



The Texas School Psychologist
A partner on the path to student success

Texas Association of School Psychologists

www.txasp.org

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President's Message

Jennifer Schroeder, President



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Greetings TASP members! I would like to take this opportunity to say hello and welcome you to a new year. I am very excited to take over as the President of TASP for 2015 and am looking forward to moving forward with this great organization.

Before I lay out my thoughts on the upcoming year, I'd like to introduce myself to you. I have been a member of the TASP Executive Board for seven years, first as Treasurer Elect and Treasurer, then as Trainers Representative. In my seven years on the Board I have learned a lot about how the organization works and have seen it evolve. I am looking forward to leading such a great organization during the coming year.

During the year ahead I have two major goals that I would like to accomplish with the organization. The first is to continue on our Past President's work and increase the efficiency of board meetings. Kelly Anderson, our past president, instituted a new board organization that allows us to accomplish more at each meeting by breaking the group into three councils. The councils are each responsible for different aspects of the organization and have proven to be a more efficient way to accomplish TASP business. I plan to continue using the council structure to keep our meetings efficient.

My second goal is to lay the foundation for the Sunset Review that is coming up following the current legislative session. For those of you who are not familiar with the Sunset Review process, the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (TSBEP) will undergo a review process in 2016-1017 that will determine if the agency is necessary and, if so, how it can be improved. Further information about the process is available at <https://www.sunset.texas.gov/how-sunset-works>.

One thing that I would like to make you aware of was a recent visit by the Executive Director of TSBEP at our January 2015 board meeting. As you may remember, in 2013 TSBEP asked TASP, as well as TPA, for support in asking for a special budget item that would have increased licensing fees by \$15. TASP did support TSBEP and our licensing fees increased by only \$7.

During his most recent visit, the Executive Director asked TASP for a letter of support to back TSBEPs asking for another special budget item that would allow for a raise for board staff. This budget item would increase licensing fees by the additional \$7 that they were not increased by in 2013. The Executive Board voted to support TSBEP and provided the letter of support. Although this will mean a slight increase in our licensing fees, it is no larger than what it would have been two years ago.

As President, I look forward to moving TASP forward and ask you to forward any suggestions to me so that as an organization we may provide you with the membership benefits you need and want. I am truly looking forward to the rest of 2015.

TASP Spotlight on a Cooperative: HONDA Student Service Agreement

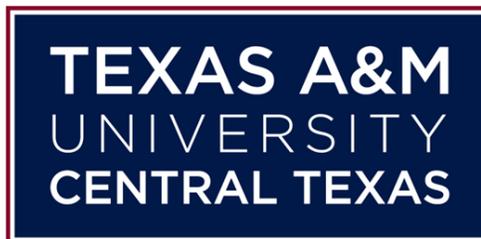


This quarter we are showcasing a small cooperative in West Texas. HONDA Student Service Agreement provides special education services to five, rural districts just north of the Lubbock area. HONDA is an acronym for the districts and includes: Hale Center, Olton, New Deal, and Abernathy. Shallowater Independent School District later joined the co-op. Currently, the co-op employs one director, one assistant director, two secretaries, five diagnosticians, six speech pathologists, an occupational therapist, physical therapist, vision therapy specialist, auditory impairment teacher, curriculum specialist, transition coordinator, and one LSSP.

HONDA had never had an LSSP and utilized several established positions to meet the psychological needs of their students. The school districts' counselors provided counseling as a related service, private practice psychologists who also held a license in school psychology completed evaluations to determine eligibility for autism and emotional disturbance, and a behavior specialist provided consultation to teachers, developed behavior intervention plans, and worked closely with the districts' FOCUS Redirectors who provide behavior management support. This is the first year the co-op has had an LSSP to absorb these duties in addition to facilitating IEP meetings and managing a small paperwork caseload.

HONDA has been pleased with their decision to add an LSSP to their staff. In addition to being cost and time efficient, the LSSP can offer a range of services, including substantial training in applied behavior analysis. By hiring an LSSP, the co-op has been able to provide behavioral consultation and brainstorm more effective treatments for their students with autism and emotional disturbance from one professional who sees the student from evaluation, through treatment development to implementation, and follow up as opposed to multiple professionals that may or may not directly communicate with one another.

HONDA's story is just one example of how LSSPs are critical in meeting the psychological needs of students in the rural areas of Texas. There is clearly a shortage of LSSPs to meet the high demands across hundreds of miles in the state of Texas. As advocates for mental health in schools, LSSPs are encouraged to get involved, advocate, and represent the field as we approach Sunset Review in 2017, which could drastically change the way we practice school psychology.



