for students of color.

One of the biggest challenges is getting others to see the BTAM process as a proactive process to get students the appropriate support they need and not as a consequential process to get a student out of school. Using student support services staff that can provide the necessary resources of support and utilizing a restorative approach has reduced the recidivism for several of our students of color and students with disabilities. Getting staff buy-in to the restorative approach takes time to see the benefits of repairing harm and restoring relations versus a punitive approach and exclusionary practices.

We work hard to ensure that the team is inclusive of staff, family members, and community members. Striving toward having members who are aware of their own implicit biases and actively committed to equitable decision making is critical. Barriers to this have been limited access to staff who are knowledgeable about the student, overuse of emotional decision making, and variables that may be impacting the situation. When these barriers

are present, they impact the initial overall decision making process and ultimately have the potential to harm student outcomes.

How have you engaged students, families, and colleagues of color in the development, implementation, and ongoing finessing of this process?

This is an area both districts continue to grow in across many areas of seeking input on our equity journey. Both districts went through a review of our resource officer programs in which we held several community meetings to gather input, and we now have a standing committee with students, parents, and community members of color where many topics are discussed in order to obtain feedback.

In Bloomington Public Schools, we have been reviewing the process with our office of educational equity (OEE), as well as throughout the development process, by asking teams to provide feedback gathered from the members of their teams. This is also an area in which we will continue to grow in specifically to involve our students, families, and community members in reviewing our overall discipline procedures, including the threat assessment process.

Please discuss why restorative practices are an essential component of the BTAM process in addressing racial harm when racism arises in schools?

Both districts have embraced the use of restorative practices for the past several years due to the effectiveness of this approach in promoting positive social interactions and an inclusive environment for all students and staff. Specifically, the implementation has resulted in an increase in student advocacy to access this proactive process (restorative circles) for restoring relationships and repairing harm, as well as a reduction of suspension rates.

The restorative techniques have been used during times of conflict, processing through incidents of racial harm, as well as situations between staff members. In Bloomington, our OEE has fully embraced training in the area of restorative

practices, and it continues to provide training and support to our staff across the district in addition to the initial training that has been provided. Understanding the importance of how and when restorative practices, specifically healing circles, are utilized has started to grow within our district, with more staff utilizing this strategy to provide a safe environment for all students to share their voices and experiences. We continue to work on how to provide a safe environment for all students, specifically ensuring that the voices of students of color are represented.

What steps did your team take to effectively apply a more intentional equity lens to BTAM processes and have these steps shown an impact?

We have developed a district-wide mental health team that is inclusive of our mental health supports

from school social workers, school psychologists, school counselors, health services, the OEE, and the communication department. This team has taken a critical look at how we are conducting our threat assessments and has provided guidance on what critical team members to have involved in this process. The involvement of these team members has led to a shift in our overall process. We are finding that teams, through active problem solving, are using equity-focused skills to take a more behavioral approach to understanding the underlying causes for students' actions, and ultimately providing interventions and supports that meet individual student needs and increase prosocial skills. This proactive approach has resulted in better prevention of threats, increased school safety, and improved trust and collaboration between schools and families.

What makes school psychologists effective leaders in the BTAM process and how can they help to reduce racial harm?

In collaboration with our school administrators, school psychologists lead the threat assessment process in each one of our schools. This includes reviewing the data around threat assessments and discipline referrals through an equity lens. School psychologists have training and experience in understanding complex behavior and in determining patterns of behavior. They are leaders in this area and assist teams in looking for the variables that may be contributing to the patterns in behavior. School psychologists have well developed skills in collaboration and facilitation across disciplines, helping teams bring together multiple perspectives when considering the overall function of a student's behavior. The key to understanding is knowing their own

personal areas of implicit bias so that, when analyzing data or collaborating with other team members, they maintain an open-minded approach to ensure that all variables are considered and factored into the interventions to be developed.

For more information on NASP guidance regarding behavioral threat assessment and management, see:

- Behavior Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) Best Practice Considerations for K-12 Schools at <https://www.nasponline.org/btam>
- Upholding Protecting Student Civil Rights and Preventing Disproportionality in Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management at <https://www.nasponline.org/btam-sped> ■

JENNIFER MCINTYRE, NCSP, is Executive Director of Special Education and Health Services for Blooming Public Schools, Bloomington, Minnesota. SCOTT HARE is Director of Student Support Services for Mankato Area Public Schools, Mankato, Minnesota.



The Auraria Campus in downtown Denver

GARY CONNER / GETTY IMAGES

Colorado Beckons: Student Spots

BY CASSANDRA MIZE

In the heart of Denver lies the shared campus of three colleges: the Community College of Denver, Metropolitan State University of Denver, and University of Colorado Denver. Known collectively as the Auraria Campus, it is located steps from this year's NASP 2023 convention and boasts many student-friendly hangouts for studying or grabbing a bite to eat. The campus is located on the ancestral homelands of the Cheyenne and Arapahoe Nations and was also shared with Nations such as the Lakota, Ute, Kiowa, Comanche, Apache,

and Shoshone for events like trade, hunting, and healing.

The hub of this campus is the Tivoli Student Union. Historically a brewery, it is now home to several restaurants and the campus bookstore. Located a short walk from the Tivoli is the Auraria Library, a sprawling, two-story center for mostly quiet study. There are many cozy nooks, of which several overlook the library's two atriums, and larger study rooms scattered among the thousands of books. There are also many art installations and

historical buildings scattered across the walkable downtown campus. Just be sure to bundle up as it will be chilly!

- Tivoli: <https://www.ahec.edu/services-departments/tivoli>
- Auraria Library: <https://library.auraria.edu>
- 5280 Trail Art: <https://www.ahec.edu/auraria/5280-trail-art>

If you're looking off campus for some study spots, Roostercat Coffee House is a popular, women-owned shop about a mile and a half southeast of the campus. A bit further out, The Bardo Coffee House is a good option for night owls, with multiple locations open until midnight. If you're up for driving even farther, the Auraria Campus is not the only campus of higher education in metropolitan Denver; a few miles south is University of Denver's campus.

- Roostercat Coffee House: <https://www.roostercatdenver.com>
- The Bardo Coffee House: <https://www.bardocoffee.com>
- University of Denver: <https://www.du.edu>

For students who like to indulge in a little bit of nightlife, Denver is home to many types of arts and entertainment. One of the more popular clubs is Milk Bar, with two different themed clubs in one location: a *Clockwork Orange* inspired bar and

the Jazz Room, a retro experience. Denver also boasts many hidden bars or "speakeasies," including Retrograde, a speakeasy located behind a false freezer door in an ice cream shop.

- Milk Bar: <https://coclub.com/milk>
- Retrograde: <https://www.retrograde.dnvr.com>

If live music or performances are more your speed, the Denver Performing Arts Center is located right next door to the Convention Center. With three large theater spaces and many more performance venues sharing the same location, there are performances to attend almost every single evening year-round that range from Broadway to ballet and orchestras to Off Broadway. Look into their student discounts! If indie or underground live music is important to you, you can't skip Lost Lake, a small live music venue boasting a "dive bar" kind of setting.

- Denver Center for Performing Arts: <https://www.denvercenter.org>
- Lost Lake: <https://lost-lake.com>

Denver is a city that has many amenities catering to students. We hope you're able to check out some of these spots during your visit to the NASP 2023 convention in February! ■

CASSANDRA "CASSIE" MIZE is a student in University of Colorado Denver's school psychology PsyD program. She is a student coordinator for the NASP Denver Convention Committee.

HANDOUTS

Editor's Note: Many handouts are fully formatted for distribution and available for downloading on the NASP website (<http://www.nasponline.org>).

Upholding Student Civil Rights and Preventing Disproportionality in Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM)—Executive Summary

Behavioral threat assessment and management (BTAM), when done properly, is a critical component in schools' overall ability to effectively identify and address the needs of students whose behavior raises concerns about risk of harm to others. Concerns have emerged that school-based BTAM can be discriminatory and biased, may violate student's civil rights, and may lead to disproportionality in the application of discipline and placement in special education. Inappropriate disciplinary action or referral to law enforcement can occur if BTAM is not used correctly or if BTAM procedures are not followed correctly. However, when BTAM best practices are utilized, the process helps prevent and reduce the overuse of restrictive placements and punitive measures for students with disabilities and students of color. The BTAM process is initiated by the threatening situation itself, and all threats must be taken seriously regardless of the cause. BTAM helps determine if the threat is valid and legitimate, with the goal of connecting students with necessary interventions and supports while simultaneously upholding student and school safety as well as a student's civil rights.

