

# ***Pupil Services***

# ***Position Paper***

***September 2012 Revision***

Pennsylvania Association of Pupil Services Administrators  
*Foreword*

This document represents the eighth revision of the PAPSA Pupil Services Position Paper. Its purpose is to serve as a framework for conceptualizing Pupil Services in Pennsylvania.

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## ***Pupil Services Position Paper***

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## ***Introduction and Philosophy***

The wide array of services that are now considered Pupil Services began with vocational guidance. Later this was extended to include academic counseling and

college placement for high school students. Now, comprehensive programs include but are not limited to counseling, health, psychology and social work.

Pupil Services continue to evolve in response to the changing environment in which children live and develop. New pressures on communities, families and schools have resulted in more at-risk students now than in the past. As a result, Pupil Services now include more collaborative work with other professionals and community agencies. New services such as crisis intervention and planning for behavioral change, not originally provided, have been added. Pupil Services staff members address a myriad of issues including career/educational planning, character education, interpersonal relations, absenteeism, mental and physical health related concerns, students with special learning needs, and school safety issues. As compared to the costs of welfare, chronic unemployment, institutional care or imprisonment, the cost-benefit ratio to society favors the implementation of early intervention and prevention programs by school and community.

The educational system includes the family and the community. The entire community determines the environment in which families and schools exist. Collaboration is essential, involving community and school leaders, agencies, institutions and parents, because student needs must be met in school, community and family settings. The entire community is affected by and needs to support its young people.

The illustration, on the following page, adapted from the work of the UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools, exemplifies an equal partnership among the administration, instruction and support components of a school system. PAPSA supports this concept of a three-tiered system of education, each mutually dependent upon the other two to provide the most effective learning environment for all students.

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decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

## ***Removing the Barriers to Learning***

To ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school, the long range aims of educational leaders and in particular of pupil services administrators must include the development of a comprehensive component to effectively address barriers to learning and teaching. Not only will this enable students to learn and teachers to teach, it will create supportive, positive environments that maximize learning and well-being and help strengthen families and communities.

To achieve all this requires:

- ✓ Formulating policy that supports a comprehensive, multifaceted and cohesive approach for addressing barriers to learning and teaching as an essential component of school improvement and then fully integrating the component into school improvement planning.
- ✓ Working to coordinate, braid and integrate all school resources being used for student/learning supports and all community resources that are relevant to student well-being.
- ✓ Rethinking infrastructure and establishing new mechanisms to facilitate the development, ongoing planning, implementation, evaluation and sustainability of the component for addressing barriers to learning (and promoting healthy development).

What are some of these barriers to learning?

- ✓ Excessive absence and tardiness.
- ✓ Lack of engagement in classroom learning.
- ✓ Bullying and sexual harassment.
- ✓ Inadequate family involvement in children's schooling.
- ✓ Inappropriate referrals for specialized assistance, including special education.
- ✓ Pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease.
- ✓ Early termination of attendance (dropout).
- ✓ Misbehavior and resulting suspension/expulsion.

The role of Pupil Services in removing barriers such as those defined above involves adhering to a set of standards no less rigorous than the academic standards which are in effect within the classroom. These standards include the following:

Specific Standards for a Learning Support Component:

The following standards are the direct responsibility of the Pupil Services staff, programs and services.

Standard 1a: Continuous enhancement of regular classroom strategies to enable learning.

Standard 1b: Continuous enhancement of programs and systems for a full range of transition supports.

Standard 1c: Continuous enhancement of programs and systems to increase and strengthen home and school connections.

Standard 1d: Continuous enhancement of programs and systems for responding to, and where feasible, preventing school and personal crises.

Standard 1e: Continuous enhancement of programs and systems to increase and strengthen community involvement and support.

Standard 1f: Continuous enhancement of programs and systems to facilitate student and family access to effective services and special assistance as needed.

The following standards require active involvement by Pupil Services staff in cooperation with administration, instruction, home and community.

Standard 2: Establishment of an integrated infrastructure framework for a comprehensive, multifaceted and cohesive component for addressing barriers to learning and teaching.

Standard 3: Appropriate resource use and allocation for developing, maintaining and evolving the component.

Standard 4: Capacity building for developing, maintaining and evolving the component.

Standard 5: Formative and summative evaluation and accountability are fully integrated into all planning and implementation.

and Dr. Linda Taylor, co-directors of the Center. Persons interested in more detail concerning the work of the Center are encouraged to access its web site at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>.

As educators, Pupil Services personnel share the goals and objectives of all educators and are guided by the following beliefs:

- Pupils are viewed holistically; that is, they are human beings with complex needs and interests which extend beyond the educational system. Cultural, physical, social and emotional factors are all important.
- Each student has unique characteristics.
- Child development is an orderly developmental process.
- Pupils are in a constant state of change which requires adaptability and flexibility on the part of all educators.
- Schools do not function in isolation but are part of an increasingly complex social structure which demands more of the learner than just the mastery of cognitive skills.
- Effective education results in a person who can adapt to as well as contribute to the changing environment.
- Learning is a lifelong process.
- Effective education develops:
  - self-understanding and a feeling of self-worth.
  - an understanding of others and an appreciation of the worth of all people.
  - the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for successful personal and family living.
  - the knowledge and practices necessary to maintain physical and emotional well-being.
  - the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to become a self-supporting member of society.