Texas A&M University – Central Texas School Psychology program is accepting applications for their Specialist Degree in School Psychology (SSP) program. Interested applicants should hold a Bachelors degree in Psychology or a closely related field and be dedicated to improving the lives of students and schools. The SSP program is 63 graduate hours and prepares students to become a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology in the state of Texas, or seek licensure as a School Psychologist in other states. The program includes extensive training in assessment, counseling, consultation and internship experiences that help apply classroom learning to real life problems. Send letters of inquiry to: Dr. Coady Lapierre, LSSP, 1001 Leadership Place, Killeen, Texas 76549 or lapierre@tamuct.edu

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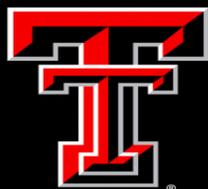


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School Psychology Program

The Department of Educational Psychology at UTSA is pleased to offer the Master of Arts program in School Psychology. The program includes coursework and field-based experiences consistent with guidelines provided by the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists and the National Association of School Psychologists. Most courses are offered in the evening at the UTSA Downtown Campus, and full-time and part-time tracks are available. Application deadlines are as follows: July 1st for the Fall, November 1st for the Spring, and April 1st for the Summer. Students are currently completing their practicum experiences with the following sites: Alamo Heights ISD, Atascosa-McMullen Cooperative, Bexar County Academy, Boerne ISD, George Gervin Academy, San Antonio ISD, San Antonio Special Programs Cooperative, Somerset ISD, and South San ISD. Students are currently completing their internship experiences with the following sites: AIM Consulting, Alamo Heights ISD, Atascosa-McMullen Cooperative, Autism Treatment Center, Belton ISD, Boerne ISD, East Central ISD, George Gervin Academy, Granbury ISD, Heartland Special Education Cooperative, Katy ISD, and San Antonio ISD.

Treasurer's Report

My name is Cheri Waggoner and I am the 2015 Treasurer for TASP. I previously served as Membership Chairperson and last year as the Treasurer-Elect.

In January we had our first board meeting of the 2015 year and discussed how the organization ended the 2014 year financially. We also discussed and approved the budget for the 2015 year. From the 2014 year the organization saw our projected income exceeded in the areas of membership and conference. This translates to a larger than planned for membership total and a conference that had more attendees than projected. This is fantastic news for the organization as it indicates we are serving a growing number of LSSPs practicing in the state.

We are currently planning a larger than ever Summer Institute where we again hope to exceed projected attendees. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you and the organization.



Spotlight on an LSSP: *Amy M. Strauch, LSSP*



Amy Strauch is a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology and the Evaluation Specialist at the Education Service Center, Region 20. Education Service Centers were developed almost 50 years ago by the Texas Legislature. Their primary mission is to provide high quality, low cost products and services for Texas public schools in an attempt to keep the cost of public education affordable. Today the role of Education Service Centers has expanded to support a variety of education entities through the provision products and services. The Education Service Center, Region 20 supports 84 public and charter school districts in 17 counties that educate approximately 400,000 students.

Amy completed her undergraduate education in psychology at Texas Lutheran University and her graduate training in school psychology at Trinity University. Prior to her work at ESC-20, Amy worked as an LSSP in the Northeast ISD in San Antonio for 9 years.

In her role at ESC-20, Amy provides professional development workshops that focus on assessment practices, administration of test instruments, related service counseling, and disability identification. As the Evaluation Specialist, she provides service and support to school districts through technical assistance in the provision of special education services for students with disabilities. This includes supporting evaluation personnel conducting special education assessments for students within public schools. She also serves as the Child Find contact for incoming students transitioning from Early Childhood Intervention agencies into public schools, and for parents who suspect their child may have a possible disability requiring special education services.

Amy has presented at the Statewide Evaluation Personnel Conference (SWEP) and Texas Educational Diagnosticians Association (TEDA) conference. Amy is a National Organization of Victims Assistance (NOVA) trained crisis responder, and serves on the ESC-20 Crisis Team to assist in providing on site support and guidance when schools experience tragedy or loss. She also serves as a trainer for Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NCI) through the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI).

Outside her work, Amy has been married for 14 years, and has four children: Cade age 9, Colt age 7, Cohen age 5, & Carlynn age 3. She loves spending time with her family and training for her next long distance run.

Amy's important contributions to the practice of school psychology provides an excellent example of a professional opportunity for an expansion of the role of the school psychologist. She is able to utilize her training and experience to impact the promotion of best practices of all school psychologists throughout the state.



Texas A&M University Commerce

Students are admitted to the School Psychology program in both the Spring and Fall semesters. Deadlines for applications are 4/15 and 11/15, respectively.