DISPELLING MYTHS ABOUT BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

BTAM is a multidisciplinary, fact-based, systematic process designed to identify, assess, and manage potentially dangerous or violent situations. The purpose of the BTAM team is to identify, evaluate, and address potential threats to help schools distinguish between incidents where a student made a threat that is not actually legitimate (with no intent to harm) and other incidents in which the student does pose an actual threat of targeted violence. The systematic implementation of BTAM helps avoid impulsive and potentially harmful decisions that can lead to overmanagement (i.e., suspension and expulsion) and requires teams to take into account the context and disability rather than using a zero-tolerance approach.

BTAM is not a substitute for school teams and processes that address nonviolent behaviors of concern (e.g., attentional, emotional regulation, social skills, and others), nor is it a mechanism to allow schools to remove children from school because they may have behaviors that are difficult to manage or a disciplinary process.

TEAM MEMBERSHIP AND TRAINING

The core BTAM team must include an administrator, at least one school mental health professional (school psychologist, school counselor, school social worker), and a school resource officer (SRO). It should be noted that an SRO may not need to take directive action in every case just because they are part of the team. If a student is receiving special education services, an expert in special education must be a member of the BTAM team. In addition to being multidisciplinary, all teams must receive appropriate training on how and when to engage the BTAM process in accordance with any relevant local, state, and federal policies. This training must include examination of how bias and racism can impact perceptions of student behavior and strategies to eliminate discriminatory action. Importantly, BTAM teams must have an understanding of student privacy laws (e.g., FERPA), and clear parameters of how student information should and should not be used must be clearly articulated and enforced. If an SRO, other law enforcement official, or other community-based partners are granted access to student records as part of the BTAM process, this must be articulated in the district Memorandum of Understanding, with clear prohibitions against using that data for purposes outside of the BTAM process.

BTAM, IDEA, AND SECTION 504

BTAM teams must uphold the rights afforded to students by the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. BTAM

Behavioral Threat Assessment

- Goal is ensuring health and safety of all involved (i.e., subject and potential targets).
- Consider needs of all students involved.
- Multidisciplinary team of professionals who have received specialized threat assessment training.
- Assesses if the student legitimately poses a threat.
- Parent consent is not required, but parent participation in interviews and intervention planning is highly recommended and should be solicited.
- Decisions can inform special education programming, but a threat assessment does not replace or override IEP processes and procedures.

Special Education Process

- Goal is meeting individual needs related to suspected or existing disability.
- Consider needs of individual student only.
- Mandated engagement of educational professionals who have the appropriate professional licensure and certification to serve students who qualify for special education services.
- Makes the determination if a student has a disability and qualifies for special education services.
- Parent consent/participation is required.
- Decisions are legally binding as part of the IEP.

teams must operate with an understanding of the impact that IDEA regulations have on decisions made during the threat assessment process for students with disabilities and how indicators of violence and disability characteristics could be related to or distinct from one another. While most individuals with an identified disability will never be violent, it is erroneous to suggest that a student with a disability or a mental health diagnosis could never pose a threat, or risk of harm, to the health and safety of the community. Thus, what initiates a threat assessment is the behavior itself, not the diagnosis or identified disability.

When evaluating a threat made by a student with a disability, it is important that the BTAM and IEP team work together, in collaboration with the family, to determine and implement any additional interventions and supports. Decisions made as part of the threat assessment can inform the IEP process, but they do not override decisions made by the IEP team. Any changes to a student's placement or educational programming must be determined by the IEP team. If the school administrator determines disciplinary action is warranted, the school must follow appropriate procedures and conduct a manifestation determination review if necessary, which is a separate and distinct process. If it is determined that a student needs additional supports outside of special education and related services, members of the BTAM team (e.g., school psychologists) can help connect the student and with other school and community-based supports. ■

Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) Best Practice Considerations for K-12 Schools—Brief Overview

Behavioral threat assessment and management (BTAM) is a multidisciplinary, fact-based, systematic process designed to identify, assess, and manage potentially dangerous or violent situations. The purpose of the BTAM team is to identify, evaluate, and address potential threats to help schools distinguish between incidents where a student made a threat that is not actually legitimate (with no intent to harm) and other incidents in which the student does pose an actual threat of targeted violence. In all cases, the goal is to pair the student with proper school and community-based intervention and supports. The systematic and proper implementation of BTAM helps avoid impulsive and potentially harmful decisions that can lead to overmanagement (i.e., unnecessary suspension and expulsion) and requires teams to take into account the context and disability rather than using a zero-tolerance approach.

BTAM is not a substitute for school teams and processes that address nonviolent behaviors of concern, nor is it a disciplinary process or a mechanism to allow schools to remove children from school because they have behaviors that are difficult to manage. In fact, BTAM is most effective when it is embedded within a comprehensive multitiered

system of support (MTSS) and other efforts to promote a positive school climate and effective and positive discipline practices. When not done properly, or when the process is not used in the context of threatening behavior, students may be misidentified or labeled, not provided with necessary interventions and supports, unnecessarily suspended or expelled, or unnecessarily referred to the juvenile justice system. As such, it is imperative that BTAM processes are followed with fidelity and in accordance with IDEA, Section 504, FERPA, and other civil rights and privacy laws. (For more detailed information see: *Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management: Best Practice Considerations for K-12 Schools and Upholding Student Civil Rights and Preventing Disproportionality in Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management* on the NASP website)

ESTABLISH PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

To facilitate data-based and objective decisions and minimize the risk of erroneous decisions based on profiling characteristics, personal biases, or misperceptions, school boards should adopt BTAM policy and procedures that contain the following elements: (a) established authority for school professionals to act on reported threats or concerning behaviors and provide guidance on the establishment of a best practice model; (b) establishment of a well-trained, multidisciplinary school or district-level BTAM team with clear expectations of roles and duties of all members; (c) establishment of integrated and interagency systems, relationships, and partnerships; (d) awareness training for staff, students, parents, and community partners; and (e) proactive and preventive social and emotional initiatives and mechanisms for providing comprehensive school mental and behavioral health services; (f) confidential reporting procedures; (g) clear guidelines for information sharing; and (h) procedures for determining disciplinary action when warranted.

ESTABLISHING AND IMPLEMENTING THE BTAM PROCESS

The eight steps below outline the critical components to be included in a high-quality BTAM process.

Step 1. Establish a multidisciplinary threat assessment team. The BTAM team must be carefully selected, be appropriately trained, and have collective expertise in school administration, mental health, academic instruction, and law enforcement. The core BTAM team must include an administrator, at least one school mental health professional (e.g., school psychologist), and a school resource officer (SRO)/law enforcement officer. Roles and responsibilities must be explicitly defined and understood by all involved. Back up team members also need to be trained and accessible to fill in when primary team members are unavailable. When the student of concern or potential target has a disability or speaks a language other than English, the BTAM team must include members who understand working with individuals with disabilities and those who speak a language other than English. The school administrator maintains ultimate responsibility for ensuring team members carry out their assigned roles.

Step 2. Define prohibited and concerning behaviors. The school community needs to be educated on behaviors that are unacceptable and how to recognize and report when someone is struggling and is at risk for potential harm to self or others, such as possessing a weapon, making violent verbal threats or concerning social media posts, or showing sharp changes in behavior.

Step 3. Develop a central reporting mechanism. Various methods for reporting can include directly reporting to a trusted adult, a tip line, a reporting app, email, voice mail, link on the school/district website, or 911 call. It is important to have more than one confidential method to report, and students, staff, and families need to be explicitly trained on how and what to report and what is not appropriate to report via these methods. The BTAM teams also need to be aware of any cultural implications that may affect willingness to report because of past community traumas or historical incidents that make it feel acceptable to disclose serious incidents to those in authority.

Step 4. Determine the threshold for law enforcement intervention. While law enforcement should be part of the BTAM team, they do not necessarily need to participate in every BTAM case. However, if the threat is legitimate and mitigation actions need to be taken, an SRO/law enforcement officer may become engaged in a consultative or direct role. SROs and other law enforcement officers must be properly selected and trained to work in schools. If the law enforcement officer is not a district staff member, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) may need to be developed that outlines the relationship between school staff and law enforcement and outlines what law enforcement responsibilities will be in the BTAM process.

