

**ETHICS FOR SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS 2018:
DECISION MAKING FROM MULTIPLE
PERSPECTIVES**

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And
Special Guests

Objectives

- Participants will practice using a problem-solving model to address ethical issues.
- Participants will discuss accepted and evolving standards and principles pertaining to different scenarios.
- Participants will increase knowledge and awareness of the NASP Principles for Professional Ethics.
- Participants will increase knowledge and awareness of the intersection between ethical principles, legal mandates and procedural requirements in professional practice.

Please Note:

- Although I am a member of the NASP Ethical and Professional Practices Board. Individual professional opinions are my own.
- Although I occasionally write and publish about ethical and professional practices, I am not promoting my work today.
- I am not an attorney; my opinions should not be regarded as legal advice.

The Ethics and Professional Practice Board's Role

- The NASP Ethical and Professional Practices Board (EPPB) is responsible for interpreting and applying standards for the professional conduct of NASP members and school psychologists who are credentialed by the National School Psychology Certification System.
- The Board's objectives are:
 - *To promote and maintain ethical conduct by school psychologists.*
 - *To educate school psychologists regarding NASP ethical standards.*
 - *To protect the well being of school psychologists' clients.*

Ethical Codes

- National Association of School Psychologists Principles for Professional Ethics (NASP, 2010) provides four general themes: Respecting the dignity of all persons, professional competence and responsibility, honesty and integrity in interpersonal relationships and responsibility to schools, families, communities, the profession and society.
- The Ethical Principles of Psychologists provided by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2003) provides five general ethical principles: Beneficence and non-maleficence, fidelity and responsibility, integrity, justice and respect for people's rights and dignity.
- The International School Psychology Association (ISPA) created a code of ethical principles that attempts to define general principles that span international, cultural, linguistic and legal contexts. The general tenants of the ISDA ethical code include general principles related to trust, promotion of children's welfare, and high levels of professional competence (ISPA, 1990).

Parameters

- Ethical Codes- for school psychologists and other educational professionals
- Legal Requirements- FERPA, IDEA, NCLB, credentialing requirements, state education laws and regulations, etc.
- District Policies

Ethics codes are imperfect guides for professional conduct

- Composed of broad, abstract principles as well as specific mandates
- Competing ethical principles or conflicts between ethical principles and laws or regulations
- Conflicting interests of multiple parties (e.g., student, parents, classmates)
- Dual roles of employee and pupil advocate
- May not address new and emerging ethical issues in a timely manner

ETHICAL SCENARIOS
2018

A Rose May Not Always Be a Rose

In my new district, we share and explain test scores from special education evaluations to parents using a use a printout of a bell curve. However, when different team members (ex- SLP, OT, reading specialist) discuss scores from their own testing, the descriptive labels of the scores sometimes are different than the ones that I used. For example, I mostly use the WJIV tests and go by their score descriptions where 90-110 is average, 80-89 is low average, etc. Others have been trained to use ranges related to standard deviations, where they refer to average as 85-115. Parents (and teachers!) can get confused when one team member has called a score of 86 low average and then another refers to an 86 as average. I have tried to get us all on the same vocabulary page, but no one is ready to go against the way they learned about testing.

Time is Not on My Side

I have recently returned to work after staying home with my children for 5 years. I am working for a different district than I did before. On my first day I learned that I have 10 6th-8th grade students with weekly counseling time I am supposed to provide. In my previous position, I only provided crisis counseling services, not counseling as a related service as part of an IEP. I'm not at all sure what I am supposed to do with these students. I'm only on the campus for a day and a half a week so, meeting with each kid takes my entire time allotted for this school. So add meetings and testing. I have no idea how to fit it all! The students on my list have concerns ranging from significant social skill deficits related to autism, impulsivity and disorganization related to ADHD, and anxiety and depression related to emotional disturbance.

Do the Right Thing

For the first time, our school is working with a transgender student regarding appropriate access to facilities. There is a lot of emotional responses in the community related to meeting the needs of all students with respect to gender. I have been in practice for more than 15 years and my training did not include content or practical experiences regarding working with gender diverse students. In addition, I personally believe that this has become more of a political and philosophical debate rather than an evidence based one. I want to be professional and work with this student and family, but I am not sure what I am doing.

Stirring the Pot

I am currently working in a district that utilizes more than one individual to complete the psychoeducational component of completing comprehensive evaluations (ex- diagnosticians complete cog and achievement, school psych completes social emotional). I am not sure that I am really comfortable with this process. At the moment, I have created waves by stating I will do all of the assessments for the students with whom I am involved. However, this is causing difficulty for many folks in our system.

Sharing is Caring

I am not clear on the standard for the confidentiality of general education counseling rosters. For students who are receiving counseling as part of their special education related services, it is very much common knowledge among involved staff, administration, and parents. On the other hand, if general education students are to see me more than a couple of times for crisis intervention, I require parental permission and/or refer them to the school counselor. So, parents know if a child is seeing me. So who in the school building can or should know that I am seeing a student? The specific situations I am thinking about are:
Sharing my counseling roster with the school counselor.

Sharing my counseling roster with administration in the context of our regular meeting to discuss students with behavior difficulties and their progress. I am often asked if I am seeing one student or another.

Also can the school counselor share their roster with me? My reason for the equal exchange is because I am aware of certain students who would benefit from additional counseling, but I do not know who is being seen at this time.