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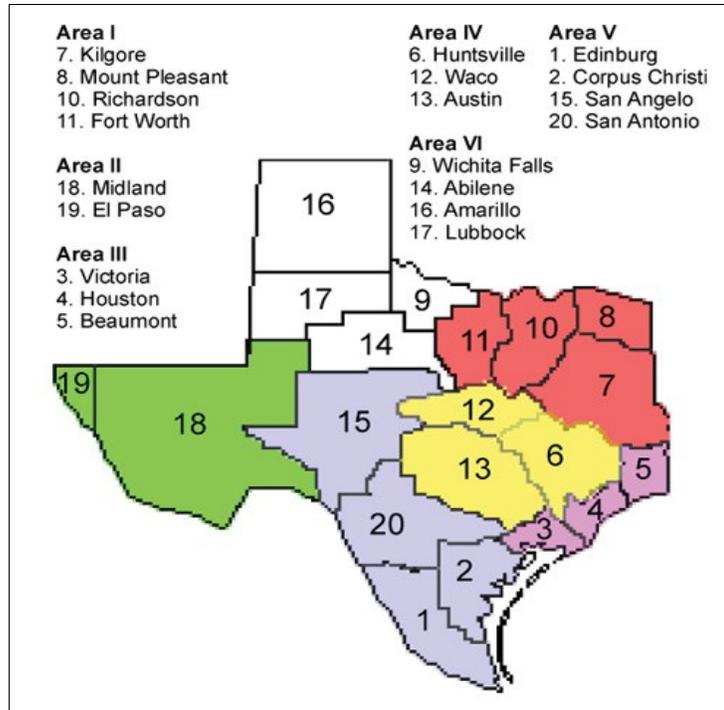
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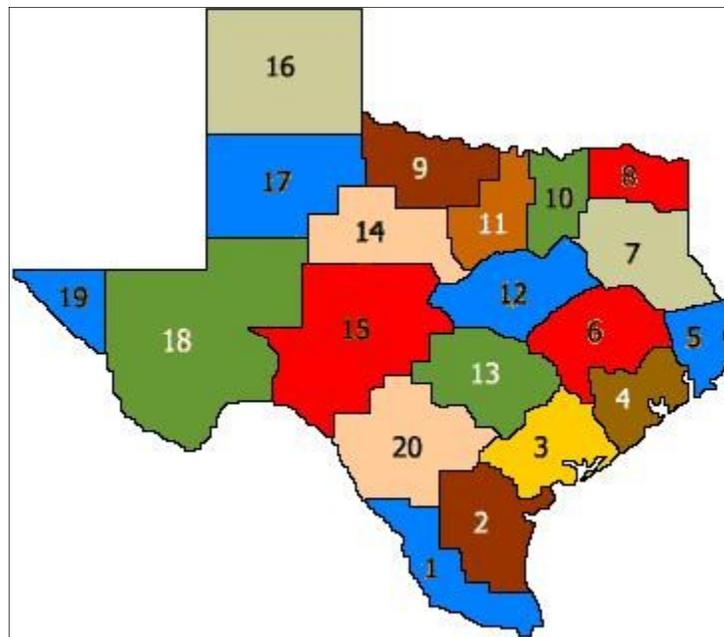
Information from the Area Liaisons!

AREA LIAISONS

Area Representative Map



Regional ESC Coverage Map



Area I

Hello Area I TASP Members!

I am so honored to have been elected as the Area I Representative for the next two years! I am looking forward to getting to know more of the members in this area and seeing how we can do our part to help the children that we serve each day. We had the first board meeting in January, and I learned so much about how our wonderful organization is run and all of the work that goes into it. I encourage each of you to get involved in TASP, whether it is by becoming a district representative or just asking other LSSPs to join. For those of you that are not aware, Dallas Fort Worth Regional Association of School Psychologists is an organization in our area that hosts three conferences a year so that we can get the continuing education hours we need throughout the school year. The conferences are usually held in September, January, and April/May. You can get more information at their website, dfwrasp.org. Arlington ISD hosted the most recent conference the last Friday in January, and I was able to set up a table to distribute information on TASP and the upcoming Summer Institute being held in Corpus Christi in June. It was great to see so many people take an interest in continuing their education this summer. I am sure being close to a beach will not hurt any either! If you ever have any questions for me or the executive board, or just want to know more about how you can become involved, please contact me through the website. I hope you all have a wonderful spring semester!



Raina Walterscheid

Area II

Greetings, Area 2! I want to take this opportunity to provide you with an update of some recent TASP developments discussed at our January Board meeting. As your Area Representative, I serve on the Board's Communications Council. Our Communications Council recently convened to discuss several topics, including updating the TASP website, providing more content on the TASP website, and diversifying forms of communication with our membership. In addition to the quarterly newsletter, you will soon be receiving a monthly TASP email with a variety of content including useful resources, legal updates, announcements, and book and app reviews, for example. We hope that this email will provide our members with another benefit of membership. Additionally, we will be increasing our presence on social media as we have a desire to keep our membership informed of current resources and legal developments impacting our profession. There continues to be many ways for our members to be involved with TASP, particularly as we prepare for our summer conference and fall convention. If you would like to be more involved or have a question or concern which you would like to bring to my attention, please contact me at kate.b.marcus@gmail.com.

