NASP Practice Model

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Helping schools help students thrive. In school. At home. In life.

NASP
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF School Psychologists

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Using the NASP Practice Model Implementation Guide

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Introduction
Using the NASP Practice Model Implementation Guide

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this section, you will be able to:

1. Describe the intention of the NASP Practice Model and this guide.
2. Navigate the guide to meet your needs.
3. Acknowledge your potential impact in aligning your role with the NASP Practice Model.

KEY IDEAS

- The NASP Practice Model is designed to promote provision of a full range of services to meet the needs of your school or district.
- The NASP Practice Model is not a job description, and not every school psychologist will be engaged in all aspects of the model; rather, it identifies what services can reasonably be expected from school psychologists.
- The guide provides concrete yet independent suggestions and resources that you can use and adapt to your specific circumstance; it is not a prescriptive or sequential set of instructions or a program.
- Depending on the context, alignment with the NASP Practice Model may constitute changing the role of the school psychologist.
- The NASP Practice Model can be used to explain to key stakeholders what school psychologists are doing in a district or state.
- Suggestions in the guide can be used by individual practitioners to improve their individual practice and by administrators/supervisors to spur systems change to improve school psychological practices on a more comprehensive level.
- Effective, sustainable change takes time, patience, commitment, and collaboration.
- Every step toward the NASP Practice Model helps improve services to students, families, and schools.

ENHANCING PRACTICE STARTS WITH YOU

The National Association of School Psychologists' (NASP) *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services*, also known as the NASP Practice Model, provides the framework for supporting effective practice at both the individual and systems levels. The primary purpose of the model is to help you talk to key stakeholders about school psychology and to promote the provision of the full range of services for which you are trained in order to improve outcomes for students, families, and schools.

Active engagement of school psychologists like you is critical to the successful implementation of the model throughout the country. You can make a difference as an individual practitioner in your schools and by working with colleagues through your district and local and state professional associations. This *NASP Practice Model Implementation Guide* is designed to help you and your colleagues to move toward implementation of the NASP Practice Model by setting goals and using approaches that best meet the needs of your school buildings, district, or state. The guide provides concrete yet independent suggestions and

resources that you can use and adapt to your specific context. It is not a prescriptive or sequential set of instructions or a program.

Aligning the role of the school psychologists with the NASP Practice Model will take patience, persistence, and for most will be a multiyear process. For example, during your first year of implementation, a reasonable goal might be to simply improve your relationships with influential people and have a dialogue with them about the NASP Practice Model. It is critical that you take your time, chart your course, and make steady progress toward transforming your role as a school psychologist.

The NASP Practice Model
- Delineates skills and services available from school psychologists across 10 domains of practice.
- Describes the general framework and organizational principles within which services should be provided.
- Promotes the connection between school psychologists' training, standards, and actual practice.
- Recommends a ratio for schools implementing this comprehensive model of one school psychologist to 500–700 students (1:500–700) depending on level of need within the student population.
- Creates the capacity to make the best, most cost-effective use of school psychologists' skills and expertise, which are an existing but sometimes underutilized resource in schools.
- Allows flexibility for agencies and professionals to develop policies and procedures that meet local needs, while also providing sufficient specificity to ensure appropriate, comprehensive service provision.
- Provides a reference for assessing continuing professional development needs.
- Provides an organized and coherent framework to advocate for and communicate about school psychological services.

School psychologists do not function within a vacuum. Collaboration is absolutely critical to effective service delivery, to aligning your role with the NASP Practice Model, and to effecting the systems change necessary to do so. Working together with administrators (SPED directors, supervisors) and other specialized instructional support personnel is particularly important. Always keep in mind that aligning your role with the NASP Practice Model is not just impacting your role; it supports the overall functioning of the school and everyone's ability to improve student outcomes.

The NASP Practice Model is a key component of the 2010 NASP Standards and contains the NASP's policies regarding the delivery of school psychological services. The NASP Practice Model is *not* a job description but rather delineates what services can reasonably be expected from school psychologists across 10 domains of practice. On an individual practitioner level, it describes what you are trained to do, not necessarily what you have the capacity to do every day, all by yourself. On the district level, the model delineates how services should be provided by the school psychology team, as well as defining the general framework within

which services should be provided. It allows flexibility for schools and professionals to develop policies and procedures that meet local needs, while also providing sufficient specificity to ensure appropriate, comprehensive service provision.

EFFECTING CHANGE STEP BY STEP

The NASP Practice Model is also an important tool for creating the capacity to make the best, most cost-effective use of school psychologists' skills and expertise. Service provision varies dramatically across states and districts throughout the country. Therefore, the distance between "what is" and "what can be" will similarly vary, depending on where you work. That distance can be defined by, among other things:

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- the traditions within your district
- the level of awareness of school psychologists' training among decision makers
- the number of schools served
- setting (e.g., rural, urban, suburban)
- current student-to-practitioner ratios
- breadth and intensity of student needs
- funding

Closing this distance will take time and a multifaceted effort that involves strategic thinking, effective practice, consistent advocacy, collegial support, and patience. In most districts, this level of change is more likely a marathon, not a sprint. The good news is that every step you take toward implementing the NASP Practice Model will help improve your ability to serve students as you go. More importantly, you have the ability to take steps forward, however small.

ORGANIZATION OF GUIDE RESOURCES

The *NASP Practice Model Implementation Guide* is organized into five areas relevant to enhancing practice using the NASP Practice Model as both the framework for change and the end goal. Sections include:

- **Section I: NASP Practice Model Overview**—Provides an overview of the model's intent, the 10 domains of practice, and the organizational principles.
- **Section II: Implementation and Service Delivery**—Provides guidance on how you can advocate for a more comprehensive role by assessing the needs of your school or district and identifying specific strategies to support the needs identified. The section` also explains how linking these strategies to the NASP Practice Model helps demonstrate the value of school psychological services. *This section is relevant for all school psychologists and describes steps that can be taken whether you are just starting to align your role with the NASP Practice Model or have already made progress in doing so. This is probably the best place for individual practitioners to start.*
- **Section III: Organization and Management of School Psychological Services**—Provides a brief introduction to the Practice Model Organizational Principles; offers guidance on how to organize service delivery; provides considerations regarding school climate, key personnel issues, supervision, mentoring and professional development; and outlines a self-reflection process for individual and systems professional needs assessment. *This section is most appropriate for school psychologists who want to advocate for improved organizational infrastructure and individuals working at the systems level who can implement such change.*
- **Section IV: Evaluating School Psychological Services**—Provides guidance on two types of evaluation: (a) establishing a personnel evaluation system aligned with the model that focuses on growth and improvement of individual professionals, and (b) district-wide service delivery evaluations for the purposes of both improving services and demonstrating value of a comprehensive role. *This section is most appropriate for people working in districts redesigning and/or improving personnel appraisal systems and school psychological services program evaluation systems.*
- **Section V: The Advocacy Steps for Promoting the NASP Practice Model**—Outlines the basic steps and strategies to developing an advocacy plan, building stakeholder support, and developing key messages related to the NASP Practice Model; links directly to practical resources for advancing your advocacy plan at the local and state levels. *This section is a relevant tool to move forward across all areas of change outlined in the earlier three sections and could be a constant reference.*