## ***Team Concept***

The diversity within Pupil Services encourages the resolution of student issues through a team approach. The Pupil Services administrator provides the district leadership to coordinate all student-centered teams within the district. Considering the complexities of

services, many types of teams have evolved to address the diverse needs presented. Teams may include the expertise of Pupil Services staff and other educational specialists, as well as parents, guardians and community agency representatives. Each team recognizes the specialized training that is brought to the team by the individual members.

The team focuses upon the child as a learner. Issues and problems may differ between the elementary and secondary levels; however, the basic operating procedures and the team processes are essentially the same. Analysis of data, consensus building, action planning, and monitoring student progress are essential elements of any team's operation. The team makes recommendations and decisions regarding the student's eligibility for support services, alternative educational programs, and/or other appropriate interventions within the school and community.

Essential to the functioning of the team is the appointment of a team leader and a case manager for each student served. Pupil Services specialists provide the following:

- medical, social, developmental and educational history
- cognitive, physical, affective and behavioral assessment and evaluation
- interpretations of information contained in students' school records
- development of intervention plans
- monitoring of student progress
- liaison for community referrals
- facilitation of student and parent groups
- structured follow-up for each student

## ***Conceptual Framework***

Pupil Services are coordinated programs of specialized services to students and families. Though the variety of services offered will differ from school to school depending upon its size and the needs of its students, the following categories of services are typically present to some degree:

### **I. Developmental Services**

Developmental services include counseling, psychological services, health services, home and school visitor services and social work services that support students in addressing their academic, behavioral, health, personal and social development issues. \*

## **II. Diagnostic, Intervention and Referral Services**

Pupil Services staff use diagnostic services to identify barriers that limit a student's success in school. Intervention services actively engage Pupil Services staff in activities planned to eliminate specific barriers to student success. Pupil services staff may arrange for referrals to other school-based or school-linked professionals or may refer parents and guardians to appropriate community-based services for assistance. \*

## **III. Consultation and Coordination Services**

Consultation services are used by Pupil Services staff, in partnership with parents or guardians, to obtain assistance to address barriers and issues that are outside the scope of the student services professional. Consultation and coordination services may be used to assist in the diagnosis, intervention or referral of students who face barriers to success. Coordination services connect school resources with other available resources to assist students in meeting their educational objectives. \*

## **IV. Other Services**

Pupil Services personnel fulfill a variety of other functions in the school district, which contribute to the effectiveness of the system.

Each of the categories is described in greater detail on the following pages.

\* The definitions under the first three categories have been adapted from Chapter 12 Regulations of the Pennsylvania State Board of Education; Subsection 12.41(b).

## ***Description of Services***

### **I. Developmental Services**

Direct services are provided by Pupil Services staff and are designed for *all* students. They include activities and processes to facilitate the normal development of students.

### **Orientation**

Information is provided to groups of students to ease the transition into new situations. Examples include new student, elementary, junior high/middle school, and high school orientations.

### **Academic Counseling**

Students are assisted in course selection, determining appropriate placement, and matching various styles of learning to appropriate instruction. Response to Instruction and Intervention components also fall within this category.

### **Student Evaluation**

A system must be in place to monitor student performance and progress and to develop a plan when a particular individual is experiencing frustration and academic failure.

### **Health Appraisals**

Periodic appraisals are conducted to monitor normal development and to determine the absence of disease. Such appraisals include height, weight, vision, hearing, scoliosis, body mass index and dental hygiene.

### **Attendance Monitoring**

Attendance patterns are reviewed. Regular attendance is encouraged and reinforced. If nonattendance becomes an issue, appropriate referrals are made.

### **Career Development**

Total development of the student includes the ability to make appropriate postsecondary plans. Competencies are developed in areas of self-knowledge career planning, and educational/vocational development. Pupil Services assist in accomplishing these goals through individual or group counseling and instruction in the use of technology-assisted career exploration.

### **Resiliency and Wellness**

Initiating and promoting programs and activities for all students which develop positive coping skills and support healthy behaviors are functions of the Pupil Services staff.

## **II. Diagnostic, Intervention and Referral Services**

Direct services to individual students are needed in the schools. These services are handled by the Pupil Services staff in each school and are designed to help *each* student succeed in the school program.

### **Counseling**

Counseling of individuals and groups occurs in a variety of contexts. Examples

are personal and social development, educational planning, and coping with specific life situations.

### **Assessment**

Assessments through interviews, observation, testing and surveys may be used to identify specific strengths and weaknesses and to determine appropriate educational interventions and services.

### **Intervention**

When the assessment indicates, appropriate intervention services may be provided to the student by school staff or by other professionals as arranged by the school team. Instructional Support Teams, Student Assistance Teams, or Crisis Intervention Teams are most frequently involved in providing this service for students who are exhibiting signs of depression, chemical abuse, academic difficulties, being bullied or other behaviors that are harmful. Also included in this category is the management of crisis situations in the school, including the coordination of community support services in the school in the time of crisis.

### **Placement**

Pupil Services staff members are usually responsible for placing students in the educational setting that is most appropriate for meeting the students' needs. In addition to regular education schedule changes, this could involve placement in a special education program, Title I program, homebound instruction, alternative education, specialized tutoring, or Chapter 15 services.