Regards,

KateMarcus



Area V

Hello Area 5,

My name is Amanda Real and I am an LSSP in a rural district south east of San Antonio. I am a graduate of Texas State University. As the previous TASP newsletter editor, I am happy to transition into my new role as your Area 5 representative. I plan to work closely with Jeremy Sullivan, the previous Area 5 representative, to continue his efforts as well as with the educational service centers to join in on-going professional development endeavors. Please feel free to email me any questions or concerns you may have at this time. I look forward to seeing you around our communities and hope to see you at the Summer Institute in June!

Amanda Real

Area VI

Greetings Area VI,

I am excited to be starting my 2nd year as your Area Representative. TASP has many exciting things planned this year including Summer Institute and Fall Conference. Join us for learning, networking, and fun!



TASP is your professional organization and we are here for you. Val Meixner, LSSP and Education Specialist from Region 17, reported the following: *“The Region 17 ESC was honored to host a regional TASP meeting complete with a delicious luncheon provided by TASP for 41 LSSPs and Special Education Directors from ESC Regions 18, 17, 16, 14, and 9. Area 6 Representative Kassi Lopez and Webmaster Brook Roberts led an informative update on TASP and lively conversation on current topics pertinent to LSSPs. The session was followed by a TSBEP panel discussion on board complaints and hot topics. The panel consisted of TSBEP Executive Director Darrel Spinks, Board members Donna Black and Angela Downs, and University of Houston Clear Lake, Director of School Psychology Gail Cheramie. The panel discussion was an expanded version of the one presented at the TASP 2014 Conference in the fall. It was very well received by the audience.”*

I look forward to hearing from you!

Kassi Lopez

Dear Eddie,

My district administration has determined that all students who are being evaluated for a suspected disability will be assessed using a specific assessment battery (WJ-IV Cog and Ach, BASC-2, CELF-4, PPVT, VMI, etc.). The battery will be used in all cases, whether the primary presenting concern is academic, behavioral, language or medical. The assistant superintendent has been advised by the district's legal counsel that the use of a standard battery is the best way to ensure that the assessments will stand up under scrutiny should a case be involved in a due process hearing. I feel very uncomfortable with this mandate. In all of my graduate training, and subsequent professional development, I was taught that assessments were planned based on the referral question being addressed. Am I missing something here?

Discomfort in the district

Hello Discomfort,

This is not the first time I have heard a question like this. It seems there is an increasing number of districts that are coming up with these policies. Ethically, the implementation of a "standard battery" is a problem. The following NASP Ethical Standards are relevant:

Standard II.3.2 School psychologists use assessment techniques and practices that the profession considers to be responsible, research-based practice. School psychologists select assessment instruments and strategies that are reliable and valid for the child and the purpose of the assessment. When using standardized measures, school psychologists adhere to the procedures for administration of the instrument that are provided by the author or publisher or the instrument. If modifications are made in the administration procedures for standardized tests or other instruments, such modifications are identified and discussed in the interpretation of the results. If using norm-referenced measures, school psychologists choose instruments with up-to-date normative data. When using computer-administered assessments, computer-assisted scoring, and/or interpretation programs, school psychologists choose programs that meet professional standards for accuracy and validity. School psychologists use professional judgment in evaluating the accuracy of computer-assisted assessment findings for the examinee.

Standard II.3.3 A psychological or psychoeducational assessment is based on a variety of different types of information from different sources.

Standard II.3.4 Consistent with education law and sound professional practice, children with suspected disabilities are assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability

Standard II.3.5 School psychologists conduct valid and fair assessments. They actively pursue knowledge of the student's disabilities and developmental, cultural, linguistic, and experiential background and then select, administer, and interpret assessment instruments and procedures in light of those characteristics (see Standard I.3.1. and I.3.2).

In addition, IDEA requires that student evaluation be based on individual needs- it is called an Individual Educational Evaluation after all.

Sec. 300.304 Evaluation procedures.

- (a) Notice. The public agency must provide notice to the parents of a child with a disability, in accordance with Sec. 300.503, that describes any evaluation procedures the agency proposes to conduct.
- (b) Conduct of evaluation. In conducting the evaluation, the public agency must--
 - (1) Use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, including information provided by the parent, that may assist in determining--
 - (i) Whether the child is a child with a disability under Sec. 300.8; and
 - (ii) The content of the child's IEP, including information related to enabling the child to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum (or for a preschool child, to participate in appropriate activities);





(2) Not use any single measure or assessment as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining an appropriate educational program for the child; and

(3) Use technically sound instruments that may assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical or developmental factors.

(c) Other evaluation procedures. Each public agency must ensure that--

(1) Assessments and other evaluation materials used to assess a child under this part--

(i) Are selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis;

(ii) Are provided and administered in the child's native language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information on what the child knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is clearly not feasible to so provide or administer;

(iii) Are used for the purposes for which the assessments or measures are valid and reliable;

(iv) Are administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel; and

(v) Are administered in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of the assessments.

(2) Assessments and other evaluation materials include those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those that are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient.

(3) Assessments are selected and administered so as best to ensure that if an assessment is administered to a child with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the assessment results accurately reflect the child's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factors the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the child's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (unless those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure).