Each section includes:

- Learning objectives
- Brief background on the issues
- Practical tips and strategies
- Common barriers
- Examples of effective and ineffective practices
- Ideas for promoting effective changes
- Reflection questions and worksheets
- Action steps
- Resources with written hyperlinks provided at the end

GETTING STARTED

Like the model itself, the guide is designed to be flexible. Sections I–IV cover the substantive areas of change. Section V provides tools and strategies for advancing the areas of change. You can use the sections in concert or independently, depending on the current status of practice in your school or district and the potential scope of change you can reasonably expect. You do not need to read the entire guide in order to successfully move forward in one of the areas of change; however, having a broad understanding of the ideas and issues in each section can be helpful in terms of anticipating how they ultimately must work together in order to achieve full implementation of the model.

The first step is to assess the status of priorities in your district, potential opportunities for change, and with whom in the district or school you can/should work. Also, consider timing (e.g., When is the best time to initiate your efforts?) and any potential resources you might need (e.g., What assessment tool might work best?). The advocacy section (V) can help guide you through specifics steps and provide you with helpful resources. Remember, you maintain responsibility for advocating for a role that best meets the needs of the students, families, and schools you serve.

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Section I
NASP Practice Model
Overview

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Section I
NASP Practice Model Overview

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this section, you will be able to:

1. Describe the NASP Practice Model.
2. Identify the 10 domains of professional practice.
3. Identify the 6 organizational principles of effective schools.

KEY IDEAS

- The NASP Practice Model represents the range of knowledge and skills that school psychologists possess; it is not a job description.
- School psychologists can use the NASP Practice Model as a framework to provide a comprehensive role to meet the needs of youth, families, and schools.
- The NASP Practice Model contains professional practices as well as organizational principles that help facilitate those practices.

NASP PRACTICE MODEL OVERVIEW

In 2010, NASP released for the first time the *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services*, also known as the NASP Practice Model. Almost everything you do in practice reflects the NASP Practice Model in at least one of the 10 domains of school psychology practice. The competencies identified within these 10 domains represent the knowledge and skills that school psychologists are prepared to have. The model is intended to show the alignment between your competencies and the services you can provide. Often, the challenge is to reframe how you think about your services in this context, identify other areas of practice in which you can grow, and begin to use the model to define your work and its value when communicating with others. Always remember that the goal in enhancing your practice is to better serve students, families, and schools.
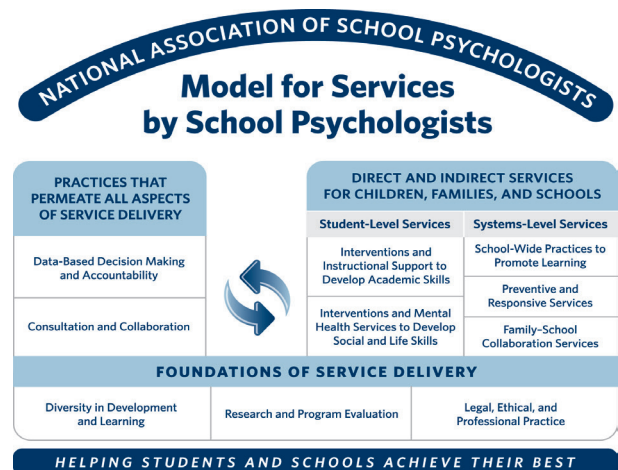
The NASP Practice Model is one of four major parts of NASP's 2010 Professional Standards. The four national standards include: *Principles for Professional Ethics*, *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists*, *Standards for the Credentialing of School Psychologists*, and the *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services* (the NASP Practice Model).

The NASP Practice Model has two major parts: (a) Professional Practices and (b) Organizational Principles. Professional Practices include 10 domains of school psychology practice that are organized into three areas: (a) foundations of school psychological service delivery; (b) practices that permeate all aspects of service delivery; and (c) direct/indirect services to children, families, and schools. The Organizational Principles describe the things that need to be in place in school districts to support effective delivery of the domains of school psychology practice.

NASP PRACTICE MODEL 10 DOMAINS

The following domains, while described below as distinct, regularly interact and intersect within the context of service delivery. Understanding the domains helps inform the range of knowledge and skills school psychologists can provide. The NASP Practice Model outlines how services are integrated to best meet the needs of students, families, and the school community.

PRACTICES THAT PERMEATE ALL ASPECTS OF SERVICE DELIVERY

Domain 1: Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability

School psychologists have knowledge of varied models and methods of assessment and data collection for identifying strengths and needs, developing effective services and programs, and measuring progress and outcomes. As part of a systematic and comprehensive process of effective decision making and problem solving that permeates all aspects of service delivery, school psychologists demonstrate skills to use psychological and educational assessment, data collection strategies, and technology resources and apply results to design, implement, and evaluate direct interventions, psychological services, and programs.

Examples of professional practices include:

- Using the problem solving framework as the basis for all practices.
- Systematically collecting data from multiple sources and using ecological factors as the context for all assessment and intervention decisions.
- Using assessment data to understand students' problems and to implement evidence-based instructional, mental, and behavioral health services.
- Using data to analyze progress toward meeting academic and behavioral goals.
- Evaluating treatment fidelity of student interventions.
- Evaluating the effectiveness and/or need for modifications to school-based interventions or programs.
- Conducting valid and reliable assessments for the purpose of identifying student's eligibility for special education services.

Domain 2: Consultation and Collaboration

School psychologists have knowledge of varied models and strategies of consultation, collaboration, and communication applicable to individuals, families, schools and systems, and methods to promote effective implementation of services. As part of a systematic and comprehensive process of effective decision making and problem solving that permeates all aspects of service delivery, school psychologists demonstrate skills to consult, collaborate, and communicate effectively with others. Examples of professional practices include:

1. Using a consultative problem-solving process for planning, implementing, and evaluating all instructional, and mental and behavioral health services.

2. Facilitating effective communication and collaboration among families, teachers, community providers, and others.
3. Using consultation and collaboration when working at the individual, classroom, school, or systems levels.
4. Advocating for needed change at the individual student, classroom, building, district, state, or national levels.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND SCHOOLS

Student-Level Services

Domain 3: Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills

School psychologists have knowledge of biological, cultural, and social influences on academic skills; human learning, cognitive, and developmental processes; and evidence-based curricula and instructional strategies. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to use assessment and data collection methods and to implement and evaluate services that support cognitive and academic skills. Examples of professional practices include:

1. Implementing evidence-based interventions to improve student engagement and learning.
2. Using assessment data to develop and implement evidence-based instructional strategies that will improve student performance.
3. Working with other school personnel to ensure attainment of state and local benchmarks for all students.
4. Sharing information about research in curriculum and instructional strategies.
5. Promoting the use of instructional strategies for diverse learners and to meet individual learning needs.