### **Community Referral**

When the needs of a student extend beyond the available services of the school, referral to community resources may be appropriate. Community agency support, medical services, or residential services may result from such referrals. School assessment and intervention services are explored before such referrals are made.

## **III. Consultation and Coordination Services**

Some activities do not involve direct services to students; rather they are designed to facilitate the development and progress of students by consultation with school staff and parents or by coordination with other agencies or individuals.

### **Case Management**

Services must be coordinated and responsibility assigned for each student. A Pupil Services staff or team member may be assigned the role of case manager for every student receiving services.

### **Community Liaison**

Pupil Services extend into the community to discover, promote and draw upon local resources which provide services to students, i.e., serving on an advisory board or making public presentations.

### **Consultation**

By virtue of their expertise in human relations, Pupil Services staff may advise in the areas of curriculum development, instructional processes, human growth and development, learning and behavior issues, and other emerging issues.

### **Home/Family Communication**

Pupil Services staff facilitate communication and coordination between home and school through such activities as home visitation, parent conferences, and providing workshops or information sessions.

### **Staff Development**

Pupil Services staff seek to acquire the most current information in their field to enlarge their own knowledge bases and skills and to share their expertise with other staff. This role may take the form of advising administration or providing inservice and other training to administrators and staff.

### **Parent Education**

Promoting student progress requires that parents be well informed about the parental role in student success. Pupil Services staff conduct parent seminars or clinics on a variety of subjects.

## **IV. Other Services**

### **Record Maintenance**

An accurate set of school records is kept for all students. Pupil Services responsibilities include the monitoring, collection, maintenance and dissemination of records as well as the protection of the confidentiality of the records.

### **Research/Evaluation**

Research and evaluation are ongoing responsibilities of Pupil Services. They involve activities such as attitude surveys, follow-up studies, and analysis of student test performance. They may include a review of group performance

records to develop longitudinal data or a formalized research project.

### **Policy Recommendations**

Pupil Services staff assist in the development of policies and procedures in areas that directly affect students.

### **School Environment Assessment**

Pupil Services staff monitor the school environment for the physical safety and social and emotional health of students and staff.

## ***Relationships to Other Programs and Services***

Pupil Services are an integral part of the educational process in its involvement with initiatives, which may extend beyond the roles already described herein. While Section 12.41 of State Board Regulations (pertaining to Student Services) establishes the four basic components of Pupil Services as counseling, health, psychology and social work, other programs such as child accounting, homebound instruction, student assistance, and safe and drug-free schools and communities are often administered through the Pupil Services department.

Some districts see programs for exceptional children as primarily instructional and, therefore, as part of the curriculum department. In other districts the high degree of interaction between special education personnel and Pupil Services staff has resulted in an organizational plan where the programs for exceptional children are part of the Pupil Services department. This decision is made most appropriately at the district level.

Programs aimed at “drop out” prevention, substance abuse prevention, pregnant and parenting teens and other “at risk” students often do not fit into the existing

administrative structure of the district. Many of them deal concurrently with curriculum issues, administrative issues, and Pupil Services issues. This makes it difficult to determine which department should be responsible for operating these programs. Pupil Services departments have a responsibility for initiating and developing such programs when they are necessary to meet the special needs of students. Once the programs are established and operational, some aspects should continue to be served by the Pupil Services staff while other aspects should be moved into more appropriate departments. This conceptualization helps to support those directors who need to initiate such programs in their schools but believe that the programs should operate outside the Pupil Services department.

## ***The Administrator of Pupil Services***

It is essential that one professionally qualified and appropriately certificated person be appointed as the Pupil Services administrator with district-wide responsibilities in order to assure coordination of the various Pupil Services functions and other services in the school. This position should be full time when the number of Pupil Services staff members equals 15 to 20.

The role definition for the administrator of Pupil Services includes the following responsibilities. The administrator of Pupil Services:

- is directly responsible to the chief school administrator for the development, coordination and evaluation of all activities which are included in the program. Responsibility is shared with other administrators for the selection, supervision and evaluation of Pupil Services staff.
- is a member of the superintendent's central office administrative staff.
- is responsible for program development and staff development within the department and with the total staff in areas directly related to Pupil Services.

- is responsible for the clinical and programmatic supervision of the following services: psychology, counseling, health, attendance and social work. Please refer to the appendix for details regarding the role and function of each of these areas. An important function at the central office level in the operation of Pupil Services programs in a school district is the provision of “Clinical Supervision.” In this context, the term is defined as follows:

Clinical supervision, in an educational setting, is a systematic process through which a Pupil Services staff member receives consultation and feedback in the planning and delivery of appropriate interventions for students and families to assure quality services. This type of supportive supervision should be provided by a professional person who has training and experience in Pupil Services. The process should contribute to the individual’s professional growth and improvement of performance and should not be part of the employee evaluation system.

- participates in and contributes to district-level curricular and administrative activities and is represented in building level activities.

- is responsible for the development of policies and procedures related to the delivery of Pupil Services.
- is responsible for the coordinated functioning of the various disciplines into a working team.
- provides leadership in designing and implementing research activities in the educational setting.

## ***Staffing Considerations***

### **Professional Staff**

In the past, Pupil Services programs have consisted of a cluster of discrete services provided by particular groups of certified specialists within the school system. The programs provided by school psychologists, school counselors, social workers and school nurses collectively were considered to define the Pupil Services program.