(4) The child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, if appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, and motor abilities;

(5) Assessments of children with disabilities who transfer from one public agency to another public agency in the same school year are coordinated with those children's prior and subsequent schools, as necessary and as expeditiously as possible, consistent with Sec. 300.301(d)(2) and (e), to ensure prompt completion of full evaluations.

(6) In evaluating each child with a disability under Sec. Sec. 300.304 through 300.306, the evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the child's special education and related services needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified.

(7) Assessment tools and strategies that provide relevant information that directly assists persons in determining the educational needs of the child are provided.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1414(b)(1)-(3), 1412(a)(6)(B))

After you sort through all of that, the school psychologist must remember that he/she must engage in collaboration with administration and decision makers to impact policy decisions that affect children and their rights.

-Standard IV.1.2 School psychologists use their professional expertise to promote changes in schools and community service systems that will benefit children and other clients. They advocate for school policies and practices that are in the best interests of children and that respect and protect the legal rights of students and parents.³⁴

-Standard III.2.3 The school psychologist's commitment to protecting the rights and welfare of children is communicated to the school administration, staff, and others as the highest priority in determining services.

So, as school psychologists, we are required to ensure that effective, appropriate evaluations are designed based on an individual student's unique characteristics and needs. When we are asked to do something other than this, we have a responsibility to advocate for change.

Ethically,

Eddie



School Psychology Program

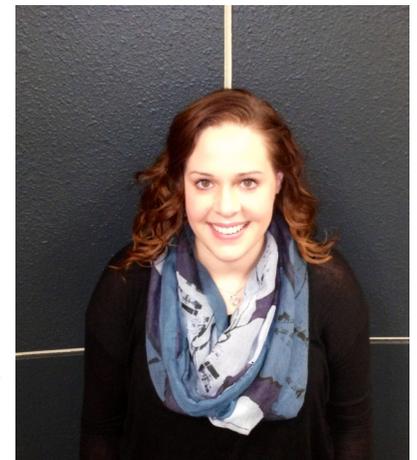
Texas State University offers a Specialist in School Psychology (SSP) degree in school psychology, approved by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). The program endorses the scientist-practitioner training model. Texas State also offers a program for individuals who already hold a master's level psychology degree in a related field and would like to re-specialize in school psychology.

For more information, please contact:

Jon Lasser, Ph.D.
Coordinator, School Psychology Program
www.txstate.edu/clas

Graduate Student Corner

My name is Kelsey Theis and I am honored to serve as the 2015 graduate student representative for the Texas Association of School Psychologists Board. I am currently working towards my specialist degree in school psychology at Texas State University. I am looking forward to beginning practicum this year and gaining quality experience in the schools. I am interested in traumatic brain injury and the long-term implications students face after injury.



Upon beginning my degree I made it my goal to become more involved in various learning opportunities in order to gain more knowledge in the field of school psychology. I attended the TASP conference in Dallas and started a project that I will be doing a poster presentation for at the Trainers of School Psychologists conference while also taking advantage of the various learning opportunities NASP has to offer. I look forward to attending the TASP Summer Institute this June as well as the TASP Convention this fall, and I hope you will consider joining us!

I am very excited to serve as the graduate student representative for the TASP Board to address issues important to current graduate students across the state. I am currently accepting suggestions for graduate student topics to be seen at the fall convention in San Antonio. I would love to receive input in order to make the convention as beneficial for students as possible. Please feel free to contact me with any general comments or questions at (309)840-3641 or kat90@txstate.edu.

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Where Are They Now?

Past TASP Presidents

Many great presidents have come to lead the helm of the Texas Association of School Psychologists. Often times we wonder “where are they now?” So in that effort this month we would like to highlight Past President, Dr. Gail Cheramie, who proudly served her term from 1996-1997. Dr. Cheramie is the director of the nationally approved School Psychology program at the University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL). In this capacity she is responsible for curriculum oversight and development, ensuring that the UHCL program continues to meet national training standards. Dr. Cheramie is a licensed psychologist, licensed specialist in school psychology, and a nationally certified school psychologist. Her area of specialization is assessment for students exhibiting developmental, academic, behavioral, and emotional difficulties. Dr. Cheramie consults with public school districts throughout the state of Texas on matters pertaining to special education, including assessment, eligibility, and IEP development. She also serves as a consultant to the Region 4 ESC on the multidisciplinary evaluation of autism spectrum disorders and is involved in a three-year project training school-based teams on conducting such evaluations. As we can see she is ever involved in the profession of school psychology and is making strides to continue to be a trailblazer.

Government & Professional Relations Update

At our January Board meeting, Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (TSBEP) Executive Director, Darrel Spinks, requested a letter of support to raise licensing fees by seven dollars to be used to increase the TSBEP staffs’ salaries. After much discussion, the TASP board agreed to write a letter of support. Mr. Spinks shared the Jurisprudence Examination would soon be offered online.