Domain 4: Interventions and Mental Health Services to Develop Social and Life Skills

School psychologists have knowledge of biological, cultural, developmental, and social influences on behavior and mental health, behavioral and emotional impacts on learning and life skills, and evidence-based strategies to promote social–emotional functioning, and mental and behavioral health. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to use assessment and data collection methods and to implement and evaluate services that support socialization, learning, and mental and behavioral health. Examples of professional practices include:

1. Providing a continuum of mental and behavioral health services, including individual and group counseling, behavioral coaching, positive behavioral supports, and parent education.
2. Integrating behavioral supports and mental health services with academic and learning goals for students.
3. Facilitating the design and delivery of curricula to help students develop effective skills, such as self-regulation, planning, organization, empathy, social skills, and decision making.
4. Using systematic decision-making to consider the antecedents, consequences, functions, and causes of behavioral difficulties.
5. Developing and implementing behavior change programs at individual, group, classroom, and school-wide levels.
6. Evaluating evidence-based interventions to improve individual student social, emotional, and behavioral wellness.

Systems-Level Services

Domain 5: School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning

School psychologists have knowledge of school and systems structure, organization, and theory; general and special education; technology resources; and evidence-based school practices that promote learning and mental and behavioral health. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to develop and implement practices and strategies to create and maintain effective and supportive learning environments for children and others. Examples of professional practices include:

1. Using knowledge of universal screening programs to identify students in need of instructional and behavioral support services.
2. Promoting policies and practices that support effective discipline, instructional support, grading, home–school partnerships, student transitions, and more.
3. Collaborating with other school personnel to create and maintain a multitiered continuum of services to support academic, social, emotional, and behavioral goals for students.
4. Advocating for policies and practices that promote positive school environments.

Domain 6: Preventive and Responsive Services

School psychologists have knowledge of principles and research related to resilience and risk factors in learning and mental health, services in schools and communities to support multitiered prevention, and evidence-based strategies for effective crisis response. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to promote services that enhance learning, mental and behavioral health, safety, and physical well-being through protective and adaptive factors and to implement effective crisis preparation, response, and recovery. Examples of professional practices include:

1. Using knowledge of risk and protective factors to address problems such as school completion, truancy, bullying, youth suicide, and school violence.
2. Developing, implementing, and evaluating prevention and intervention programs that address precursors to severe learning and behavioral problems.
3. Participating in school crisis prevention and response teams.
4. Participating and evaluating programs that promote safe and violence-free schools and communities.

Domain 7: Family–School Collaboration Services

School psychologists have knowledge of principles and research related to family systems, strengths, needs, and culture; evidence-based strategies to support family influences on children's learning and mental and behavioral health; and strategies to develop collaboration between families and schools. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to design, implement, and evaluate services that respond to culture and context and facilitate family and school partnerships and interactions with community agencies for enhancement of academic and social–behavioral outcomes for children. Examples of professional practices include:

1. Collaborating with and engaging parents in decision making about their children.
2. Promoting respect and appropriate services for cultural and linguistic differences.
3. Promoting strategies for safe, nurturing, and dependable parenting and home interventions.
4. Creating links among schools, families, and community providers.

Foundations of School Psychological Service Delivery

Domain 8: Diversity in Development and Learning

School psychologists have knowledge of individual differences, abilities, disabilities, and other diverse student characteristics; principles and research related to diversity factors for children, families, and schools, including factors related to culture, context, and individual and role difference; and evidence-based strategies to enhance services and address potential influences related to diversity. School psychologists provide professional services that promote effective functioning for individuals, families, and schools with diverse characteristics, cultures, and backgrounds and across multiple contexts. Understanding and respect for diversity in development and learning, and advocacy for social justice, are foundations for all aspects of service delivery. Examples of professional practices include:

1. Addressing individual differences, strengths, backgrounds, and needs in the design, implementation, and evaluation of all services.
2. Using a problem-solving framework for addressing the needs of English language learners.
3. Promoting fairness and social justice in school policies and programs.

Domain 9: Research and Program Evaluation

School psychologists have knowledge of research design, statistics, measurement, varied data collection and analysis techniques, and program evaluation sufficient for understanding research and interpreting data in applied settings. School psychologists demonstrate skills to evaluate and apply research as a foundation for service delivery and, in collaboration with others, use various techniques and technology resources for data collection, measurement, and analysis to support effective practices at the individual, group, and/or systems levels. Examples of professional practices include:

1. Using research findings as the foundation for effective service delivery.
2. Using techniques of data collection to evaluate services at the individual, group, and systems levels.
3. Assisting teachers in collecting meaningful student data.
4. Applying knowledge of evidence-based interventions to evaluate the fidelity and effectiveness of school-based intervention plans.

Domain 10: Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice

School psychologists have knowledge of the history and foundations of school psychology; multiple service models and methods; ethical, legal, and professional standards; and other factors related to professional identity and effective practice as school psychologists. School psychologists demonstrate skills to provide services consistent with ethical, legal, and professional standards; engage in responsive ethical and professional decision-making; collaborate with other professionals; and apply professional work characteristics needed for effective practice as school psychologists, including respect for human diversity and social justice, communication skills, effective interpersonal skills, responsibility, adaptability, initiative, dependability, and technology skills. Examples of professional practices include:

1. Remaining knowledgeable about ethical and professional standards, and legal regulations.
2. Assisting administrators, other school personnel, and parents in understanding regulations relevant to general and special education.
3. Engaging in professional development and life-long learning.
4. Using supervision and mentoring for effective practices.

NASP PRACTICE MODEL ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES

The NASP Practice Model is framed on six organizational principles that reflect and link to the broader organizational principles of effective schools. Each principle includes standards that describe necessary organizational practices that will support effective school psychological services. These standards are summarized below. Strategies for promoting these principles are described in detail in Section III.

Principle 1: Organization of Service Delivery. Services are coordinated and delivered in a comprehensive and seamless continuum that considers the needs of consumers and utilizes an evidence-based program evaluation model.

1. School psychological services are planned and delivered based upon systematic assessment.
2. School psychological services are available to all students.
3. School psychological services are integrated with other school and community services.
4. Contractual school psychological services are provided in a manner consistent with the model.
5. Regular evaluations of the collective delivery of educational, mental and behavioral health, and other students' services are conducted.
6. A range of services to meet the academic and mental health needs of students is provided.
7. School systems support consultative and other services by school psychologists.