In this position paper, we have reconceptualized these distinct areas and focused on the types of services provided rather than the type of certificate that a professional staff member holds. Several overlapping areas have developed in the specialty categories. For example, nurses are sometimes involved in counseling, counselors may make home visits, social workers may do group counseling, and psychologists may become involved with family dynamics. This allows for greater program flexibility and broader role definition among the professional groups.

This conceptualization is not intended to deny the need for certification or specialization within the Pupil Services functions. However, it allows for the collaborative interchange of roles. This concept relies heavily on the team approach since the members of the team should determine which professionals can provide the services that are necessary for an individual or group of students.

### **Paraprofessional Staff**

Pupil Services programs can be supplemented and enhanced by including paraprofessionals who serve specific student needs. The paraprofessional staff members do not take on the responsibilities normally associated with the professional staff. Each of the professional groups can make use of paraprofessional staff members to support their professional responsibilities.

## **Staff Ratios**

Previous editions of this paper have included ratios of particular certificate areas to the number of individual students served. With the increased emphasis on a coordinated approach to student concerns, role specificity among team members takes on less importance. However, since we are recommending a more flexible, team-centered approach, it is appropriate to recommend that a specific staff ratio be considered when professional staff members may overlap in these services.

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Since school nurses have specific legal mandate in The Pennsylvania School Code to provide services to a certain number of students, the school nurse recommendations are addressed separately from the other workers, therefore, it is recommended that a school nurse be assigned to approximately 1,000 students and that no nurse may be assigned to more than 1,500 students. Also, where other Pupil Services staff are concerned, a total of Pupil Services workers to allow for a ratio of one Pupil Services worker to every 200 secondary students and one Pupil Services worker to every 300 elementary students is recommended, exclusive of the school nursing services.

## **Staff Evaluation**

A plan for accountability that includes a staff evaluation system designed specifically for the role(s) of the Pupil Services practitioner, is essential to the maintenance of a quality program of services. As this position paper goes to press, the Pennsylvania Department of Education is in the process of designing a system of rubrics based upon the Charlotte Danielson Model that will address this need. In many ways, the PDE system will resemble that of the PAPSA Rubrics developed in 2006. Plans call for rubrics to be designed both for educational specialists such as counselors and nurses, and special education teachers according to their specialties. PAPSA has been an active participant on the work group established to create the rubrics and to plan for the professional development necessary to implement them in the schools. It is expected that a pilot study will be conducted beginning in January 2013, followed by full implementation with the 2014-15 school year.

## ***Related Issues***

The rapidly changing environment of the late 20th century has produced an ever-increasing number of emerging issues that require the attention of Pupil Services staff. Both in the areas of initial training and of continuing professional development, substantive changes will be necessary for the effective preparation of the Pupil Services specialists who must be ready to address these issues in a proactive manner. Despite the formidable aspects of the increased demands upon the Pupil Services program, the growth of these issues will inevitably expand the need for such services in every school. Among the issues of critical interest to the Pupil Services professional are the following:

- *Chapter 15/Section 504 Issues* including identification, negotiating service agreements, and monitoring.
- *Special Education Issues* including transition planning, incarcerated youth, discipline, behavior management, assessment and identification, early intervention, and legislative and legal decisions.
- *Fiscal Issues* including shrinking budgets, personnel cuts, services to nonpublic schools, availability of medical assistance funds to schools (ACCESS, EPSDT), and sufficient administrative leadership.
- *Violence-Related Issues* including sexual harassment, peer mediation, conflict resolution, increased availability of weapons, bullying and gang activities.
- *Multicultural Issues* including social bias, provision of services to ESL students, and the need for sensitivity to and understanding of cultural minorities.

- *Changing Curriculum Issues* including the effects and challenges of Chapter 4, gifted education, strategic planning, technology preparation programs, home schooling, the implications of year round education, and inclusion.
- *Assessment Issues* including increased parental referrals, changing state assessment system, challenges to the fairness of standardized testing, and authentic portfolio and curriculum-based assessments.
- *Pre-referral Intervention/Student Assistance Program Issues* including pre-referral procedures, intervention design, and expanded programs such as Response to Instruction and Intervention.

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- *Family Issues* including changing family structure, dysfunctional families, and the homeless.
- *Community Issues* including liaison, coordinated services, effective use of resources, and school-based community services.
- *Chapter 16* including programs and services for gifted students.
- *School Safety Issues* including the provisions of Chapter 10 of State Board Regulations pertaining to the management of a safe school.
- *Standards for Positive School Climate* as proposed by the State Board of Education.
- *Reform Initiatives* including No Child Left behind at the federal level and at the state level such initiatives as SAS, PAGE1, PVAAS, Project 720, Academic Standards, Keystone exams, and PSSA testing.
- *Other Issues* including adolescent sexual activity, school-based mental health services, AIDS and its related implications, substance abuse, IDEA, and ADA.