Step 5. Establish assessment procedures. An effective BTAM process is designed to identify, inquire, assess, and manage. Clear and confidential reporting mechanisms help to identify the subject/situation whose behavior or impact has raised concern. The BTAM team then conducts an inquiry to gather additional data in a lawful and ethi-

cal manner and assesses information regarding situation, context, and developmental or disability factors to determine if the subject/situation poses a threat of violence or harm to self or others. The situation is then *managed* by implementing problem solving supports and, if warranted, an intervention and monitoring plan to prevent harm where possible and to reduce/mitigate impact of the situation. It is critical that the BTAM team stay objective when reviewing the facts of the case, as fear and emotions frequently affect why a person considers a threat an actual threat. The BTAM team also needs to take into consideration their own biases to ensure this process does not contribute to the disproportionality that exists within disciplinary practices.

Step 6. Develop risk management options. The BTAM team should consider all data, including risk and protective factors, and identify the level of concern (low, moderate, high, imminent), which will guide the team in directive actions and supports to be taken. It is important to note that levels of concern are not to be used to predict human behavior or to automatically determine a change of educational placement but are to be used to design interventions and supports. There is no magic or mathematical formula or a specific number of risk factors and warning signs that determine any specific level.

Interventions and management. The BTAM team should develop a written plan that assists the individual of concern who engaged in threatening behaviors. Interventions, which could include school and community-based supports, should focus on building resiliency and protective factors for the student while also addressing safety concerns. Punitive measures, such as suspension and expulsion, can increase risk. Disconnecting the student of concern from monitoring and supports can further escalate emotions and isolate the person from the school and social environment. Thus, these types of consequences should be implemented only after careful team consideration, and they should always be paired with supportive interventions.

It is important for BTAM teams to document the actions taken to support their good faith efforts to identify, inquire/investigate, assess, and manage threatening situations. Each district should obtain guidance from their own legal counsel regarding the management of threat assessment records. Decisions on record keeping are important, as maintaining records establishes a legal and behavioral justification for intervention.

Monitor progress and stay engaged. For situations determined to be of low risk, informal monitoring may be sufficient. For those subjects determined to be of moderate, high, or imminent risk, more formalized progress monitoring will need to be implemented, and it is highly recommended that follow-up meetings are scheduled to review progress and responsiveness to interventions and supports. It is important to reevaluate the plan and make adjustments as needed.

Step 7. Create and promote safe school climates. Prevention and mitigation rely on relationships and connectedness amongst students, staff members, and the community. Individuals must respect, trust, and empower one another to report concerns, and all must feel as if they belong. Schools should incorporate wellness promotion and social-emotional learning curricula, and they should routinely analyze academic, behavioral, and social-emotional data in order to make data-based decisions regarding prevention and intervention programs needed.

Step 8. Conduct training for all stakeholders. School safety is the responsibility of all. All stakeholders (students, teachers, support staff, coaches, mentors, parents, community members) must receive explicit training so they know how and when to report threats. BTAM team members need high-quality training that equips them with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively implement the pre-K-12 BTAM process with fidelity. It is imperative that the selected BTAM model is validated, uses a multidisciplinary approach, and is standardized yet flexible enough to meet varying resources. At minimum, administrators, school mental health professionals (school psychologists, counselors, social workers), and SROs should all be trained, preferably together in teams.

An effective and appropriate BTAM process integrates these best practice guidelines and is critical to saving lives, enhancing school safety, and ensuring legal and ethical guidelines are followed.

KEY RESOURCES

Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates (<https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/threatassessmentguide.pdf>)

Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Plans (https://rems.ed.gov/docs/School_Guide_508C.pdf)

National Association of School Psychologists

- A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools (<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-safety-and-crisis/systems-level-prevention/a-framework-for-safe-and-successful-schools>)

- School Safety and Crisis Resources (<http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis>)
- PREPaRE School Safety and Crisis Response Training Curriculum (<http://www.nasponline.org/professional-development/prepare-training-curriculum>)

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (<https://www.pbis.org>)

U.S. Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance Center (<https://rems.ed.gov>)

School Safety (<https://www.schoolsafety.gov>)

Contributors: Melissa Reeves, Christina Conolly, Scott Woitaszewski

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Manifestation Determination Reviews: A Brief Overview

When a student with a disability violates a school code of conduct or engages in behavior that would initiate a school to propose removing that student from their current placement or their school (e.g., suspension or expulsion), the school must engage in a hearing known as a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR). This hearing brings together all relevant Individualized Education Program (IEP) team members to determine (a) if the student's actions caused or had direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability and (b) if the student's actions were the direct result of the local education agency's (LEA) failed implementation of the IEP. If the IEP team determines the LEA failed to properly implement the IEP and that may have contributed to the behavioral infraction, the LEA must take action to remedy the deficiencies in IEP implementation efforts.

FULL IDEA DESCRIPTION

Sec. 300.530 (e) of IDEA (2004) states:

- (1) Within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the LEA, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team (as determined by the parent and the LEA) must review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine
 - i. If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or
 - ii. If the conduct in question was the direct result of the LEA's failure to implement the IEP.
- (2) The conduct must be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability if the LEA, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that a condition in either paragraph (1)(i) or (1)(ii) of this section was met.
- (3) If the LEA, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine the condition described in paragraph (e)(1)(ii) of this section was met, the LEA must take immediate steps to remedy those deficiencies.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR MDRS

Allen (2021) described information (see Table 1) that should be collected and requested before the MDR. This information helps the IEP team develop a complete picture of the student and consider relevant information that may demonstrate a direct and substantial relationship (or lack thereof) to the incident that led to the MDR. School psychologists are often involved in this data collection as part of the IEP team.

MEMBERS OF AN IEP TEAM FOR MDRS

The IEP team may be composed of several members:

- The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the child
- At least one general education teacher of the child
- At least one special education teacher of the child
- A representative of the school district who is qualified to provide or supervise special education services and who is knowledgeable about the

- availability of resources of the school district (known as the LEA representative)
- An individual, such as a school psychologist, who can interpret evaluation results
- Others who have knowledge about the child, at the discretion of the parent or the school district
- The child, when appropriate

Parents' roles in manifestation determination. Parents are important members of the IEP team. The role of parents in these hearings includes providing relevant information that would help the IEP team make the most informed decision about the event that led to the hearing. Relevant information provided by the parents may include, but is not limited to, medical records, reports from service agencies outside of the school setting, and other sources of information to be considered that may be reviewed and considered by the IEP team. In Table 1, Allen (2021) suggests that information via a parent statement on their perspective regarding the relationship between the child's behavior and the child's disability should be encouraged. Parents may supplement their statement with the child's statement on their own perspective on the behavior-disability relationship, if applicable, as well as updated information from a qualified health professional such as a licensed therapist.

School psychologists' roles in manifestation determination. School psychologists are often part of IEP teams that assess, report findings, and contribute to IEP decision-making based on their knowledge of interventions that would be beneficial in developing a child's academic, behavior, social, emotional, and mental health needs. The level of involvement of school psychologists at various stages of the special education process does vary by state and district; however, the contributions of a school psychologist during manifestation determination may be essential due to their knowledge and skill set with conducting functional behavioral assessments (FBAs) and the development of function-based behavior intervention plans (BIPs).

Administrators' roles in manifestation determination. School officials (e.g., principals, superintendents, special education directors) are team members who may contribute details of the behavioral infractions that led to the MDR and knowledge of the district and state policies that apply to the situation. They may take on additional leadership roles relevant to the circumstances or responsibilities unique to their state or district. They may also serve as a line of communication and support to the parents during the process for scheduling and planning when and where the MDR will take place.

Teachers' roles in manifestation determination. Input from teachers who work directly with the student provides a unique lens of how the teacher-student relationship works within the classroom setting. Often, classroom teachers can provide a perspective of the student's interactions with adults and peers that lends a great deal of understanding of the student's circumstances within a school environment. This information assists the IEP team in better understanding the student as they navigate their school day and how incidents that led up to an MDR may help IEP team members consider the context of the situation.

Reference

Allen, J. P. (2021). The school psychologist's role in manifestation determination reviews: Recommendations for practice. *Journal of Applied School Psychology*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15377903.2021.1895396>

Resources

U.S. Department of Education link for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) section on Manifestation Determination. <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/e/300.530/e>

Kid's Legal link for "Special Education Discipline: Suspensions and Expulsions" Q&A explaining circumstances for discipline within a special education context. <https://kidslegal.org/special-education-discipline-suspensions-and-expulsions>

Center for Parent Information & Resources: Manifestation Determination in School Discipline. <https://www.parentcenterhub.org/manifestation>

Knudsen, M. E., & Behtune, K. S. (2018). Manifestation determinations: An interdisciplinary guide to best practices. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 50(3), 153-160. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059917745653>

This document is designed to summarize guidance based on federal legislation. State and territorial laws and regulations and local education agency policies may be more restrictive than federal guidance. Readers are encouraged to also access their state or territorial department of education and school district websites for this state and local guidance. Please also note that the function of this document is informational and is not intended to provide official legal advice.