Principle 2: Climate. The professional climate facilitates effective service delivery that allows school psychologists to advocate for and provide appropriate services.

1. Cooperative and collaborative relationships among staff members are promoted.
2. The organizational climate allows school psychologists to advocate in a professional manner.
3. Work environments maximize job satisfaction of employees.
4. Organizations promote and advocate for balance between professional and personal lives of employees.

Principle 3: Physical, Personnel, and Fiscal Support Systems. Physical, personnel, and fiscal systems support appropriately trained and adequate numbers of school psychologists, and provide adequate financial and physical resources to practice effectively.

1. Organizations recruit qualified and diverse staff who function in their areas of competency.
2. The ratio of one school psychologist to the number of students is determined by the staffing needed to provide comprehensive school psychological services. NASP recommends a ratio of 1:500–700.
3. Organizations provide technological resources for service delivery.
4. Adequate access to professional support services and appropriate work conditions are provided.

Principle 4: Professional Communication. Policies and practices exist that result in positive, proactive communication among employees at all administrative levels.

1. The organization provides opportunities for employees to communicate with each other on a regular basis.
2. Collaborative problem solving is used to plan and deliver school psychological services.
3. Staff have access to technology necessary to perform their jobs adequately.
4. Policies relating to student records are consistent with state and federal rules and laws.

Principle 5: Supervision and Mentoring. All personnel have levels and types of supervision and/or mentoring adequate to ensure the provision of effective and accountable services.

1. Supervisors have valid credentials.
2. Supervision methods match the developmental level of the school psychologist.
3. Time is allowed for supervision and mentoring.
4. A coordinated plan to evaluate school psychological services is implemented.
5. Practica and internship experiences occur under conditions of appropriate supervision.
6. School psychology supervisors provide professional leadership.

Principle 6: Professional Development and Recognition Systems. Individual school psychologists and school systems create professional development plans annually that are both adequate for and relevant to the service delivery priorities of the school system.

1. School psychologists have access to continuing professional development sufficient to remain current in professional practices.
2. Supervision is provided so that professional skills are continued and maintained over time.
3. The organization provides levels of recognition that reflect professional growth.

The domains of practice and organizational principles provide the framework for examining your own practice context and allow you to gauge the distance between where you are now and where you want to be. In subsequent sections of the guide, you will learn strategies for more formally assessing your own and your district's needs, and for beginning to make changes to align your work more closely with the model.

RESOURCES

Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services
http://www.nasponline.org/standards/2010standards/2_PracticeModel.pdf

Principles for Professional Ethics
http://www.nasponline.org/standards/2010standards/1_ Ethical Principles.pdf

Standards for the Credentialing of School Psychologists
http://www.nasponline.org/standards/2010standards/2_Credentialing_Standards.pdf

Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists Standards for the Credentialing of School Psychologists http://www.nasponline.org/standards/2010standards/2_Credentialing_Standards.pdf

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Section II
NASP Practice Model
Implementation and Service Delivery

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Section II
NASP Practice Model Implementation and Service Delivery

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this section, you will be able to identify the steps and resources needed to:

1. Conduct a needs assessment in relation to your school's strategic plan and goals.
2. Align your role with the NASP Practice Model to respond to system needs.
3. Promote your range of knowledge and skills to administrators and colleagues.

> ### KEY IDEAS
>
> - School psychologists can advocate for a comprehensive role by demonstrating how they can help the school, its students, and their families.
> - School psychologists can identify the needs of the school or district by facilitating a needs assessment and resource mapping.
> - The NASP Practice Model can be used as a framework to share the myriad knowledge and skills that school psychologists possess that can help directly address identified needs.
> - The outcome of this process, along with the process itself, can help demonstrate how invaluable the school psychologist can be, and can lead to a more comprehensive role that aligns with the NASP Practice Model.

A COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK FOR SERVICES

As a school psychologist, you play a vital role in lowering barriers to learning, which is essential to ensuring that all students are achieving their best academically, socially, and emotionally. The NASP Practice Model provides a framework for broad-based service delivery (assessment, collaboration, consultation, prevention, intervention, and evaluation) that best meets the needs of all students while also supporting teachers' ability to teach. Often, facilitating the changes in school culture necessary to establish comprehensive and coordinated services takes commitment and patience. This section of the guide provides steps to help you and your colleagues move toward a comprehensive service delivery model by identifying and addressing pressing needs in your school or district.

ASSESSING SCHOOL-LEVEL AND DISTRICT-LEVEL NEEDS

You can position yourself well for aligning your role with the NASP Practice Model by linking your services to the identified needs of the school or district. An initial step in this process is identifying needs and priorities by reviewing your district's and/or school building's school improvement plan. Your review should look carefully at how you and the other district school psychologists can support the goals and activities of the school improvement plan.

You cannot realistically meet all of the identified needs of the school by yourself. However, the NASP Practice Model offers a good schema for identifying the services you can provide to address those

identified needs. The NASP Practice Model reflects the collaborative nature of this work. A school psychologist within a district can work together with other school psychologists and specialized instructional support personnel to ensure that the full range of necessary services is provided.

Recommended Steps for Completing a Needs Assessment

A comprehensive needs assessment can serve numerous purposes, including identifying strengths and weaknesses of your school or district and helping prioritize areas of concern. Needs assessments can be specifically targeted around an area of interest for your school (e.g., perceived safety among students, discipline data, reading fluency among specified grades) or be more broad and exploratory. You must work collaboratively with school leadership in this process, while demonstrating how you can help meet the identified needs, goals, and priorities using your expansive skillset.

Step 1: Identifying and Engaging the Appropriate Stakeholders
Be sure to include school administration/leadership and other specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) throughout this process to be sure that the identified target areas are aligned with the school's priorities and goals.

The NASP *Communiqué* article, "Guidelines for School Needs Assessment Interview" offers general guidance on initiating conversations with school administration about needs assessment. Additionally, the IDEA Partnership has created a collection of resources that can be used to help people understand the role and value of specialized instructional support services and personnel. This collection includes guiding assumptions, needs of the field, a glossary of related terms, a PowerPoint presentation, and dialogue guides.

Step 2: Identifying Relevant Data Sources (Ideally From Multiple Perspectives and Stakeholders, Including Students, Educators, and Families)
Note: Not all data sources listed must be collected. If additional data are needed, develop a plan collaboratively with school leadership and other stakeholders that is consistent with any existing strategic plan.