Marty De Leon, TASP’s legislative consultant, provided the Board with an overview of the upcoming legislative year. It should be an interesting year. Several bills that will be monitored include: SB 149, HB 299, HB 340, SB 107, HB 138, HB198, HB 223, HB 245, and SB 238. At the Capital, discussions are occurring on the reauthorization of the Elementary & Secondary Education Act of 1965 most recently named No Child Left Behind.

To register for daily or weekly updates regarding education legislation, visit <https://www.govtrack.us/>.

TASP is making a list and checking it twice for TASP members who may have representatives on committees influencing our field. Don’t be surprised if you get an email or phone call asking for help advocating for issues relevant to the important job you do.

Jennifer Langley



School Safety- How Much Do You Know?

By Ashley Arnold-Texas School Psychology Action Network (SPAN) Contact

In 2013, NASP released a Framework for Safe and Successful Schools in partnership with the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO), National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), and the School Social Work Association of America (SSWAA), which includes their joint recommendations for improved school safety and access to mental health services for students. This framework outlines evidence-based policies and practices for improving school safety and increasing access to mental health supports for children and youth. This important document highlights that efforts to improve school climate, safety, and learning are not separate endeavors and must be designed, funded, and implemented as a comprehensive school-wide approach. The main focus is school safety policies that will genuinely support the well-being and learning of students over the long term, rather than reactive strategies that may cause more harm than good. There is a balance between physical and psychological safety when discussing school safety.

The groups caution against excessive emphasis on overly restrictive security measures, such as armed guards and metal detectors, which do not necessarily improve safety and can undermine the school climate and learning. They oppose arming school staff and reiterate that, if a school determines the need for armed security, school resource officers (commissioned police officers trained to work in schools) should be the only armed school personnel of any kind.



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Other recommendations include: improving staffing ratios of school-employed mental health professionals to allow for the delivery of a full range of services and the support of effective school-community partnerships; employing effective school discipline that promotes positive behavior; and integrating ongoing school safety and crisis and emergency preparedness and response teams, training, and planning.

NASP encourages you to make yourself available when your campus discusses school safety. Share this document and create the dialogue that school safety is not just school violence. Share this framework with your administrators when they talk about making improvements to school safety.

Download this framework **TODAY** at: <http://www.nasponline.org/schoolsafetyframework>.

In addition, check out all the great resources NASP has for crisis and safety at http://www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/index.aspx

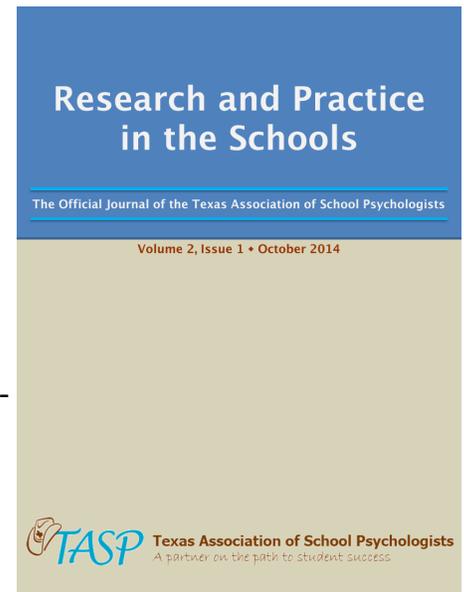
Research and Practice in the Schools: The Official Journal of the Texas Association of School Psychologists

Journal Update

The first two issues of *Research and Practice in the Schools* can be accessed on the TASP website: <http://www.txasp.org/tasp-journal>. We welcome manuscripts from school psychologists working in a variety of settings. Submissions can include original empirical research, theoretical or conceptual articles, test reviews, book reviews, and software reviews. If you (or your students, interns, or colleagues) are interested in submitting a paper, please email jeremy.sullivan@utsa.edu or see the latest issue for the Instructions for Authors.

Since the second issue was published in October, submissions to the journal have increased (including submissions from different institutions in Texas and from other states). This has resulted in the need for additional Editorial Board members who can help with reviewing manuscripts. Editorial Board members can be practitioners and/or educators. If there is enough interest among graduate students, we may develop a Graduate Student Editorial Board as well, which would be a great opportunity for students to become familiar with the peer-review process.

Editorial Board members are responsible for reviewing submitted papers, providing feedback to the authors, and making recommendations regarding publication. Reviewers are provided with a rubric to help structure their feedback to authors, and final publication decisions are made by the co-editors. If you are interested in serving on the Editorial Board, please email jeremy.sullivan@utsa.edu and include (1) a copy of your resume or curriculum vita, and (2) a list of your professional/research interests. We will make every effort to send you manuscripts that are related to your areas of interest. Thanks for considering this request.