***Appendix A***  
***(Section 12.41-12.42 State Board Regulations)***

## Section 12.41 Student services.

(a) Each school entity shall prepare a written plan for the implementation of a comprehensive and integrated K-12 program of the student services based on the needs of its students. The plan shall be prepared and revised in accordance with the timeframes and procedures described in sections 4.13(a), (b), (d), (e) and (f) (relating to strategic plans). Services offered by community agencies in public schools shall be coordinated by and under the general direction of the school entity. The plan shall include policies and procedures for emergency care and administration of medication and treatment under the Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act (35 P.S. sections 780-101 – 780-144) and guidelines issued by the Department of Health. The Department of Health guidelines are available from the Division of School Health, Department of Health, P. O. Box 90, Harrisburg, PA 17108.

(b) While the variety of student services offered will differ from school to school depending upon its size and the needs of its students, the following categories of services shall be provided by each school entity in planning its student services:

(1) Developmental services for students that address their developmental needs throughout their enrollment in school. Developmental services include guidance counseling, psychological services, health services, home and school visitor services and social work services that support students in addressing their academic, behavioral, health, personal and social development issues.

(2) Diagnostic, intervention and referral services for students who are experiencing problems attaining educational achievement appropriate to their learning potential. Diagnostic services are used by student services staff to identify barriers that limit a student's success in school. Intervention services actively engage student services staff in activities planned to reduce or eliminate specific barriers to student success. Student services staff may arrange for referrals to other school-based or school-linked professionals or may refer parents and guardians to appropriate community-based services for assistance.

(3) Consultation and coordination services for students who are experiencing chronic problems that require multiple services by teams or specialists. Consultation services are used by student services staff, in partnership with parents or guardians, to obtain assistance to address barriers and issues that are outside the scope of the student services professional. Consultation and coordination services may be used to assist in the diagnosis, intervention or referral of students who face barriers to success. Coordination services connect school resources with other available resources to assist students in meeting their educational objectives.

(c) Student services shall:

(1) Be an integral part of the instructional program at all levels of the school system.

(2) Provide information to students and parents or guardians about educational opportunities of the school's instructional program and how to access these opportunities.

(3) Provide career information and assessments so that students and parents or guardians might become aware of the world of work and of a variety of career options available to individual students.

(4) Provide basic health services outlined in Article XIV of the Public School Code for students and information to parents or guardians about the health needs of their children.

(d) When student assessments using individual surveys are administered, parents or guardians shall be informed of the nature and scope of the surveys and of their relationship to the educational program of their child, consistent with the requirements of the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (20 U. S. C. section 1232h ). Parents or guardians or the student if they are 18 years or older shall have the right to refuse to participate in the survey via procedures established by the school entity.

(e) Persons delivering student services shall be specifically licensed or certified as required by statute or regulation.

(f) The Department will provide guidelines and technical assistance to local education agencies in planning student services.

#### Section 12.42 Student assistance program

School entities shall plan and provide for a student assistance program under Act 211 of 1990 (Public Law 1362).

***Appendix B (Pupil Services Role Statements)***

# School Psychological Services

The following role statement was provided by the American Psychological Association as of September 1, 2009

School Psychology is a general practice and health service provider specialty of professional psychology that is concerned with the science and practice of psychology with children, youth, families; learners of all ages; and the schooling process. The basic education and training of school psychologists prepares them to provide a range of psychological assessment, intervention, prevention, health promotion, and program development and evaluation services with a special focus on the developmental processes of children and youth within the context of schools, families, and other systems.

School psychologists are prepared to intervene at the individual and system level, and develop, implement, and evaluate preventive programs. In these efforts, they conduct ecologically valid assessments and intervene to promote positive learning environments within which children and youth from diverse backgrounds have equal access to effective educational and psychological services to promote healthy development.

## **Parameters To Define Professional Practice in School Psychology**

School psychological services are provided in a broad array of settings (e.g., schools, workplace, school-based and school-linked health centers, as well as medical, social service, or correctional facilities). School psychologists recognize schools as a crucial context for development. They know effective instructional processes; understand classroom and school environments; understand the organization and operation of schools and agencies; apply principles of learning to the development of competence both within and outside school; consult with educators and other professionals regarding cognitive, affective, social, and behavioral performance; assess developmental needs and develop educational environments that meet those diverse needs; coordinate educational, psychological, and behavioral health services by working at the interface of these systems; intervene to improve organizations and develop effective partnerships between parents and educators and other caretakers.

An essential role of the school psychologist is synthesizing information on developmental mechanisms and contexts and translating it for adults who are

responsible for promoting the healthy growth and development of children and youth in a wide range of educational contexts.

### **Populations**

Consistent with an emphasis on the development of competence, school psychologists provide services to learners of all ages and the systems and agencies that serve them and their families. Among the populations served are:

- \* Individuals from birth to young adulthood presenting learning or behavior problems; specific disabilities that affect learning, behavior, or school-to-work transitions; those that experience chronic or acute conditions of childhood and adolescence that influence learning and mental health; and, individuals with mental disorders first evident in infancy, childhood or adolescence.

- \* Families who request diagnostic evaluations of learning disabilities and social problems and assistance with academic and behavioral problems at home and at school.

- \* Teachers, parents, and other adults to enhance their ability to provide healthy relationships and environments that promote learning and development.

- \* Organizations and agencies to promote contexts that are conducive to learning and development.

### **Problems**

Among the problems addressed by school psychologists are:

Educational and developmental problems related to school achievement and school adjustment, social or interpersonal problems related to learning or behavior; specific disabilities and disorders that affect learning, behavior, or school-to-work adjustment; chronic or acute situations of childhood and adolescence that influence learning or mental health, such as personal or school crises or mental disorders first noticed in infancy, childhood, or adolescence.