Many resources with school indicators of progress include data that already exist and just need to be analyzed with an eye toward how you can contribute to school improvement. Examples include:

- *Demographics:* Enrollment, attendance, retention, ethnicity, gender, free and reduced meals, cultural and linguistic diversity, graduation rates, dropout rates, special education data, student mobility, at-risk populations
- *School climate:* discipline referrals, perceived safety and connectedness among students and staff, classroom management
- *Student learning and achievement:* grades, universal screening measures, formative assessments, disaggregated data by various groups (age, ethnicity, access to interventions), data trends over time, state testing data, teacher observations
- *Family and community engagement:* opportunities for involvement, attendance and actual involvement from families and community in school functions and decisions, availability of language interpretive services, existing community partnerships
- *Staff quality, recruitment, and retention:* staff attendance and turnover rate, professional development, mentoring opportunities for new staff

Examine these tools for adoption or adaptation to fit the needs of your school, while acknowledging that some states may have a mandatory or recommended needs assessment established.

- Needs Assessment Tools and Guidelines:

  o *North Dakota Needs Assessment Guide and Tools*—This resource offers a description of critical issues, considerations, and steps in conducting a needs assessment in schools. Includes self-reflection questions, types/sources of data to consider, and sample needs assessment surveys and decision matrices. Sample documents are all one page or less. Resources (both paid and free) are provided as well.
  o *NCLB Comprehensive Needs Assessment – Texas Education Agency*—This resource offers a summary of the legal mandates associated with school-based needs assessments, followed by detailed steps to complete a needs assessment. Various data categories and probing questions are provided to generate dialogue within your school/district when considering the focus of your needs assessment. A self-reflection worksheet is also provided.
  o *ASCD School Improvement Tool – online assessment tool*—The ASCD School Improvement Tool is an online needs assessment survey based on ASCD'S Whole Child Tenets (healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged); indicators of sustainability; and indicators of the school improvement components of school climate and culture, curriculum and instruction, leadership, family and community engagement, professional development and staff capacity, and assessment. You can take the survey individually or register your school to have various staff complete the survey. You can then also view results through a report feature within the website. This site requires development of a free login and profile.
  o *North Carolina Department of Public Instruction – Needs Assessment School Improvement Rubric*—This resource offers a detailed needs assessment rubric designed around five dimensions: (a) instructional excellence and alignment, (b) leadership capacity, (c) professional capacity, (d) planning and operational effectiveness, and (e) families and community.

- School Climate Assessments

  The National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (NCSSLE)—This resource maintains a compendium of valid and reliable surveys, assessments, and scales of school climate that can assist educators in their efforts to identify and assess their conditions for learning (Safe and Supportive Schools Technical Assistance Center).

- Collecting and Using Systems-Level Data

  Minneapolis Public Schools – Positive School Climate Tool Kit—This source provides information about using data throughout the school to bring about significant change.

Once you have collected data, you need to organize it in ways that will help others understand the strengths and needs of your school. Here are some critical questions to guide your data analysis process.

1. Define expectations and goals among the available data (e.g., the school's goal for parent participation in back-to-school night is 90%).
2. Identify gaps between expectations/goals and actual data (e.g., actual parent participation in back-to-school night is 30%).
3. Identify the school's strengths and weaknesses.
4. Identify trends, if available.

5. Examine how the available data relate to the strategic goals and priorities described in the school improvement plan (see inset box at right).

Step 3: Resource Mapping

Schools already have a variety of personnel, programs, and services available to students. Resource mapping consists of evaluating those available resources, how they are being used, identifying redundant or overlapping services, and how they can be integrated and used most efficiently and effectively. An important component of resource mapping is identifying the current levels of (a) mental and behavioral health supports and services for students and families, and (b) academic interventions and services. Consideration should be given to what supports and services are available at the student, classroom, school, and district-wide levels.

> *Systems that do not have an established strategic or school improvement plan, or that have a plan in need of updating or revision should consider utilizing the following target areas to guide the development of goals. See the NASP Practice Model Overview*
> - Improve Academic Engagement and Achievement
> - Facilitate Effective Instruction
> - Support Positive Behavior and Socially Successful Students
> - Support Diverse Learners
> - Create Safe, Positive School Climate
> - Strengthen Family–School Partnerships
> - Improve Assessment and Accountability

As an example, through the resource mapping process, a school may recognize that an administrative procedure is in place for crisis response within the district that also provides a set of procedures for each school building. However, they do not have a full-time mental and behavioral health professional to provide classroom or more intensive student-level support on a consistent basis following a crisis, nor do they have a long-term recovery plan.

Another school may identify a growing population of students that qualify as homeless and a substantial increase in students from immigrant and refugee families during the needs assessment. The resource mapping process can help identify what personnel and supports are available and how to use existing resources, such as school psychologists, to address growing needs.

The UCLA Center for Mental Health in the Schools developed a comprehensive overview of resource mapping titled Resource Mapping and Management to Address Barriers to Learning: An Intervention for Systemic Change.

USING THE NASP PRACTICE MODEL TO SUPPORT IMPROVED PRACTICE IN IDENTIFIED AREAS OF NEED

With your needs assessment and resource mapping data in hand, you can then engage in a process of assessing current professional practice and how this practice supports the school improvement plan, goals, and priorities. This can be completed by you individually or as an entire department. The purpose of this self-reflective process is to evaluate current school psychological practices and connect them with the school's needs. Keep in mind that broad-based implementation of any new strategies or approaches to services requires the buy-in of others. This may occur more readily when the relevant players are engaged and invested in the process from the beginning. Table II.1 summarizes some of the common barriers, ineffective practices, advocacy tips, and effective practices that can occur when conducting needs assessments.

The NASP *Self-Assessment for School Psychologists* is a free tool specifically developed to assess your practices and their perceived importance. The self-assessment allows for the identification of gaps in school psychological services; addressing those gaps may be helpful in supporting learning and the school's

priorities. Note that the self-assessment is intended for individual use and self-reflection. If you are talking about changing practice across the district, it is helpful for all school psychologists to take the self-assessment and/or have your supervisor complete the administrators/supervisors version.

Table II.1. Moving From Ineffective to Effective Practices Conducting a Needs Assessment

Common Barriers	Ineffective Practices	Advocacy Tips	Effective Practices
School staff are concerned about whether data will be used against them in some way.	The school staff is mandated to collect data without full explanation of its purpose.	• Share examples with school leaders on how to create a data-driven culture where data are used as a tool, not a threat, and valued as a way to improve services.	The school staff is fully informed about the data collection process, its purpose, and their role. The staff is also given the opportunity to provide input and feedback about the process.
Staff members are already feeling overworked and view the needs assessment as just another thing to do.	Mandating staff to participate in the needs assessment, which is presented as a program rather than as the first step of a long-term sustainable plan to improve services.	• Help identify sources of data that already exist. • Share available resources that can help facilitate the needs assessment including those within the school or district as well as the available external resources identified in this section.	Staff and students are regularly given adequate, dedicated time to participate in the needs assessment process. This practice over time becomes part of the expectation for all students and staff.
There is reluctance to acknowledge the staff resistance to the needs assessment or other barriers, as well as a lack of buy-in.	You decide to engage in a needs assessment and resource mapping and submit a summary report independently without regard to building staff buy in.	• Offer an inservice, brown bag lunch, or memo to introduce and explain the value and process of a needs assessment to staff, including their roles. • Request a meeting at the beginning of the year with administration to review the previous year's data and/or discuss goals for the upcoming year.	You understand the role of administration and key stakeholders and consult and collaborate with them throughout the process.
There is a perception among leadership or staff that they can identify the needs of	A small group of school personnel identify needs of the school through	• Describe the importance of a data-driven process. • Provide the free and	School staff and leadership identify potential needs and outcome goals. These needs and goals are addressed