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Table 1. Information Sources for MDR

Information collected prior to meeting

- Current Individualized Education Program
- Current or recent functional behavioral assessment
- Description of behavioral intervention plan
- Recent comprehensive psychoeducational evaluation
- Description of the behavioral infraction
- Review of historical disciplinary records

Information requested ahead of meeting

- Recent evaluation from a licensed health professional
- Parent statement
- Student statement

Note. From "The School Psychologist's Role in Manifestation Determination Reviews: Recommendations for Practice," by J. P. Allen, 2021, *Journal of Applied School Psychology*, Advance online publication (<https://doi.org/10.1080/15377903.2021.1895396>). Copyright 2021 by Taylor & Francis. Reprinted with permission.



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NOTABLES AND DOWNLOADS

Online NASP Resources for Practice

The NASP website (www.nasponline.org) houses a wide, comprehensive array of resources to support school psychologists' role and work to help all children thrive in school, at home, and throughout life. This column highlights a few select resources to shine a light on useful content you might have missed. The QR code takes you to a page online where these resources are featured with hyperlinks. This page will update frequently with new featured resources.

Research Summary: Promoting Student Mental Health at School
School Psychology Review's 50th volume focused on the use of public health approaches to address the prevalence and burden of youth mental health problems, with an emphasis on improvements to comprehensive school mental health systems. This research summary provides an overview of the findings

from several articles in this special issue, which provide clear evidence of the importance of school mental health services to school and student outcomes.

Advocacy Toolkit: Promoting Equity, Diversity, and Social-Emotional Learning

Across the country, numerous local school boards and state legislatures

are considering harmful legislation that would further marginalize LG-BTQ+ students; prohibit discussions of critical topics like racism, equity, and social-emotional learning; and, in some cases, require school psychologists to share confidential information about students. This toolkit is intended to provide you with information and resources to help you respond to these proposals should they arrive in your community.

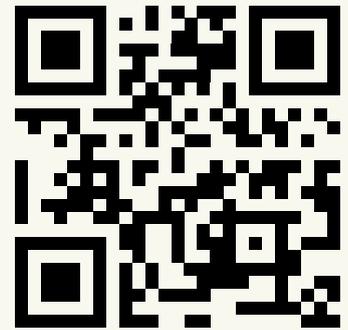
Practice Guidance: Multitiered Systems of Support in Early Childhood Settings

NASP supports active roles for school psychologists in early childhood education and intervention to support behavioral and social-emotional development, school readiness, transition to school, and early school success for all young children. Multitiered systems of support can be applied effectively in early childhood settings to facilitate these goals. This handout offers guidance

on specifics related to MTSS for early childhood populations.

Podcast: BTAM Best Practices for Defensible Process

The podcast with Dr. Melissa Reeves explores how to establish a high-quality behavioral threat assessment and management (BTAM) program using a multidisciplinary team and best practices to address bias, equity, and disproportionality. Listeners will learn how BTAM is distinctly different from, yet complimentary to, special education policies and procedures.



Student Self-Report

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]

monitoring, a topic yet to be extensively researched. What follows reflects the information we have gained because of our efforts in hopes that practitioners can use this information to enhance their methods of progress monitoring; thus transferring the responsibility from already overworked teachers and practitioners to students, giving them more voice and autonomy in the TI-MTSS intervention process. This article intends to summarize previous literature on student self-report for progress monitoring while clearly articulating the rationale for student self-report. It also emphasizes the value of self-reports for students with internalizing problems, who are consistently underreferred within the MTSS process (Splett et al., 2019).

PROGRESS MONITORING WITHIN MTSS

Progress monitoring tools measure observable and operationally defined behaviors or constructs across multiple points during an intervention (Vannest, 2012) and are key components of any MTSS process (Pentimonti et al., 2017). Teachers are involved with various aspects of MTSS, such as referring students for mental health support, completing universal screeners, facilitating interventions, and collecting progress monitoring data (Christ et al., 2009; Reinke et al., 2011; Splett et al., 2019). Despite recognizing the importance of mental health support (Ormiston et al., 2021) and understanding their role in supporting student mental health (Nygaard et al., 2022), teachers desire more training and support (Braun et al., 2020; Johnson, 2022; Ormiston et al., 2021). Systems-level constraints (e.g., academic demands, residual effects of COVID-19 pandemic), the influence of student characteristics and behaviors, and a lack of adequate resources prevent teachers from effectively supporting student mental health (Johnson, 2022; Nygaard et al., 2022; Ormiston et al., 2021).

BARRIERS TO EFFICIENT PROGRESS MONITORING

Teachers are often unsure how to determine if a student is making progress within an MTSS framework (Braun et al., 2020). Frustration due to high turnover rates (Charlton et al., 2018) and frequent changes to intervention tools and data collection

are challenges that contribute to inconsistently implementing MTSS (Braun et al., 2020). In addition, teachers felt modifications to the MTSS process were seldom described effectively to educators and staff, creating confusion about what types of data were needed. Teachers have also struggled with knowing how to determine if an intervention was successful (Braun et al., 2020), reflecting on a lack of training and confusion regarding MTSS (Sailor et al., 2021). These sentiments shared by teachers are hardly surprising. Lack of adequate training and clarity of roles in both supporting student mental health and MTSS has been a consistent problem (Alisic, 2012; Ormiston et al., 2021; Reinke et al., 2011; Stormont et al., 2011). Data collected from progress monitoring tools may be inaccurate and flawed when roles are not clearly defined and teachers are not adequately trained in supporting student mental health needs.

Not only are there system- and school-level constraints, but teacher ratings of students' social, emotional, and behavioral (SEB) functioning can be influenced by student characteristics (Peters et al., 2014; Splett et al., 2018), suggesting teachers may rate students based on demographic characteristics rather than SEB functioning (Splett et al., 2018). Teacher effects such as teacher gender (Splett et al., 2018), self-efficacy, and depersonalization have also been found to impact teacher ratings (McLean et al., 2019). As teachers' self-efficacy has plummeted and burnout has increased in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic (Pressley, 2021; Pressley & Ha, 2022), teachers may not be in a state to accurately evaluate student performance. Teacher- and student-effects on teacher reports hinder the ability to make conclusions about the relationship between intervention implementation and student outcome (Bolt et al., 2010).

Students' behavior in classrooms can also impact a teacher's accuracy in progress monitoring and service referral (Margherio et al., 2019). Specifically, students with internalizing problems are consistently "missed" (i.e., not referred, or referred significantly less often) while students with externalizing problems (typically disruptive to the classroom environment) are more likely to be referred for intervention services (Splett et al., 2019). Despite recent work emphasizing the need to improve MTSS for internalizing disorders (Collins et al., 2019; Dart et al., 2019; Doll, 2019) and the identification of progress monitoring tools for internalizing problems (Dart et al., 2019), the unobservable nature of many internalizing problems (Greif Green et al., 2017), coupled with lack of training (Sailor et al., 2021), make it difficult for teachers to accurately monitor progress of students with internalizing problems. In addition, increased teacher workload (Johnson,

OLIVIA C. HECK and JACK KOMER are PhD students, and HEATHER E. ORMISTON, PhD, NCSP, is an assistant clinical faculty member, in the school psychology program at Indiana University Bloomington.

2022; Nygaard et al., 2022; Ormiston et al., 2021), as well as teacher and student effects on teacher reports (Peters et al., 2014; Splett et al., 2018), suggest there is a clear need to consider alternative ways to measure progress and student outcomes within the MTSS framework.