The Texas School Psychologist is published four times a year. Articles, announcements, advertising, employment notices, and letters should be submitted to:

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NATIONAL
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PSYCHOLOGISTS



The Texas School Psychologist
A partner on the path to student success
Texas Association of School Psychologists

Adopted by the TASP Executive Board January 2015

Position Statement

SUPERVISION IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

Supervision of educators is essential to school improvement and student success. Through professional supervision, the practices of administrators, teachers, and support personnel are observed, monitored, and evaluated to ensure implementation of appropriate and up-to-date services. The roles and functions of school psychologists are summarized in the NASP Practice Model and related documents (e.g., NASP position statements). Supervision serves to protect the public and improve educational outcomes (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). Therefore, it is essential that all school practitioners have access to knowledgeable professional supervision.

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) strongly promotes the professional supervision of school psychologists by school psychologists at all levels of practice (e.g., student, intern, early career, and expert) as a means of ensuring effective practices to support the educational attainment of all children. Supervisors who are both knowledgeable about and experienced in the delivery of school psychological services promote adherence to high standards; ensure appropriate, high quality services to children and youth; and provide appropriate evaluation of personnel.

DEFINITION OF SUPERVISION

Supervision in school psychology includes both professional and administrative supervision. It is provided through an ongoing, positive, systematic, collaborative process between the school psychologist and the school psychology supervisor. This process focuses on promoting effective growth and exemplary professional practice leading to improved performance by all, including the school psychologist, supervisor, students, and the entire school community.

TYPES OF SUPERVISION

Professional supervision refers to oversight of the specific professional practices of personnel within one's own profession, and requires specific training and knowledge in the area of supervision. Professional supervisors are responsible for supporting practices consistent with professional standards (NASP, 2010a) as well as ethical codes (NASP, 2010b). Professional supervisors are also responsible for promoting ongoing professional development to improve and update skills (NASP 2010d), and to ensure systems of personnel evaluation that are consistent with these professional standards (NASP, 2010c). These standards indicate that school psychologists should engage in continuing professional development in order to remain current regarding developments in research, training, and professional practices that benefit children, families, and schools. Professional skill development beyond that of the early career practitioner requires well-planned continuing professional development and professional supervision. As indicated in the Graduate Preparation Standards (NASP, 2010c), professional supervisors of practicum students and interns are responsible for all professional practices of their supervisees. Graduate students in school psychology require more

intensive supervision than those with many years of experience. Graduate students and interns are identified as such, and their work is cosigned by the supervising school psychologist (NASP, 2010c). Professional supervision is only provided by a licensed/certified school psychologist or by an individual holding an equivalent title (e.g., NCSP, school psychological service provider, school psychology specialist). Consistent with the intent of the NASP *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists* (III.3.4), when supervision takes place in a setting other than public schools, provision of supervision may be by an individual holding the appropriate state psychology credential for practice in that setting (e.g., licensed psychologist; NASP, 2010c).

Professional supervisors must collaborate with administrative supervisors to ensure appropriate and ongoing evaluation of models of service delivery. NASP promotes access to both administrative and professional supervision for all school psychologists, regardless of work setting. Although an ideal situation would have professional supervision provided by individuals with administrative supervisory responsibility, NASP recognizes that different configurations of supervision will be necessary based upon available resources and organizational structure. Graduate students and interns must be supervised only by credentialed school psychologists who can provide professional supervision.

Administrative supervision focuses on the functioning of the service unit, including personnel issues, and legal, contractual, and organizational practices. Administrative supervision addresses the logistics of service delivery and performance of job duties in accordance with conditions of employment and assigned responsibilities, and is primarily concerned with outcomes and consumer satisfaction rather than discipline-specific professional skills. Administrative supervisors also monitor the work levels of employees and are available to solve problems when job expectations and personal factors conflict. Administrative supervision may be carried out by individuals trained and credentialed in school administration and not school psychology. Professionals who are not school psychologists can provide only administrative supervision.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

NASP has adopted standards of service delivery including standards for supervision of practicum trainees and interns, new school psychologists, and experienced practitioners. These standards should guide service units in their implementation of supervision of school psychologists. As delineated in Organizational Principle 5, Supervision and Mentoring (*Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services*; NASP, 2010a), school psychological services units should ensure supervision of all levels of personnel in order to “ensure the provision of effective and accountable services.” NASP recommends that school systems provide and support the supervision of school psychologists by an appropriately credentialed and experienced school psychologist so that the development of professional skills is continued and maintained over time. School psychologists seek and use appropriate types and levels of supervision as they acquire new knowledge, skills, and abilities by creating and following a personal plan of professional development. NASP Standards address the qualifications of supervisors; the nature and frequency of supervision for practicum trainees, interns, new professionals, and experienced practitioners; and the supervisor’s leadership in developing and evaluating effective and accountable services. NASP promotes the implementation of these standards in all school psychological services units.

Qualification of supervisors. Supervisors have a valid state school psychologist credential for the setting in which they are employed, and have a minimum of 3 years of full-time experience as practicing school psychologists. Education and/or experience in the supervision of school personnel are desirable. Typically, supervision is provided by those with more experience for those with less, such that all school psychologists have access to supervision throughout their careers.