Common Barriers	Ineffective Practices	Advocacy Tips	Effective Practices
the school without a systematic data collection process.	a brainstorming session.	easy-to-use resources to facilitate a needs assessment. • Offer to help collect, analyze, and interpret the data. • Suggest that a brainstorming session in combination with systematic data collection can help identify differing perceptions.	through a systematic needs assessment. Data from the needs assessment are used to develop formal improvement plans.
Educators are unaware of available resources and/or resources are siloed. There is no existing relationship or communication between school and community service providers.	Resources are not shared across programs and staff. Services are provided by unqualified staff or are not provided at all. Community providers offer isolated services without considering student learning or achievement.	• Conduct resource mapping. • Specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) provide informational opportunities (e.g., inservice, brown bag lunch, school newsletter article) about available student support services. • SISP provide fact sheets and brochures about expertise and services. • A Memorandum of Understanding exists between the school and public agencies in an effort to provide comprehensive and coordinated support services. School-employed and community-employed service providers meet regularly to discuss student needs and available services.	SISP meet regularly with grade level teams to discuss student needs and offer appropriate services. They also serve on school improvement teams and work with school leadership to identify and address school and district level needs. School–community partners work with SISP to ensure comprehensive and coordinated services and supports.

Once data are compiled on an individual level, you are in a position to examine how your skills compare to the skills needed to meet the needs of the school. As an example, imagine that the needs assessment helped identify gaps in crisis prevention and response capacity as well as insufficient utilization of the current

school-employed mental health staff to address those needs. You can then use the NASP Practice Model as a reference (e.g., referencing domains 4 and 6) to:

- Articulate your particular skills associated with responding to crises to leadership
- Recommend and/or provide specific trainings (e.g., PREPaRE) for the school
- Identify links among school safety, violence prevention, crisis response, mental and behavioral health supports, and other related school-wide efforts
- Help establish or improve upon the existing crisis response plan, including an offer to take an active leadership role on the crisis team
- Identify and make recommendations on how you and possibly other school mental health staff can be better utilized to meet this need of the school
- Help make and improve connections with community supports

Demonstrating How Implementing the NASP Practice Model Helps Respond to System Needs

You can now consider your own current practices along with the identified needs of your school or district and determine the best ways you can support those needs within a comprehensive role. While the NASP Practice Model delineates 10 domains of practice that can reasonably be expected from school psychologists, you may feel more comfortable in some domains compared to others.

Similarly, while the NASP Practice Model individually and independently describes each domain, *school psychologists rarely implement one domain in isolation*, and instead incorporate a range of domains within each activity and when meeting a set of specified goals. When you complete an assessment, for example, you likely incorporate Data-Based Decision Making (Domain 1), collaboration with the family and school team during data collection and determining services (Domain 2: Consultation and Collaboration), consideration of culturally appropriate assessment methods (Domain 8: Diversity in Development and Learning), and consideration of the legal and ethical components associated with assessment or the special education referral, evaluation, and identification process (Domain 10: Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice). When you reframe how you think about and describe your work, it is easier to see how the NASP Practice Model truly represents an integrated model of services.

Below are some examples of how you can implement aspects of the NASP Practice Model to help address school improvement goals seeking to eliminate barriers to learning and respond to school system needs:

Goal 1: Improve academic engagement.
NASP Practice Model Application: Communicate with school leadership that you can help improve school engagement by having more opportunities to engage in consultation and collaboration and other related indirect services (Domains 2 and 5), along with direct student-level services (Domain 3). You can draw out the relationship between school climate and academic engagement, and work collaboratively to improve the school culture (Domains 5 and 6). You can also help identify or lead appropriate inservice activities related to classroom management.

Goal 2: Increase supports for effective instruction.
NASP Practice Model Application: You may suggest implementing a school-wide multitiered problem-solving process. You could offer to help monitor student progress, evaluate classroom data, or assist in adjusting intervention and instructional strategies (Domains 1, 2, 3, 4, and 9).

Goal 3: Devote more energy to supporting positive behavior and socially successful students.
NASP Practice Model Application: You can provide services that promote communication and social skills, problem solving, anger management, conflict resolution, resilience, and optimism. This can be achieved through consultation, individual or small group counseling, or helping develop classroom-based

activities or school-wide programs (Domains 2, 3, and 4). You may also play a significant role in school-wide positive behavior interventions and supports and promoting positive discipline practices (Domain 5). Importantly, you can support program evaluation efforts, which can be critical to determining effectiveness and making needed program modifications (Domain 9).

Goal 4: Support diverse learners.
NASP Practice Model Application: You can help clarify the differences between cultural barriers that impact learning and identifiable disabilities that would require services (Domains 3 and 8). You can also consult with instructional staff and administrators on the potential cultural barriers related to accessing mental and behavioral health or other related services (Domains 2, 4, and 8). Finally, information can be shared regarding culturally responsive communication and outreach with diverse families to improve engagement (Domains 2 and 7).

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What are some barriers to completing a school- or district-level needs assessment in your setting?
2. How frequently should your schools engage in this process?
3. What areas do you think are most likely to surface as needs or priorities for your school?
4. Aside from school psychologists, who else should participate in this process?
5. How much time do you expect this process to take?
6. What time of year would be best to begin and complete this process?

NEXT STEPS: LINKING SERVICES WITH THE NEEDS OF THE DISTRICT

This section helps school psychologists link their skill set, as defined by the NASP Practice Model, with the needs of the school or district to promote a more comprehensive role. Table 11.2 helps identify some of the common barriers, ineffective practices, advocacy tips, and resulting effective practices that can be experience when using the NASP Practice Model to identify areas of need.

Some steps school psychologists should take in this process include:

- Review the school's or district's previous efforts at identifying needs and priorities.
    - Does your school have a strategic plan or school improvement plan?
    - Has a needs assessment been completed in the past?
- Begin a needs assessment by first identifying its scope.
    - Broad and exploratory, looking at numerous indicators
    - Targeted, looking only a specific indicators or variables (e.g., perceived student safety)
- Consider and identify the stakeholders.
    - School administrators
    - School staff
    - Student council
    - PTA
    - Community partners
- Identify sources of data.
    - Data already available that the school collects
    - Collecting data through surveys (samples provided above)
        - Identify *who* will complete surveys
- Help organize, interpret, and analyze data.
    - Connect results with the existing school improvement plan (if the school has one). Has the school achieved goals set forth in the existing plan?