Along with teachers, school psychologists are often tasked with various responsibilities within MTSS (Eagle et al., 2015; Frank Webb & Michalopoulou, 2021; Ormiston et al., 2020). We develop competencies and curricula for effective MTSS procedures, train and coach other staff members, participate in the selection of MTSS teams, consult with teachers, as well as evaluate student outcomes (Eagle et al., 2015; Frank Webb & Michalopoulou, 2021; Ormiston et al., 2020). We are also uniquely qualified to assist with universal screening at Tier 1, implement evidence-based interventions at Tier 2, and conduct functional behavior assessments at Tier 3 (Ormiston et al., 2020). However, our valued roles and responsibilities within MTSS (coupled with routine special education evaluations and case conference meetings) make it difficult to find time to regularly collect progress monitoring data for our students. Staff shortages and increased demands can leave us spread thin and burned out (Schilling et al., 2018). With the workload of both teachers and school psychologists increasing, there is an urgent need to allocate progress monitoring to those who are directly impacted by interventions: the students themselves. By doing so, we engage in best practice for MTSS and evidence-based interventions while reducing the workload for teachers and practitioners.

STUDENTS AS SELF-REPORTERS

Students can complete progress monitoring via self-report throughout intervention implementation to relieve teachers, school psychologists, and other school-based mental health professionals from the demands of progress monitoring. Students are dynamic and multifaceted individuals; including other data, such as grades, attendance, office discipline referrals, and school engagement will improve problem identification across multiple domains while also enhancing relationships and learning (Hazel, 2016). As such, self-report progress monitoring should be included with these additional data points to make data-based decisions (Hazel, 2016).

Student age. For self-reports to be an accurate and valid representation of progress, students themselves must have the ability to provide reports that correspond with their internal state (Durbin, 2010). Early literature suggests children as young as 3 can provide valid reports of their emotional state, as well as differentiate between various emotions they experience (Durbin, 2010). Five-year-olds have been found to articulate their internal mental states, including perceptions, emotions, and cognitions (Measelle et al., 2005). However, the literature is inconsistent regarding the appropriate age for self-reporting. Smith (2007) argues self-reports of younger children (below the age of 12) can offer little utility, whereas adolescent self-reports can be more accurate. Five-year-old children have been found to have “severely inconsistent” reports regarding physical, emotional, social, and school functioning compared to parent reports, whereas children at the age of 6 or 7 provided self-report interview data at a similar quality to that of their parents (Conijn et al., 2020). This suggests that students ages 7 and older can provide valid reports of their physical, emotional, behavioral, and social states.

Children, both young and older, are more valid reporters on internalizing problems compared to their teachers while teachers are more valid reporters on externalizing problems compared to their students (Smith, 2007). The developmental appropriateness of measurement procedures or tools can also affect the ability of a younger child from reporting accurately. Measures targeted to provide responses from a wide range of children may be inappropriate for young children whose specific developmental capabilities were not specifically used to construct the tool (Cremeens et al., 2006). Children between the ages of 3 and 6 can be valuable sources of information when data is collected with appropriate tools or procedures (Taber, 2010). This might suggest that the limits of younger children providing self-reports may be based on a combination of a child’s age and the construction of a tool or procedure.

Adolescents often endorse more emotional and behavioral problems than their parents (Kawabe et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2014). Adolescents have a unique perspective on their mental health problems due to their cognitions and feelings across multiple settings (e.g., home, school, extracurricular activities) that cannot be accessed by others (Danielson & Phelps, 2003; Dowdy & Kim, 2012). This discrepancy in reporting may also be due to the lack of self-disclosure adolescents have with their parents or stigma surrounding mental health. Youth may feel less inclined to discuss personal issues surrounding negative emotions such as anx-

ety and sadness (Hellström & Beckman, 2021). This can have implications for schools, as adolescents are typically referred by adults within the school system (i.e., teacher, parent). It is likely that students in need of mental health services do not feel comfortable disclosing information on mental health issues—as a result, these students may go unnoticed.

Children with disabilities. Children with various disabilities have also been observed to accurately self-report. Children as young as 5 years old have been found to report valid and useful information regarding their conduct problems when compared to parent and teacher ratings (Arseneault et al., 2005). Similarly, children with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) can provide useful information about their behaviors (Klimkeit et al., 2006). Children and adolescents with ADHD can identify problems such as concentration and social problems and poorer self-perception (Klimkeit et al., 2006); however, other reports suggest those with ADHD can underreport their symptomatology (Sibley et al., 2019). Self-reports for students with autism can also be useful, as they often report higher

levels of emotional and behavioral problems compared to peers without autism (Hurtig et al., 2009; Pisula et al., 2017). Students with comorbid autism and internalizing problems (e.g., anxiety and depression) report higher levels of distress compared to their parents (Hurtig et al., 2009), indicating self-report is especially useful for students with co-occurring internalizing problems and autism.

While research supporting self-reports among children with intellectual disability (ID) is inconsistent due to a poor quality of research methods and design (Kooijmans et al., 2022), recent work suggests that children with ID can accurately complete self-reports on mental health when language is modified to remove ambiguous or complex wording and demands on working memory (Gilmore et al., 2022). Practitioners and teachers working with

students with ID should also include picture communication symbols and visual prompts to represent the meaning of certain items, change item wording to present tense, replace statements with questions, (e.g., “I have felt happy...” to “How often do you feel happy?”), replace 5-point Likert scales to 3-point Likert or dichotomous response options, and present one item at a time (Davison et al., 2022).

Value of student self-reporting. Children can accurately report on their own behavior, general health, well-being, mental state, and psychopathology (Arseneault et al., 2005; Cremeens et al., 2006; Norwood, 2007). They can even be more accurate when reporting internalizing symptoms compared to teachers (Margherio et al., 2019; Smith, 2007), who are frequently the main sources of collecting progress monitoring data (Splett et al., 2018). Their ability to accurately self-report indicates students can play a unique role within MTSS, specifically within progress monitoring at the Tier 2 and 3 levels. Allowing students to track their progress throughout interventions will not only provide school teams with more accurate data—especially when measuring internalizing problems (Margherio et al., 2019)—but also relieve teachers of a task they may not feel qualified to do. Students who can self-evaluate are able to persist on difficult tasks, have more confidence about their abilities, and feel an increased responsibility for their work (Rolheiser & Ross, 2001). Having to monitor and evaluate their own progress and outcomes helps students to connect new knowledge and skills to what they already know. It can help students create connections and enhance learning in a meaningful way, increasing motivation and confidence (McMillan & Hearn, 2008). The use of self-reports can also elevate the student’s voice in the assessment process, allowing them to have greater control or personal agency towards the framing of their mental health concerns (Gronholm et al., 2018).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTITIONERS

To bridge the research-to-practice gap and inform progress monitoring for Tier 2 SEB interventions, we offer a few helpful tips for practitioners. This is not meant to

Students’ behavior in classrooms can impact a teacher’s accuracy in progress monitoring and service referral. Specifically, students with internalizing problems are consistently “missed” (i.e., not referred, or referred significantly less often) while students with externalizing problems are more likely to be referred for intervention services.

be an exhaustive list, but to provide valuable information and resources that may be helpful for practitioners who desire different approaches to collecting progress monitoring data.

When to monitor progress. Best practices in Tier 2 progress monitoring suggest collecting data either weekly or biweekly (McDaniel et al., 2015). Measures must correspond to the severity of student deficits and must be sensitive to behavioral growth due to the frequency of the data collection (McDaniel et al., 2015). In order to effectively measure change for students with SEB difficulties, MTSS teams must determine decision rules regarding the performance criteria. Consider these questions: How long should progress and mastery take? How are we defining “mastery criteria” or an “acceptable level” of the problem? What are the next steps based on the response, or lack thereof, to the intervention? (McDaniel et al., 2015). Despite these questions, it may be challenging to define mastery criteria for students with internalizing disorders. As such, we suggest comparing scores or patterns of responding in student self-reports. For example, imagine a student with anxiety is asked to complete the Pediatric Symptoms Checklist, short form (Bergmann et al., 2020), on a biweekly basis while participating in the Coping Cat intervention (Beidas et al., 2008). In measuring the internalizing problems scale, a score greater than or equal to 5 suggests significant impairment. The MTSS team, however, could utilize their understanding of the student’s difficulties to adjust the mastery criteria to a score of 3 or lower to indicate efficient progress in alleviating their anxiety problems.

Evidence-based self-reports. For school psychologists and teachers implementing SEB interventions at the Tier 2 and Tier 3 levels, there are a few helpful peer-reviewed articles that have identified some self-report measures specifically designed for use in schools (Deighton et al., 2013; Lorentzen et al., 2020; Patalay et al., 2014) and several clinical self-assessments that may be useful for school-based practice when working with students with internalizing problems (Andrews et al., 2020; Beidas et al., 2015; Dart et al., 2019). Although self-reports are widely used in clinical settings, self-report formats can also be used in schools, as they have been validated for self-reporting (Dart et al., 2019).

