



*stronger together*  
united we thrive

Texas Association of School Psychologists  
2021 Fall Convention



## Vision

School psychologists are partners to ensure all children succeed in school, at home, and throughout life.

## Mission

The Texas Association of School Psychologists is a professional organization that supports and advocates for school psychologists having a positive impact on school systems to improve academic skills, social-emotional functioning, and mental-behavioral health for all students.

## Domain 6: Services to Promote Safe & Supportive Schools

“School psychologists promote wellness and resilience by (a) **collaborating** with other healthcare professionals to provide a basic knowledge of behaviors that lead to healthy outcomes for children and youth; (b) facilitating environmental changes conducive to good health and adjustment of children and youth; and (c) accessing resources to address a wide variety of behavioral, learning, mental, and physical needs.”

“School psychologists **advocate** for state and local policies that promote safe and inclusive school environments.”

The background features a watercolor-style pattern. It consists of overlapping, semi-transparent circles in various shades of blue, ranging from light sky blue to deep navy. Superimposed on these circles are delicate, branching structures in a golden-brown or light tan color, resembling coral, seaweed, or stylized tree branches. The overall aesthetic is soft and organic.

# Legislative Activities

- ❖ Trans students & intramural sports
- ❖ Critical Race Theory
- ❖ Suicide Prevention Resources
- ❖ Counselor time dedicated to mental health services

- ❖ “School Psychologist”
- ❖ Including school psychologists in policies that promote and support mental health providers
- ❖ Shortage Task Force



*Go Ahead and BRAG a  
Little....*



The background features a watercolor-style pattern. It consists of overlapping, semi-transparent circles in various shades of blue, ranging from light sky blue to deep navy. Superimposed on these circles are delicate, branching structures in a golden-brown or light tan color, resembling bare tree branches or coral. The overall aesthetic is soft and artistic.

# Non-Legislative Activities

## ❖ Dyslexia Evaluations & Child Find



April 7, 2021

To: Kevin Ellis, Chair of State Board of Education  
Re: School-Based Dyslexia Evaluations

Dear Mr. Ellis,

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Texas Association of School Psychologists (TASP). School psychologists, referred to as licensed specialists in school psychology (LSSPs) in Texas, are school-based mental health professionals who provide many direct and consultative services to students, families, and schools. Among these services includes evaluation for disabilities through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). TASP is concerned that students in Texas suspected of having dyslexia are not being properly evaluated and identified for special education services through current guidance and policy in the 2018 Dyslexia Handbook. Dyslexia is specifically named in IDEA's definition of specific learning disability (SLD), and TASP believes students suspected of having dyslexia should be referred and evaluated through IDEA processes to ensure schools are meeting their Child Find responsibilities.

In general, having two evaluation pathways for dyslexia potentially contributes to the underidentification of students with disabilities, confusion among stakeholders, and a delay in students receiving specialized instruction and appropriate services for their overall educational needs. The rationale for our position on dyslexia evaluations is outlined in the following points:

- 1) The Dyslexia Handbook currently provides guidance to schools to first determine whether they suspect a student requires specially designed instruction (SDI) or "standard protocol dyslexia instruction" in order to determine the evaluation pathway through Section 504 or IDEA. This guidance is fundamentally and procedurally flawed as programming decisions should be made after the evaluation has been completed and the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD)/Individual Education Program (IEP).

## ❖ Gender Affirming Care for Trans Children



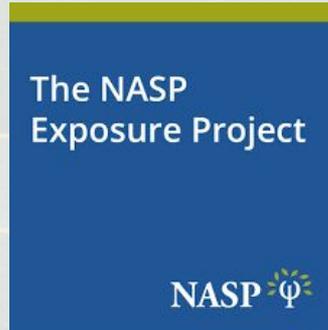
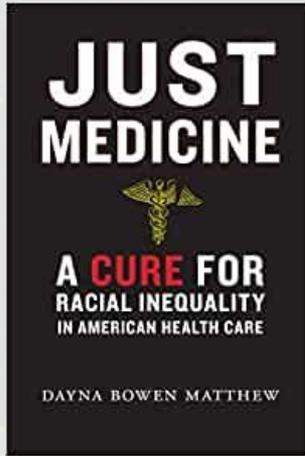
August 25, 2021

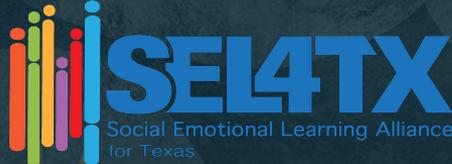
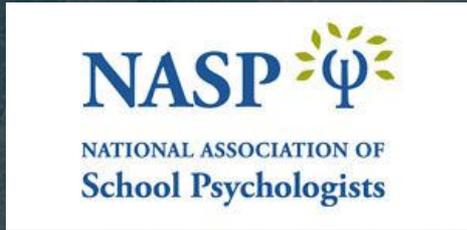
re: Gender-Affirming Care

Dear Commissioner Masters:

Texas mental health and medical professionals have significant concerns regarding your recent decision that purports to label some gender-affirming care to youth as "child abuse." Policy actions restricting or limiting gender affirming care will have negative consequences for transgender children, families, mental health and medical professionals, and those working in and around the child welfare system. We urge you, as the head of the agency charged with ensuring the best interests and well-being of Texas children, to reconsider your decision, which threatens potentially life-saving care for transgender children and youth.

At their core, efforts that attempt to categorize gender-affirming medical care as a form of abuse that would need to be investigated by the Department of Family & Protective Services (DFPS) are an inaccurate depiction of abuse and inconsistent with professional child welfare standards. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration defines individual trauma (including abuse) as resulting from:







*Alone we can do so  
little, together we can  
do so much.*

*-Helen Keller*

# GET INVOLVED WITH TASP!



**Social Justice  
Committee**



**Government &  
Professional  
Relations Committee**



**Shortage &  
Workforce  
Committee**



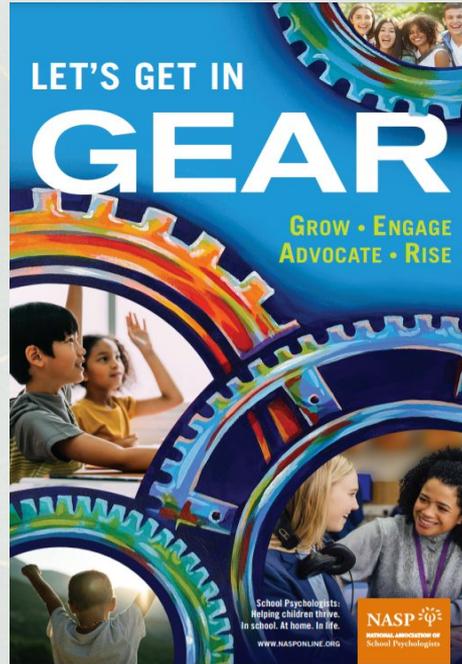
**School Safety &  
Crisis Committee**



37%

School-employed LSSPs who are TASP members

# National School Psychology Week



# School Psychologist Appreciation Week



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