Adverse social conditions that threaten healthy development in school and community, such as community and school violence, juvenile delinquency, teenage pregnancy, and substance abuse.

Problems of instructional and learning environments that affect the functioning of the school age population.

### **Procedures**

In addition to those procedures typically associated with the general practice of psychology:

Assessment of abilities, achievement, social and emotional functioning, personality, and developmental status; use of interviews, observations, and performance assessments

to understand learning and behavior problems: accountability for valid and reliable measures of behavior and treatment progress.

Diagnostic assessments to support eligibility for and delivery of services within statutorily regulated contexts that integrate diagnostic information from other professionals to support recommendations for educational modifications and community services.

Primary prevention programs to reduce the incidence of school violence, sexual abuse, teenage pregnancy, and programs to promote children's well-being through more appropriate educational and classroom accommodations; secondary prevention programs to assist students who have mild or transitory problems that interfere with school performance, such as poor peer relationships, learning or behavior problems in the classroom, and adjustment to adoption, death or divorce.

Crisis intervention services that support children following natural disasters, violence, abuse, death, or suicide by a student.

Consultation with teachers, parents, agency administrators and supervision of psychological services staff concerning children's behavior and academic and social problems; professional development programs for teachers; design and direction of comprehensive and integrated service delivery systems.

Consultation with physicians and other professionals concerning the school functioning and learning of children with disorders such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, learning disorders, chronic illness, physical or genetic conditions, and substance abuse.

Educational evaluation services including development of appropriate measures of child behavior and classroom contexts; analysis of academic achievement using standardized tests, performance assessment, self reports, and other appropriate methods; evaluation of individualized educational plans; observation and measurement of teacher and parent behaviors; and evaluation of instructional and organizational environments.

School psychology has evolved as a specialty area with core knowledge rooted in psychology and education. School psychologists have advanced knowledge of theories and empirical findings in developmental and social psychology, and developmental psychopathology within cultural contexts, and in the areas of learning and effective instruction, effective schools, and family and parenting processes. School psychologists conceptualize children's development from multiple theoretical perspectives and translate current scientific findings to alleviate cognitive, behavioral, social, and emotional problems encountered in schooling. A strong foundation in measurement theory and applications of advanced statistical methodology support efforts by school psychologists to design or evaluate standardized and non-standardized measures in emerging assessment areas for individuals from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds and to design and evaluate innovative classroom programs,

comprehensive and integrated service systems, and educational and psychological interventions.

School psychologists are accountable for the integrity of their practice. They protect the rights of children and their families in research, psychological assessment, and intervention. Their work reflects knowledge of federal law and regulations, case law, and state statutes and regulations for schools and psychological services. They appreciate the importance of the historical influences of educational, community, state, federal, and organizational dynamics on academic, social, and emotional functioning of children and youth in educational settings.

## **School Counseling Services**

The following role statement was prepared by the American School Counselor Association. The statement is dated 2009.

Professional school counselors are certified/licensed educator with a minimum of a master's degree in school counseling making them uniquely qualified to address all students' academic, personal/social and career development needs by designing, implementing, evaluating and enhancing a comprehensive school counseling program that promotes and enhances student success. Professional school counselors are employed in elementary, middle/junior high and high schools; in district supervisory positions, and counselor education positions

Professional school counselors serve a vital role in maximizing student success (Lapan, Gysbers & Kayson, 2007; Stone & Dahir, 2006). Through leadership, advocacy and collaboration, professional school counselors promote equity and access to rigorous educational experiences for all students. Professional school counselors support a safe learning environment and work to safeguard the human rights of all members of the school community (Sandhu, 2000), and address the needs of all students through culturally relevant prevention and intervention programs that are a part of a comprehensive school counseling program (Lee, 2001). The American School Counselor Association recommends a counselor-to-student ratio of 1:250.

Professional school counselors have a minimum of a master's degree in school counseling, meet the state certification/licensure standards, and abide by the laws of the states in which they are employed. They uphold the ethical and professional standards of ASCA and other applicable professional counseling associations, and promote the development of the school counseling program based on the following areas of the ASCA National Model: foundation, delivery, management and accountability.

### **Foundation**

Professional school counselors identify a philosophy based on school counseling theory and research/evidence-based practice that recognizes the need for all students to benefit from the school counseling program. Professional school counselors act on these philosophies to guide the development, implementation and evaluation of culturally relevant and comprehensive school counseling programs. Professional school counselors create a mission statement supporting the school's mission and collaborate with other individuals and organizations to promote all students' academic, career and personal/social development.

### **Delivery**

Professional school counselors provide culturally competent services to students, parents/guardians, school staff and the community in the following areas:

- School Guidance Curriculum – This curriculum consists of structured lessons designed to help students achieve the desired competencies and to provide all students with the knowledge and skills appropriate for their developmental level. The school guidance curriculum is delivered throughout the school's overall curriculum and is systematically

presented by professional school counselors in collaboration with other professional educators in K-12 classroom and group activities.

- Individual Student Planning – Professional school counselors coordinate ongoing systemic activities designed to help students establish personal goals and develop future plans.