Of concern, many existing measures have 20 or more items. Despite the many benefits of having a comprehensive self-report, this is not often realistic for school-based practitioners and teachers. In our experience, we are only given 20–30 minutes to implement weekly interventions. Having students complete a 25-item self-report is not feasible, as it would take away from critical intervention time. We recognize that interventionists may have similar experiences, so we have compiled a list of *free*, short (i.e., 12 items or less), evidence-based self-reports that can be quickly and efficiently administered in the beginning or end of the session without significantly cutting into intervention implementation time.

The 10-item Positive and Negative Affect Schedule for Children (PANAS-C) is a revised version of the 27-item PANAS-C. It measures both positive and negative mood in children ages 9–17. The 10-item PANAS-C includes two 5-item scales and requires respondents to rate how they have felt each emotion over the last few weeks using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“very slightly or not at all”) to 5 (“extremely”), suggesting it be administered biweekly. It has acceptable internal consistency and performs equally well as the original PANAS-C (Ebesutani et al., 2012).

The 11-item and 6-item Kutcher Adolescent Depression Scale (KADS-11/KADS-6) are short forms of the original 16-item KADS, measuring depression symptomatology in adolescents ages 12–22 (LeBlanc et al., 2002). The KADS-6 is specifically designed for use in schools, as it can be a quick tool to measure student outcomes of interventions (Quintão et al., 2015). In both the KADS-11 and KADS-6, respondents rate depression symptoms on a Likert scale from 0 (“hardly ever”) to 3 (“all of the time”). Both the KADS-11 and KADS-6 have adequate internal consistency, and the KADS-11 has the highest sensitivity to change compared to the KADS-6 and original KADS (Brooks et al., 2003).

The Behavior and Feelings Survey (BFS) is a 12-item questionnaire that measures both internalizing and externalizing behaviors in children and adolescents (Weisz et al., 2019). Respondents rate 6 internalizing and 6 externalizing problems during the past week on a scale from 0 (“not a problem”) to 4 (“a very big problem”). The BFS is intended to monitor progress over time and across repeated occasions during an intervention (Weisz et al., 2019). It is sensitive to change over the course of treatment and has robust internal consistency, reliability, and validity (Weisz et al., 2019).

The Pediatric Symptoms Checklist-17 Youth Report is included here (despite having a total of 17 items) because it consists of three different subscales measuring attention (5 items), internalizing (5 items), and externalizing problems (7 items).

Each subscale has its own clinically elevated score, suggesting students can complete one subscale based on reason for referral and intervention. Respondents rate each symptom on a Likert scale from 0 (“Never”) to 2 (“Often”). The original version, PSC-Y, has recently been validated in school settings (Liu et al., 2022) and has been found to be sensitive to change when used as a progress monitoring measure (Beidas et al., 2015).

The Child Outcome Rating Scale (CORS) is a 4-item rating scale that measures the student’s feelings regarding the following questions: “How am I feeling?,” “How are things in my family?,” “How am I doing at school?,” and “How is everything going?” Respondents rate their feelings on a visual analog scale from a frowny face to a smiley face. The CORS has been validated for children ages 6–15 (Casey et al., 2020; Sparks et al., 2006) and it can be completed on a weekly basis. However, the CORS is primarily used in therapeutic settings as a conversational tool to inform sessions (Sundet, 2012). The CORS may be useful in a school setting; however, it may work best for Tier 3 or one-on-one interventions as both a progress monitoring and conversational tool.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

- Adapt measures to online platforms such as Google Forms without compromising the psychometric properties or publisher guidelines. We recommend using school-issued tablets so students can quickly and efficiently complete the measure. It increases organization and keeps all progress monitoring data within one, secure location, and helps create graphs, all while reducing paper.
- Have students complete progress monitoring measures in the beginning or at the end of each weekly session to keep them accountable for completing the weekly measure.
- Match the progress monitoring tool to the problem behavior or replacement behavior of the students. Similarly, keep measures the same for all students in the group at the Tier 2 level.
- Have students create their own goals of the intervention to increase internal motivation (McMillan & Hearn, 2008).
- Show students their progress intermittently to provide them opportunities to evaluate their progress, adjust accordingly, and reflect on their own experiences (McMillan & Hearn, 2008). ■

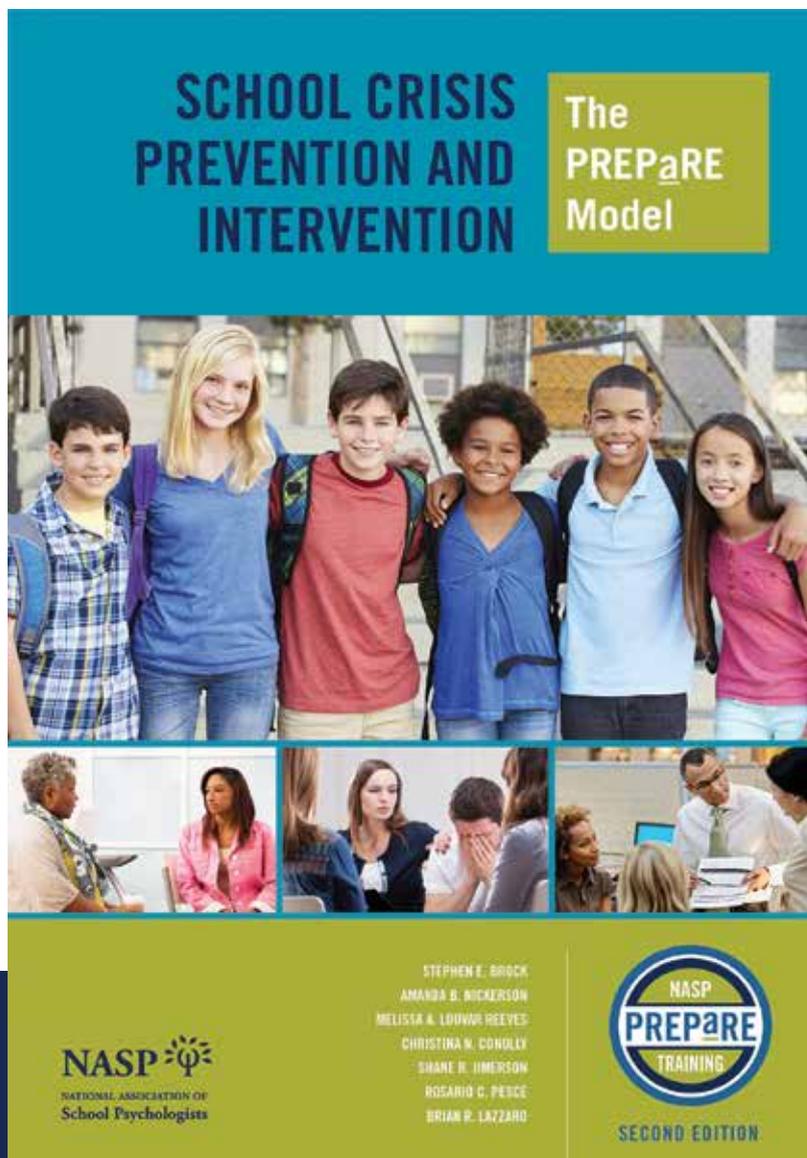
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- Complement PREPaRE workshop participation and provide access to the curriculum for individuals who have not yet taken training.

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Student Connections

Cultivating Humility With Intersectionality

BY LEONORA RYLAND

Intersectionality is a framework for how the simultaneous experience of social categorizations (e.g., race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, gender identity, multilingualism, religion) create overlapping and interdependent systems of oppression, domination, and discrimination (Crenshaw, 1989). Proctor (2020) highlights Crenshaw's argument that individuals having multiple minoritized identities "should be viewed through a lens that takes into account how their identities intersect to influence their experience of the world, particularly experiences that lead to discrimination." Often graduate students are taught intersectionality is a list of identities, oversimplifying the framework and ignoring the risk of systematic oppression resulting from the interaction of these concurrent experiences across multiple social groups (Proctor et al., 2017; Simon et al., 2021). Most school psychology programs' multicultural coursework lacks sufficient depth and breadth across the curriculum (Malone & Ishmail, 2020). From my own experiences, meaningful conversations about intersectionality occurred outside coursework only after being sought out.