- Complete resource mapping, which should include an assessment of the following.
  - Availability of school-based mental and behavioral health services and supports
  - Availability of academic interventions and supports
  - Availability of community-based services and supports
- Connect the resource mapping exercise with needs and priorities identified in the needs assessment.
  - What is the school/district doing well?
  - What needs improvement?
  - What resources are available to meet those needs?
  - What additional resources are needed?
- Assess professional knowledge, skills, and practice as an individual school psychologist or as a district staff.
  - Continue to connect these skills with the identified needs and priorities.
- Advocate for a comprehensive role (and possibly improved school psychologist to student ratios) to help the school or district effectively meet its needs and priorities. (See Section V: Advocacy Steps for resources and tools.)

Worksheet II.1 can assist with implementing these steps.

Table II.2. Moving From Ineffective to Effective Practices Using the NASP Practice Model to Address Identified Areas of Need

Common Barriers	Ineffective Practices	Advocacy Tips	Effective Practices
Direct services and program supports that are offered in schools have competing interests.	Implementing a commercial program to address an identified need based on the recommendations of the salesman versus the evidence-based merits of the program.	Offer to participate on a team to help interpret data, analyze commercial resources, and identify steps to address needs.	Choose evidence-based practices and align services with the NASP Practice Model based on data-supported needs of the school or district.
Decision making teams are staffed based on available personnel instead of on skills and knowledge.	A school improvement/strategic plan is drafted based on narrow perceptions of a problem or need and does not connect to the district's data.	Offer to help interpret, analyze, and present the findings and help develop appropriate solutions.	The school improvement/strategic plans are developed by knowledgeable professionals utilizing data collected from a variety of sources. The plan's activities are linked to research based strategies.
The school's administration is not engaged in identifying or resolving student needs.	The leadership team is assembled without identified roles, responsibilities, and influential decision makers.	• Offer to work with the school administration to lead the team selection and development process. • Utilize existing resources (in this chapter) to help identify the various roles, and assign those roles collaboratively.	Each member of the leadership team is selected based on their special expertise and has a clearly articulated role, including an identified team leader.

Common Barriers	Ineffective Practices	Advocacy Tips	Effective Practices
Leadership and staff expect significant changes in unrealistic time periods (i.e., expecting too much, too soon).	Leadership teams make unreasonable and unsustainable goals, recommendations, and timelines for change.	Work together with the leadership team to consider all data collected and information from the resource mapping to determine realistic plans that can support and sustain change.	Use the needs assessment data in conjunction with resource mapping to identify adequate and achievable goals.
A dynamic leader shoulders too much of the accountability for change without a plan for succession and sustainability.	Plans are developed and implemented without adequate team member and external stakeholder investment and do not survive leadership transitions or implementation challenges.	Recommend forming an implementation and evaluation team with a clear commitment to the plan, and offer to participate.	A clear plan is in place to monitor the progress and efficacy of all action steps taken.
The activity is viewed as extra-curricular, to be completed when time allows rather than as an integral step toward school improvement.	The process for change is put on hold as other competing demands overwhelm the staff.	Identify colleagues and fellow specialized instructional support personnel who are willing to work with you to implement the process needed for sustainable change.	Data are used to identify a need for additional mental and behavioral health services and/or staff, and you advocate for a broad-based role and school-employed providers who can coordinate with community providers.

Worksheet II.1. Aligning the Comprehensive Role of School Psychologists With the Needs of the School or District

To be completed along with other members of the leadership team

	Yes (Comment)	No (Comment)	Actions Needed
Has our district/school previously completed a needs assessment?			
Does our school have a strategic plan or school improvement plan?			
Do we have buy-in and administrative support to conduct a needs assessment?			
Have we identified the scope of the needs assessment and the data needed?			
Have we identified the stakeholders to be involved and informed of the process?			
Have we identified someone to lead the process?			
Have we identified who will analyze and help interpret the data collected?			
Have we decided how we will share, disseminate, and use the data collected?			
Have we mapped all available resources in our school, district, and community?			
Have we considered how to link the resource mapping and needs assessment data?			
Have we reviewed the various skill sets of our staff and linked them to the needs of the district?			
Do we have a plan to share outcomes with parents, administrators, teachers, students, and the community?			

RESOURCES

ASCD School Improvement Tool
http://sitool.ascd.org/Default.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2f

Guidelines for School Needs Assessment Interview (*Communiqué, 37*(1), 2008)
http://www.nasponline.org/publications/cq/mocq371guidelinesforschoolneeds.aspx.

IDEA Partnership Collection
http://www.ideapartnership.org/using-tools/learning-together/collections.html?id=1598:sisp-tools

Minneapolis Public Schools- Positive School Climate Tool Kit http://sss.mpls.k12.mn.us/sites/6c9fd336-96c5-451c-a8a6-b6f00373668d/uploads/Section_A_Data.pdf

NCLB Comprehensive Needs Assessment – Texas Education Agency
http://tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=25769811842

NASP Practice Model Overview
http://www.nasponline.org/standards/practice-model/Practice_Model_Brochure.pdf

National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (NCSSLE)
http://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/topic-research/school-climate-measurement/school-climate-survey-compendium

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction – Needs Assessment School Improvement Rubric
http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/schooltransformation/assessments/training/school-rubric.pdf

North Dakota Needs Assessment Guide and Tools
http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/grants/needs.pdf

Resource Mapping and Management to Address Barriers to Learning: An Intervention for Systemic Change http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/resourcemapping/resourcemappingandmanagement.pdf

Self-Assessment for School Psychologists
http://www.nasponline.org/standards/survey/survey_launch.aspx

NASP
Practice Model

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Helping schools help students thrive. In school. At home. In life.

Section III
NASP Practice Model
Organization and Management of School Psychological Services

URLs for resources referenced in blue in the body of the guide are included in the Resources Section at the end of each guide section.

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Section III
NASP Practice Model Organization and Management of School Psychological Services

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this section, you will be able to identify steps and resources to:

1. Identify the core components of the NASP Practice Model Organizational Principles.
2. Utilize outcomes from your assessment of needs, resources, policies, and practices to plan organizational change related to these principles.
3. Promote the alignment of building and district policies with practices consistent with the NASP Practice Model.
4. Identify your individual role in organizational change.

KEY IDEAS

- There are organizational principles articulated in the NASP Practice Model that facilitate effective service delivery. There are steps that you can take to help improve these principles in your own district.
- Supervision and professional mentorship by qualified school psychologists are essential to effective practice and advocating for this constructive leadership and guidance is possible.
- Developing your own and your colleagues' self-efficacy through professional learning communities and cross-stakeholder teams can facilitate professional development.
- Communicating and understanding the value of school psychological services among professionals (both school- and community-based professionals) is critical to the implementation of effective school and community partnerships that are responsive to the "whole child" needs of students.
- Cooperatively identifying professional development needs and sharing expertise across stakeholder groups can help meet district professional development needs without having to bring in outside experts.