- Responsive Services – Responsive services consist of prevention and/or intervention activities to meet students' immediate and future needs. These needs can be necessitated by events and conditions in students' lives and the school climate and culture, and may require any of the following:

- o individual or group counseling
- o consultation with parents, teachers and other educators
- o referrals to other school support services or community resources
- o peer helping
- o psycho-education
- o Intervention and advocacy at the systemic level

Professional school counselors develop confidential relationships with students to help them resolve and/or cope with problems and developmental concerns.

- System Support – System support consists of management activities establishing, maintaining and enhancing the total school counseling program. These activities include professional development, consultation, collaboration, supervision, program management and operations. Professional school counselors are committed to continual personal and professional development and are proactively involved in professional organizations promoting school counseling at the local, state and national levels.

## **Management**

Professional school counselors incorporate organizational processes and tools that are concrete, clearly delineated and reflective of the school's needs. Tools and processes include:

- Agreements developed with and approved by administrators for each school year addressing how the school counseling program is organized and what goals will be accomplished
- Advisory councils include: students, parents/guardians, teachers, counselors administrators and community members to review school counseling program goals and results and to make recommendations
- The use of student data to affect systemic change within the school system so every student receives the benefit of the school counseling program
- Action plans for prevention and intervention services defining the desired student competencies and achievement results
- Allotment of the professional school counselor's time in direct service with students as recommended in the ASCA National Model.
- The use of annual and weekly calendars to keep students, parents/guardians, teachers, administrators and community stakeholders informed and to encourage active participation in the school counseling program

### **Accountability**

Professional school counselors develop and implement data/needs-driven, standards-based and research-supported programs, and engage in continuous program evaluation activities. They also create results reports that demonstrate immediate, intermediate and long-range effectiveness of comprehensive school counseling programs. Professional school counselors analyze outcome data to guide future action and improve future results for all students. The performance of the professional school counselor is evaluated using an instrument based on the School Counselor Performance Standards found in the ASCA National Model, and the ASCA School Counselor Competencies. These standards of practice are expected of professional school counselors when implementing a school counseling program.

### **Summary**

Professional school counselors are certified/licensed educators with a minimum of a masters' degree in school counseling and are uniquely qualified to address the developmental needs of all students through a comprehensive school counseling program addressing the academic, career and personal/social development of all students.

## **School Social Work Services**

The following role statement has been reproduced from information provided by the Pennsylvania Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers:

When school social workers are employed in schools they are licensed and/or certified to provide the following services:

1. Prevention and intervention services (strengthening school systems, fostering healthy climates),
2. Assessments (special education evaluations, functional behavior, manifestation determinations, behavior interventions, mental health),
3. Counseling services (individual, group, and family counseling; alcohol and drug counseling),
4. Consultation (classroom observations, teacher consultations, case conferences,
5. Develop and implement programs to address student needs.
6. Parent and community liaison (home-school-community liaison.
7. Engaging community in student success, home visits.

8. Reducing violence (child abuse recognition and reporting, crisis intervention, peer mediation, anger management, bully proofing),
9. Referrals and collaboration (linking students to community resources, collaborating with outside agencies),
10. Assuring compliance with federal mandates (504 staffing, IDEA compliance; Medicaid documentation),
11. School involvement (classroom presentations, school-wide assembly presentations, participation in school committees),
12. Training (social skills training, parenting skills, staff in-service, parent-teacher organization training).<sup>1</sup>

Several pieces of federal legislation and regulation, including the No Child Left Behind Act and the implementation regulations for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (P.L. 102-119, 1991) recognize the need to have qualified professionals providing social work services to children in the school setting. The Federal No Child Left Behind Act in Section 5421 (Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Programs.) contains the following definition for school social worker

*“(5) the term ‘school social worker’ means an individual who—*

*“(A) holds a master’s degree in social work from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education; and*

*“(B)(i) is licensed or certified by the State in which services are provided; or*

*“(ii) in the absence of such State licensure or certification, possesses a national credential or certification as a school social work specialist granted by an independent professional organization.*

Recognizing the need to provide funding, the Improving America’s School Act of 1994 (P.L. 103-382), which reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 provides that Title I and other funds can be used to hire school social workers.

The National Association of Social Workers, which has professional standards for the practice of school social work, defines school social work as:

*“social work services provided in the setting of an educational agency by credentialed or licensed school social workers. This specialty in social work is oriented*

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*toward helping students make satisfactory adjustments and coordinating and influencing the efforts of either the school, the family, and the community to achieve this goal.”*

## **SCHOOL NURSING SERVICES**

In 2011 the National Association of School Nurses issued the following role statement for their members.

### **POSITION STATEMENT**

It is the position of the National Association of School Nurses that the registered professional school nurse is the leader in the school community to oversee school health policies and programs. The school nurse serves in a pivotal role to provide expertise and oversight for the provision of school health services and promotion of health education. Using clinical knowledge and judgment, the school nurse provides health care to students and staff, performs health screenings and coordinates referrals to the medical home or private healthcare provider. The school nurse serves as a liaison between school personnel, family, community and healthcare providers to advocate for health care and a healthy school environment (National Association of School Nurses / American Nurses Association [NASN / ANA], 2005).