Nature and frequency of supervision. Supervision methods should match the developmental level of the school psychologist. Graduate students, interns, and early career school psychologists require more intensive supervisory modalities and hours of weekly support. As indicated in the Graduate Preparation Standards (NASP, 2010c), interns should receive an average of at least 2 hours of field-based supervision per full-time week. Additional time may be needed to review work products. The preponderance of the 2 hours should be provided on at least a weekly, individual, face-to-face basis, with structured mentoring and evaluation that focus on the intern's attainment of competencies. Some distance-based supervision, to supplement in-person supervision sessions, is acceptable, as part of an articulated program of supervision, and as the skills and development of the individual warrant. For at least their first postgraduate year of employment, school psychologists should participate in district-provided supervision or mentoring. Such induction experiences should be for the purpose of establishing a foundation for lifelong learning and professional growth. For initially credentialed school psychologists, participation in district-provided supervision and/or mentoring conducted either directly or indirectly is recommended for a minimum average of 1 hour per week (NASP, 2010d). More experienced school psychologists may utilize alternative methods, such as supervision groups, mentoring, and/or peer support to ensure continued professional growth and support for complex or difficult cases. For all school psychologists, school systems should allow time for school psychologists to participate in supervision and mentoring. In small or rural systems, where a supervising school psychologist may not be available, the school system should ensure that school psychologists are given opportunities to seek supervision and/or peer support outside the district (e.g., through regional, state, or national school psychologist networks).

Regardless of proficiency, practitioners require supervision whenever they enter situations in which they have no previous experience, either in terms of the population with which they are working, or with regard to the procedures and/or tools used. Supervisors of school psychologists should adjust their supervisory strategies according to the skill level of the supervisee. Novice and advanced beginners require frequent, direct supervision to enhance skill development to ensure appropriate and effective practice. Although requiring less frequent, more indirect supervision, school psychologists at the proficient and expert levels continue to engage in the supervision process to help maintain objectivity, choose appropriate methods of child advocacy, and continually upgrade skills. Expert and proficient school psychologists are themselves likely to supervise interns or other school psychologists, which requires development of their professional and administrative supervisory skills.

Evaluation. The school system should develop and implement a coordinated plan for the accountability and evaluation of all school psychological services, including supervision (see below). This plan should address evaluation of both implementation and outcomes of services.

SUPERVISION METHODS AND STRUCTURES

Professional supervision techniques vary based on the supervisor's ability to intervene and assist the supervisee or client, the reliance on technology, the amount of the supervisor's time required, the level

of supervisee skill required, and the intrusion on the client. Because proximity and knowledge of school district personnel and policies are substantial advantages in providing supervision, it is most desirable for a supervisor to be an employee of the same school district as a supervisee. However, not all service units have access to full-time school psychologist supervisors. Alternative models can provide satisfactory professional supervision, including part-time supervisors, shared supervisors (collaboration among school districts or between districts and community agencies), peer supervision networks across and within districts, online supervision, and more. Individuals who do not hold a school psychologist credential should only provide administrative supervision. Professional supervision is only provided by a licensed/certified school psychologist or by an individual holding an equivalent title (e.g., NCSP, school psychological service provider, school psychology specialist).

TRAINING AND EVALUATION OF SUPERVISORS

NASP strongly recommends that supervisors of school psychologists receive formal and/or informal training in supervision. It is recommended that beginning supervisors take coursework and participate in workshops in supervision and that all supervisors monitor their skills by self-applying supervisory techniques. Any skill areas in which the supervisor is not at the competent level may be problematic, and the supervisor therefore should access supervision, consultation, and collaboration from expert school psychologists to support supervisory responsibilities in these areas. All supervisors are encouraged to refer to NASP standards for supervision. These standards include requirements for ongoing preparation and development in supervision skills. Just as it is essential that practitioners and service units undergo periodic evaluation to ensure quality and effectiveness, NASP also urges service units to conduct evaluation of supervisors and the program of supervision. This should include both external and self-supervision to ensure that supervisors provide accessible, constructive support, monitoring, and feedback to practitioners in a manner that promotes professional development and effective service delivery.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Professional supervision is one means of addressing accountability for school psychologists. NASP recommends that all school psychological service units support the professional supervision of school psychologists by:

- Assigning one or more credentialed, experienced school psychologists responsibility for administrative and professional supervision of all staff school psychologists and interns;
- Providing, as needed, opportunities for experienced school psychologists to gain initial and ongoing training in professional supervision;
- Ensuring that all school psychologists have access to and support for receiving professional supervision and mentoring as appropriate to their levels of experience and expertise;
- Providing multiple avenues and methods for obtaining supervision; and
- Ensuring the periodic evaluation of supervisors and the program of supervision.

Further, NASP calls upon school psychology training programs to offer preservice training as well as continuing professional development in techniques and models of effective supervision.

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