For many of us, thorough exploration of intersectionality is lacking in coursework. Here are some practical tools that I have found helpful in (a) continuing my self-reflection and learning and (b) trying to employ an intersectionality-informed perspective and approach in all aspects of my work, all in pursuit of our goal of developing as school psychologists and social change agents.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Schools serve increasingly diverse populations, with 42% students who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC; 27% Latinx, 15% Black) and 10.2% English learners (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). School psychologists must deepen their understanding and apply the intersectionality framework to work with students, families, and educators (NASP, 2020). School psychologists' and school psychology graduate students' understanding of privilege and oppression could inform our work in various ways, including the disciplinary consequences assigned to Black females or special education referrals of English learners.

Intersectionality can be a tool for social justice that we must learn to wield effectively to improve educational experiences and outcomes for all learners (Proctor, 2020). School psychology graduate students should not evaluate learners as a checkbox of isolated identities but, rather, recognize how these intersect to influence health, well-being, academic performance, and behavioral development (Proctor et al., 2017; Simon et al., 2021). Due to past experiences and continued interests in serving low-income and economically marginalized learners, I have found the intersectionality framework essential in shaping case conceptualization, determining appropriately normed assessments and interventions, and collaborating with learners.

STRATEGIES IN GRADUATE SCHOOL

A prerequisite to using the intersectionality framework effectively is to acknowledge and reckon with our privileges, acquiescence to implicit bias, defense mechanisms, and the destructive yet invisible nature of privilege that can reinforce oppressive systems. This reckoning enables more understanding of future learners' intersectional identities (Proctor, 2020). These strategies could include:

- Remember it is a process; remain curious and reflective, and apply new understandings in future cases.
- Conduct a self-reflection exercise (e.g., Malone et al.'s [2016] *School Psychology Multicultural Competence Scale*).
- Harness social media for good; seek out advocates transparent about their experiences at the intersection of multiple systems of discrimination.

ACTIVELY STRIVE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Graduate students must act as advocates for all minoritized groups by seeking out opportunities to do so within our graduate programs or across pre-K–12 campuses.

LEONORA RYLAND is a 4th year PhD student at Baylor University.

This work can begin with thoughtful reflection and planning and may involve:

- Monitor for microaggressions within our own thoughts and in dialogue with supervisors, colleagues, and school staff.
- Educate yourself on appropriate language embraced by specific communities (e.g., person-first or disability-first language).
- In conducting intakes during field experiences, ask each learner, "How do you identify?" and respect their responses and incorporate them into future recommendations.
- Seek opportunities to improve district policies; model using intersectionality to guide data collection, analysis, and action planning. For instance, interventions to address higher suicide rates of LGBTQIA+ BIPOC students or bullying of Asian American and Pacific Islander students.

EMBRACE CULTURAL HUMILITY

While every graduate student may not experience the same discrimination firsthand, all school psychology graduate students must show cultural humility, especially those with privileged identities. Actions to embody cultural humility must embrace the time and empathy required for deepening understanding. We gain insights from other disciplines; the social work field utilizes tools to identify and counteract ableism, classism, heterosexism, racism, and sexism as systematic manifestations of oppression (Simon et al., 2021). It may prove beneficial to consider intersectionality while crafting programmatic recommendations.

GET MORE OUT OF COURSEWORK

There are opportunities to embed intersectionality and social justice implications across curricula, explicitly in coursework about assessment, ethics, behavior, and academic interventions (Proctor et al., 2017). Specific actions to promote intersectionality within your graduate program might include:

- Audit syllabi to reflect on the emphasized voices and identify gaps in representation.
- Collaborate with colleagues and supervisors about cultural adaptations for evidence-based interventions (Jones, 2014).
- Incorporate the intersectionality framework into research (i.e., sampling methodology, data collection, and analysis; Proctor, 2020), explicitly name the lack of intersectional groups in the limitations section.
- Include social validity measures in program evaluations, implementation fidelity considerations, and frame recommendations on structural barriers.

All in all, intersectionality is a complex framework (Crenshaw, 1989; Proctor, 2020). Our responsibility is to humble ourselves, seek new understandings, and gain experiences applying the intersectional framework to provide more equitable access and empathetic support for all learners. ■

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Just a Click Away

BY DAN FLORELL



Adding Digital Therapeutics to School Psychologists' Toolkits

The crush of student mental health needs brought on by the pandemic has not lessened. Yet schools have less personnel available to address those needs, particularly school psychologists. The whole mental health system of the United States has been overwhelmed, with long waitlists being commonplace.

To provide services to more students, school psychologists should consider the use of technology. Digital therapeutics are evidence-based interventions driven by high-quality software programs used to prevent, manage, or treat various physical and psychological disorders. This broad category of interventions covers mental health apps, AI-driven chatbots, and wearable technologies.

The gold standard for digital therapeutics are interventions that have

been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Association (FDA). Only a few interventions have completed that process, one of which is a video game that treats ADHD, EndeavorRx. In addition to there being few FDA approved digital therapeutics, they can only be acquired through a prescription from a physician. This puts it out of reach for school psychologists.

However, there are many digital mental health interventions that have not gone through the FDA process that are still well-designed and based on sound theoretical footing. Currently, the digital therapeutic research literature on children and adolescents is scant and is at the stage that various counseling approaches were a few decades ago. This makes it an exciting yet confusing time to incorporate these types of interventions into school psychologists' toolboxes.

School psychologists can take tentative steps in starting to integrate these tools into practice. One small

step could be to introduce meditation or mindfulness apps like Smiling Minds into a stress management group. The apps can provide guidance to students beyond the group setting that can serve as a supplement to in-person services and help generalize the skill across settings. It has consistently been found that when digital interventions are used in conjunction with in-person services, people tend to use the digital intervention longer.

For a long time, I have been intrigued with the idea of school psychologists making better use of wearable technology as part of their assessments. There are so many issues that arise in students when they are not getting sufficient sleep or have too much or too little activity during the day. Activity trackers made by Fitbit, Garmin, and Apple have become affordable enough for school districts to purchase for use in assessment. All of the activity trackers can be used by following students over time to reveal patterns in the number of steps they are taking and the amount of sleep they are getting. While this data does not provide the highest precision, it is of higher quality than the typical verbal report received from parents or other adults.

The main drawback for many digital

interventions is the opaqueness regarding what information is being taken in and who has access to that data. School psychologists are not going to have the time to be able to dig into every app they may want to use with students. This is where mental health review sites can be helpful. Psyberguide and the M-Health Index and Navigation Database (MIND) can help. Each site reviews apps on four dimensions including privacy/data security, evidence of effectiveness, user engagement, and integration into care.

There are a couple of additional steps that school psychologists should take prior to implementing digital interventions: Check with the school district about suggesting the use of particular apps or services and always get parent consent.

The role of digital therapeutics and digital mental health interventions will continue to grow as efforts are made to reach more students who have mental health needs. School psychologists should explore how these can have a positive impact on students and allow them to expand their services beyond what is currently possible. ■

DAN FLORELL, PhD, NCSP, is a professor at Eastern Kentucky University and a contributing editor for *Communique*.



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Book Reviews

EDITED BY KATHERINE E. MCLENDON

Understanding the Unique and Complex Issues of Students in Military Families

REVIEWED BY NICK ELKSNIN

Unless one has the experience of growing up in a military family, most school psychologists have little experience with military culture. It is estimated that the “average” military family has nine transitions (i.e., relocations/deployments), all of which impact schooling. Understanding this context is paramount in developing effective student supports.

In seven compact chapters, Fenning implements the strengths based MTSS model. Chapter 1 explains the strengths and needs of military families. Chapter 2 clarifies the different school settings:

SCHOOL SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS IN MILITARY FAMILIES

By P. Fenning
2021, The Guilford Press

public, Department of Defense (DoD), and non-DoD schools. Chapter 3, Universal Screening, describes

the difficulty in identifying students from military families. Active military have only recently been included in Every Student Succeeds Act 2015 data collection. However, National Guard and Reserve families are not enumerated, thus overlooking a large number of students in potential need of support. Fenning has suggestions as to how not to miss these students. Chapters 4 and 5, Promoting Healthy Social Development and Developing Mental Health Supports, focus on more common areas of need. The military deployment cycle (unique to the military) forces change in family roles and dynamics for all members. When a member is deployed, stressors are evident in nondeployed family members in many ways. Even when a member returns from deployment, reintegrating into the changed family dynamic is again a unique source of stress. Chapter 6 explains the complexity of continually moving to different schools as a function of ongoing deployments and relocations. Military families with a student with a disability have an even larger need for supports. Chapter 7 reviews the legal requirements and resources for military youth. Chapter

8 provides a brief review of Chapters 1–7 and recommends research in this generally thinly researched and mostly unrecognized population. The author provides case studies to highlight issues in each chapter and a large number of actionable resources. In addition, NASP facilitates a Military Family Interest Group to allow school psychologists to connect and share insights.