### **HISTORY**

The practice of school nursing began in the United States on October 1, 1902, when a school nurse was hired to reduce absenteeism by intervening with students and families regarding health care needs related to communicable diseases. After one month of successful nursing interventions in the New York City schools, Lina Rogers, the first school nurse, was able to provide leadership to implement evidence-based nursing care across the city. The school nurse's role has expanded greatly from its original focus, the essence and goals of the practice remains the same (Vessey & McGowan, 2006).

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE ISSUE**

A student's health status is directly related to his or her ability to learn. Children with unmet health needs have a difficult time engaging in the educational process. The school nurse supports student success by providing health care through assessment, intervention, and follow-up for all children within the school setting. The school nurse addresses the physical, mental, emotional, and social health needs of students and supports their achievement in the learning process. The school nurse not only provides for the safety and care of students and staff but also addresses the need for integrating health solutions into the education setting.

The number of children that have a chronic condition has increased dramatically over the past four decades (Perrin, Bloom, Gortmaker, 2007). Chronic conditions such as asthma, anaphylaxis, Type 1 Diabetes, epilepsy, obesity and mental health concerns may impact the student's ability to be in school and ready to learn. The number of

students with special health care needs has also increased dramatically over the past decade. Students are coming to school with increasingly complex medical problems, technically intricate medical equipment, and complicated treatments (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2010).

The school nurse is a registered professional nurse who has a commitment to lifelong learning. Educational preparation for the school nurse should be at the baccalaureate level, and the school nurse should continue to pursue professional development and continuing nursing education. School nurses typically practice independently and are called upon to assess student health, develop and execute plans for care management, act as first responders, and engage in public health functions such as disease surveillance, immunization compliance, and health promotion. The school nurse is a vital member of the school team that leads change to advance health and collaborates with school staff members, parents and community members to keep students safe at school and healthy to learn.

## **RATIONALE**

School nursing has multiple components and the role of the school nurse is a broad one, dependent on many factors, including the school setting (rural, urban, suburban), health needs of the student population and the availability of specialized instructional student support services and programs.

The National Association of School Nurses defines school nursing as a specialized practice of professional nursing that advances the well-being, academic success and lifelong achievement and health of students. To that end, school nurses facilitate normal development and positive student response to interventions; promote health and safety including a healthy environment; intervene with actual and potential health problems; provide case management services; and actively collaborate with others to build student and family capacity for adaptation, self-management, self advocacy, and learning (National Association of School Nurses [NASN], 2010).

School nurses facilitate normal development and positive student response to interventions. The school nurse serves as the health care expert in the school to meet student health needs with an understanding of normal growth and development in children and youth as well as students with special needs. The school nurse develops plans for student care based on the nursing process, which includes assessment, interventions, and identification of outcomes and evaluation of care (Wolfe, 2012).

School nurses provide leadership in promoting health and safety, including a healthy environment. The school nurse provides health-related education to students and staff in individual and group settings and provides consultation to other school professionals, including food service personnel, physical education teachers, coaches, and counselors. Responsibilities in the provision of a safe and healthy school environment include the school nurse's monitoring of immunizations, managing communicable diseases, assessing the school environment for safety to prevent injury and spearheading infection control measures. The school nurse is also a leader in the

development of school safety plans to address bullying, school violence, and the full range of emergencies that may occur at school (Wolfe, 2012).

School nurses provide quality health care and intervene with actual and potential health problems. Health care for chronic and acute illness, as well as injuries in the school setting, is a major focus of the role of the school nurse. The school nurse is responsible for medication administration, health care procedures, and the development of health care plans. Students often have multiple needs that should be examined in order for the student to be able to be successful in the classroom, and school nurses often engage in health screenings that include vision, hearing, body mass index, mental health index or other screening procedures (often based on local and state regulations) to address those issues (Wolfe, 2012).

School nurses use clinical judgment in providing case management services. The school nurse receives medical orders to guide the health care needed to assist each student to be safe and successful at school. As in other clinical settings, the nurse develops Individualized Healthcare Plans (IHPs) in nursing language to direct nursing care for students as well as Emergency Care Plans (ECPs) written in lay language to guide the response of unlicensed personnel in a health-related emergency. Both plans are tailored to the individual needs of a specific student to improve expected care outcomes. The nurse makes decisions related to the appropriate delegation of healthcare tasks as directed by state laws and professional practice guidance (American Nurses Association [ANA]/National Council of State Boards of Nursing [NCSBN], 2006). As medical and information technology advance and change, it is imperative for the school nurse to pursue professional development so the school nurse is able to provide the best possible care for the student population (Wolfe, 2012).

School nurses actively collaborate with others to build student and family capacity for adaptation, self-management, self-advocacy and learning. Coordinating the linkage between the medical home, family and school is an important aspect of the role of the school nurse. The school nurse has health expertise that is essential to school educational teams, such as the Committee on Special Education, the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) team and the Section 504 Team so that health-related barriers to learning can be reduced for each student. The school nurse can provide families with referral information along with available community resources to improve access to health care. The school nurse can also assist families in obtaining health insurance as needed and can represent the school on community coalitions to advocate for school-based health care (Wolfe, 2012).

The school nurse may take on additional roles as needed to meet the needs of the school community. Healthy children are successful learners. The school nurse has a multi-faceted role within the school setting, one that supports the physical, mental, emotional, and social health of students and their success in the learning process. It is the breadth of nursing activities contained within the role of the school nurse and the unique non-medical setting that differentiates school nursing from other nursing specialties.