

School Psychologist

Student Services Job Description

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School Psychologist Job Description

Process

Representatives from school districts, institutions of higher education, professional organizations and the Department of Public Instruction collaboratively prepared the 2009 School Psychologist Job Description. Department staff acknowledges with deep appreciation and gratitude the contributions of the following advisory committee members:

Name	Position	Organization
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Additional input was gathered via feedback from distribution of the proposed school psychologist job description draft at meetings, via e-mail listservs to school personnel, through posting the job description on the DPI School Psychology web page, and via a zoomerang survey.

Purpose and Background

This document is intended for use by North Carolina schools and local education agencies that employ school psychologists. The 2009 North Carolina School Psychologist Job Description represents a revision of the 1987 North Carolina School Psychologist Job Description. In developing the 2009 job description, a variety of documents and relevant state policies and statutes were consulted, including the State Board of Education’s Mission and Goals, State Board of Education Policies TCP-C-003 and TCP-C-006, State General Statutes 115C-333 and 115C-335, North Carolina Standards for the Preparation of School Psychologists, current North Carolina educational staff job descriptions and the draft of the *North Carolina Professional Standards for School Psychology*, the National Association of School Psychologists’ *Professional Conduct Manual*, *National Association of School Psychologists Guidelines for the Provision of School Psychological Services*, *National Association of School Psychologists’ Standards for Training and Placement Programs in School Psychology*, *National Association of School Psychologists’ Standards for the Credentialing of School Psychologists*, *National School Psychology Certification System*, and *School Psychology: A Blueprint for Training and Practice III*.

Role of the School Psychologist

School psychologists are often the only school-based mental health professionals trained in child psychology, learning and development, school organization, and classroom learning environments. School psychologists develop primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention programs in such areas as dropout prevention, bullying, school violence, and school safety. They have specialized training in psychological assessment, crisis response, individual and group counseling, school-based consultation, and research.

In North Carolina, school psychologists are trained at the specialist-level or doctoral level. Specialist-level programs consist of a minimum of three (3) years of full-time study that includes at least 60 graduate semester hours in addition to 1,200 clock hours of supervised internship in the public schools. Doctoral programs in school psychology consist of a minimum of four (4) years of full-time study and a minimum of 90-semester hours of graduate study, including a 1,500 clock hour internship in schools and other settings.

School psychologists are specially trained to work with students, families, and educators by meeting both educational and mental health needs in schools. They assist teachers, parents, and students in understanding, preventing, and addressing learning, behavioral, developmental, and emotional difficulties. This job description aligns with the *North Carolina Professional School Psychology Standards* and supports the implementation of comprehensive school psychology services in the public schools of North Carolina.

**SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST
STUDENT SERVICES
JOB DESCRIPTION**

- POSITION:** School Psychologist
- REPORTS TO:** Superintendent; Associate or Assistant Superintendent; Director; Exceptional Children’s Director; Building Level Administrator; Level II or Level III School Psychologists.
- PURPOSE:** School psychologists help students succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. They collaborate with educators, administrators, families, and other mental health professionals to create safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments for all students and strengthen connections between home and school.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

I. FOUNDATIONS OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

School Psychologist:

Professional Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice

- Practice in ways that meet all appropriate ethical, professional, and legal standards.
- Understand and apply federal, state, and local policies and regulations in the delivery of school psychological services.
- Maintain confidentiality of student records and information.
- Use technology in ways that are consistent with ethical and responsible professional practice.

Student Diversity in Development and Learning

- Recognize issues of diversity that affect routine interactions with other people and organizations.
- Modify or adapt routine practice to effectively meet these diverse needs.
- Demonstrate sensitivity and skills needed to work with families, students, and staff from diverse cultures and backgrounds.

Information Technology

- Establish and maintain expertise in using technology such as data management, report writing, web pages, literature reviews, and data analysis.
- Use spreadsheets or other software programs to organize and graphically display data and monitor progress when appropriate for use at the system, building, and individual student level.

Research and Program Evaluation

- Evaluate and synthesize a cumulative body of research findings as a foundation for effective service delivery.
- Collect, analyze, and interpret program evaluation data in applied settings.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of school-based intervention plans.

School Systems Organizational Change, Policy Development, and School Climate

- Understand the organization of schools and systems change to provide leadership in developing and implementing early intervention and prevention programs.
- Demonstrate knowledge and leadership when assisting in the development of school policy that impacts student learning and safety.
- Demonstrate knowledge of school and classroom climates and use such knowledge to assist in developing school improvement plans and classroom interventions.

II. PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE COMPETENCIES

School Psychologist:

Home/School/Community Collaboration

- Use empirically supported strategies to design, implement, and evaluate effective policies.
- Employ practices that promote home, school, and community partnerships and enhance learning and mental health goals for students.
- Identify diverse cultural issues, situations, and other factors that influence family, school, and community interactions and address such issues when developing and providing services.

Enhancement of Student Wellness, Social Skills, and Life Competencies

- Demonstrate knowledge regarding the social, affective, and adaptive domains of child development.
- Identify and apply sound principles of behavior change within these domains to assist in designing and implementing prevention and intervention programs.

Enhancement of Student Cognitive and Academic Skills

- Help schools develop challenging, but achievable, cognitive and academic goals for all students.
- Collaborate with others to develop appropriate cognitive and academic goals for students with different abilities, disabilities, strengths, needs, and develop interventions to achieve these goals.
- Implement appropriate and alternative ways to monitor and assess the effectiveness of interventions and individual student progress toward goals.
- Assess students' cognitive abilities using a variety of instruments and techniques that are appropriate for the individual student.

Systems-Based Service Delivery

- Provide leadership in developing a safe, caring, and inviting school with a sense of community where contributions of all persons are valued, where there are high expectations of excellence for all students, and where home-school-agency partnerships are valued.

Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability

- Demonstrate expertise in collecting, managing, and interpreting various types of individual and group data.
- Apply sound principles of data-based decision making to all aspects of practice (e.g., designing interventions, monitoring student progress, consulting with school administrators, and disseminating intervention research findings within the school setting).

Consultation and Collaboration

- Demonstrate strong interpersonal skills and the ability to work, communicate, and collaborate effectively with teachers, other school staff, and families as part of a team within the school setting.
- Ensure that students and families know about community services and programs and assist them in accessing these, as appropriate.

Prevention, Early Intervention, and Crisis Management

- Participate in planning and implementing prevention programs to address the social and affective needs of students (e.g., programs to address bullying, school violence, and school safety).
- Have knowledge of universal screening, as well as early reading and math literacy.
- Participate in designing prevention and intervention methods to address programs that influence student learning.

Group and Individual Counseling Techniques

- Provide direct services to individuals or groups of students (e.g., counseling, crisis interventions, mentoring, and individual safety plans, when appropriate).
- Consult and confer with teachers, staff, and families about strategies to facilitate the social and affective adjustment of students.

Promoting Safe and Effective Learning Environments

- Participate in planning and/or implementation of school or system-level crisis response.
- Identify resources and coordinate services with other professionals and/or agencies to address students' behavioral, affective, or social needs.