Early in my career, I was assigned an elementary and a high school serving large numbers of students from both a Navy and an Air Force base. I wish I had this text as a resource, to be more aware of and effective in serving this unique population.

NICK ELKSNIN, PhD, NCSP, Learning & Evaluation Resources in Lexington, South Carolina.

Social–Emotional Skills Training

REVIEWED BY ELIZABETH WILLIAMS

School districts across the country are prioritizing social–emotional learning as a foundation for educating the whole child. The *Social–Emotional Learning Lab: A Comprehensive SEL Resource Kit* provides a structure for school psychologists (or other school-based providers) to start a program of pull-out support services for struggling students. Specifically, the “Lab” targets students experiencing difficulties with self-awareness, self-management, emotion regulation, relationship building,

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING LAB: A Comprehensive SEL Resource Kit

By V. Poedubicky & M. J. Elias
2020, Research Press Publishers

effective communication, social awareness, and problem-solving. These skills align with the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning competencies.

The text describes the logistical necessities for beginning an SEL Lab in schools, from discussions with administrators to communicating with teachers and parents to enroll students. The SEL Lab uses a psychoeducational approach and teaching style to train students in specific skills. The authors mention that their model can be utilized alongside popular SEL programs, including Second Step, Responsive Classroom, and others. Flexibility is given to substitute the Lab terminology with

the specific language used in any preexisting SEL program within the school. Student entrance into the Lab includes a student referral to the program using teacher and parent referral forms. The referral forms have questions regarding students’ presenting problems and desired areas for skill acquisition. However, student referral to the program does not involve standardized or formal universal screeners for social–emotional and behavioral functioning. Instead, the Lab relies on teacher and parent observations of student functioning. School psychologists and districts looking for a more formal screener will need to administer a separate measure alongside the Lab referral forms.

Identified students are grouped by skill area and are entered into the Lab program. Students participate in Lab sessions in a group format. Lessons include feeling check-ins/outs, worksheets, and games. All worksheets and game instructions are available as an appendix and digital downloads. It should be noted that while a majority of materials are free to copy with the purchase of the book, some supplies will need to be purchased separately to supplement the activities (e.g., markers, crayons, game boards).

The Lab program is intended for short-term participation. Importantly, the authors provide a skills assessment to monitor progress on acquired skills to guide decision-making for continuing services or exiting from the Lab. While progress monitoring during sessions is important to evaluate students’ skill knowledge, the Lab does not provide a progress monitoring tool to assess specific reductions in students’ problem behavior within the classroom environment. Instead, progress monitoring from the text involves tracking the use of skills within sessions rather than the generalization of learned skills across the school day. It is understandable that classroom tracking was not included due to the specificity of student behavior and the necessity for individualized data forms; however, the assessment tools provided in the book can be a starting point for more detailed data collection.

As previously mentioned, the structure and resources provided in this text are described as pull-out, small group services. While not a specific goal of the Lab, the lessons could easily be used as

grab-and-go activities for teachers to use in the classroom or school psychologists to include alongside their counseling content during individual counseling sessions. The Lab model might also help school psychologists roll out a multitiered system of support to respond to student behavior (e.g., Tier 2 services if classroom-based interventions were un-

School districts across the country are prioritizing social–emotional learning as a foundation for educating the whole child. The “Lab” targets students experiencing difficulties with self-awareness, self-management, emotion regulation, relationship building, effective communication, social awareness, and problem-solving.

successful). Another section of the text outlines the important distinction between the sessions in the Lab program and the content that would otherwise be covered during individual counseling (e.g., Tier 3 services).

Session formats and sample lessons are provided; however, there is no specific session-by-session guide with specific prompts for each recommended worksheet or activity. Nonetheless, there is sufficient organizational structure provided for school psychologists or interns to follow the system and have materials at the ready (e.g., table connecting problem behavior with skills, printable worksheets, color-coded system to group materials). The *Social–Emotional Learning Lab: A Comprehensive SEL Resource Kit* is a useful and informative resource for school psychologists looking to incorporate more structure and supports for students’ social–emotional and behavioral needs. ■

ELIZABETH WILLIAMS, PsyD, NCSP, is a school psychologist with the Darien Public Schools in Connecticut.

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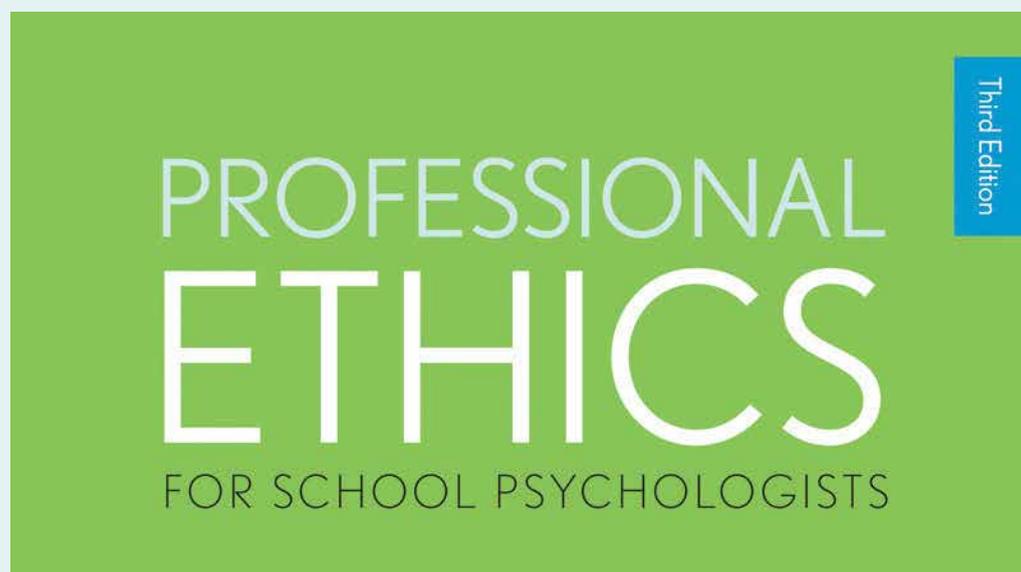
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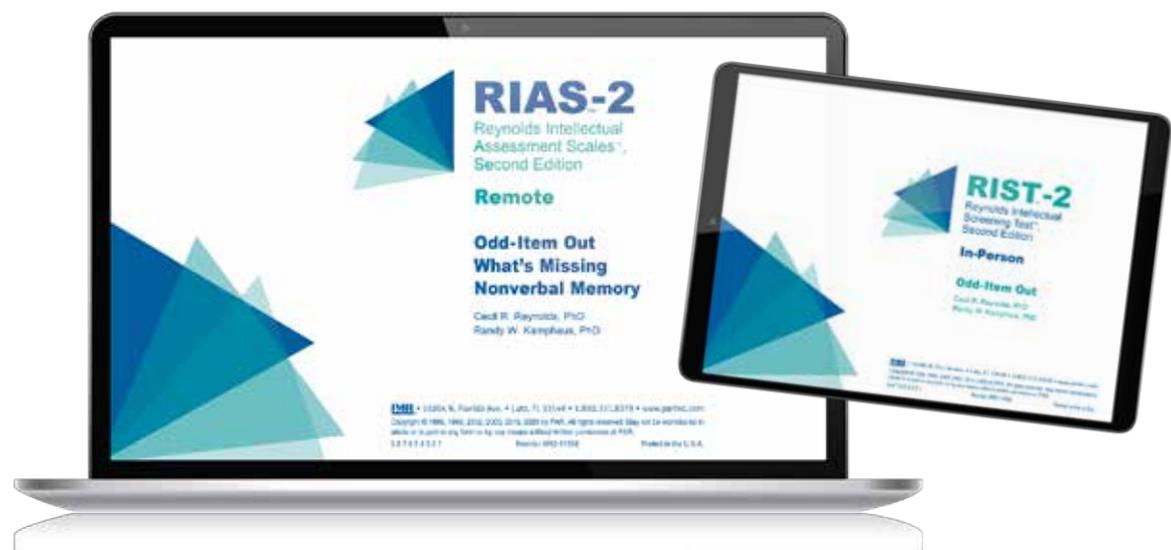
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