USING THE NASP PRACTICE MODEL ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES TO IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY IN YOUR DISTRICT

Implementing the NASP Practice Model relies on a set of organizational principles that allow for and support comprehensive service delivery. Effecting change at the district level is doable and requires working collaboratively with decision makers throughout the system.

The NASP Practice Model is framed on six organizational principles that reflect and link to the broader organizational principles of effective schools. (See p. 9 of the *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services*.) These principles are articulated in the NASP Practice Model and describe the organizational conditions that must be met to ensure effective delivery of school psychological services for children, families, and schools. Districts vary dramatically in how closely they approximate these organizational conditions. However, with sustained, strategic individual and small group action, improvements can be attained.

The six principles are summarized and described throughout this section. See page 1–6 of the NASP Practice Model for a detailed description of the Organizational Principles.

DESIGNING ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT FOR DELIVERING EFFECTIVE PRACTICES AND SERVICES

Below are examples of how each of the NASP Practice Model's organizational principles might look in ineffective and effective service delivery systems. Suggested activities to initiate change are also provided. These are not meant to be exhaustive but are designed to stimulate your thinking in planning change for your specific context.

Principle 1: Coordinated Comprehensive Services

Services are coordinated and delivered in a comprehensive and seamless continuum that considers the needs of consumers and utilizes an evidence-based program evaluation model.

School psychological services should be accessible by any student in need and not contingent upon sources of funding. They are part of a full continuum of mental and behavioral health and educational support services. They are planned and delivered on the basis of the collective needs of the school system and school community, with the primary focus being the specific needs of the students served by the individual school psychologist.

Table III.1. NASP Practice Model Organizational Principle 1

Ineffective Practices	Effective Practices
A set of services is available to students, and if their needs fall outside of this set, no services are provided.	Student academic and mental and behavioral health needs are regularly assessed. Services are designed specifically to address identified needs and are provided by school-employed personnel in collaboration with community providers.
Services are limited by funding sources. For example, school psychologists funded exclusively through IDEA are only permitted to work with special education students.	Funds are blended across the system to respond to student needs, and service providers are encouraged to work across the system and with a variety of students.
Schools only provide services to students while in school. Navigating the community system for possible family supports provided after the school day is the burden of parents alone.	Schools work collaboratively with community agencies to support students and their family in accessing a broad array of services to promote family and educational stability.
Policies prescribe a specific battery of tests to be given for student evaluations. Services are driven by specific labels or categories, not individually identified needs.	Assessment procedures and specialized instructional support services are determined by individual student needs.

Common Barriers to Providing Coordinated, Comprehensive Services

- Lack of awareness of the NASP Practice Model Organizational Principles among stakeholders.
- Expectations for direct services exceed the capacity of the school psychologist because of workload demands.

- Work setting does not provide work areas conducive for conducting assessments.
- Work setting does not provide a private setting suitable for confidential counseling with students or consultation with teachers or parents.
- School psychologists are instructed to not list direct psychological services on IEPs of students in need because of shortages of service providers or excessive workloads of practitioners.
- Separate and distinct funding streams for special education and regular education services prevent personnel from being able to serve students in need.
- School psychologists are underutilized due to a lack of knowledge of their training and skills.
- The district contracts out for services that could be provided by qualified school psychologists already present and employed in the district.
- The services provided in a system are fragmented and characterized by organizational silos.

Advocacy Tips for Promoting Coordinated, Comprehensive Services

- Talk to your supervisor about inconsistencies in policy and practice. Offer suggestions to administrators and board members to better align policy and practice.
- Engage in resource mapping, including conducting a needs assessment and gap analysis. (See the *NASP Practice Model Implementation Guide, Section II: NASP Practice Model Implementation and Service Delivery.*)
- Review the findings of your needs assessment and asset map. Identify one or more manageable interventions that address a gap. Design and implement your intervention, evaluate your outcomes, and document and share your success.
- Keep a daily log of services provided, time involved in delivering the services, and needed follow up. Meet with supervisors regularly to review this log and the job assignment.
- Encourage your supervisor to compile workload data and share it with district officials.
- Inform supervisors of how workload expectancies are impacting the quality of services and compliance with state and federal regulations and statutes.
- Solicit the support of parents to advocate for improved access to school psychological services.
- Meet with your supervisor and union representatives (if available) to educate them on the breadth of responsibilities and the time involved to provide comprehensive services and supports. Suggest ideas for improving workload assignments.

Principle 2: Effective Service Delivery

The professional climate facilitates effective service delivery that allows school psychologists to advocate for and provide appropriate services.

School psychologists work in a caring, respectful, and responsive climate that considers the well-being of the students and staff. School psychologists are able to advocate for needed services in a supportive and collaborative atmosphere.

Common Barriers to Promoting a Positive Professional Climate

- Leadership turnover results in constant change, new expectations, and new ways of doing and thinking.
- School psychologists are not included as part of problem-solving teams despite their skills and knowledge being important to the problem-solving process.
- School psychologists are expected to perform mundane duties that can be performed by less skilled employees because of a lack of knowledge of their expertise.
- Resistance to change.
- Turf battles or ideological differences impede collaboration and effective problem solving.

Table III.2. NASP Practice Model Organizational Principle 2

Ineffective Practices	Effective Practices
Conflicts are ignored or suppressed, and opportunities for collaborative problem solving and dialogue are limited.	School systems promote cooperative and collaborative interactions between staff, students, and families.
School psychologists are discouraged from and may even be punished for making referrals outside of the system.	School psychologists work collaboratively to determine student needs and to access appropriate services within the system and the broader community.
The volume of work expected of school psychologists far exceeds the contractual agreement. High job stress and unreasonable workloads are the norm.	School systems promote and advocate for balance between the professional and personal lives of employees. Supervisors monitor workload and related stress level and take action to reduce pressure when the well-being of the employee and the quality of services is at risk.

Advocacy Tips for Promoting a Positive Professional Climate

- Create a professional learning community with fellow school-employed mental health providers (e.g., school counselors, school social workers, school nurses) or local school psychology graduate educators to address student and system issues. (See Dufour & Eaker, 1998) *Professional Learning Communities at Work: Best Practices for Enhancing Student Achievement.* Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.)
- Meet with fellow school-employed mental health providers to streamline supports for students and limit redundancy in services (e.g., school-employed mental health team members meet weekly to discuss student needs and how the team will respond to meet those needs).
- Convene a cross-stakeholder team to determine the skills and training of existing personnel and how they could be better utilized to provide comprehensive services and meet student needs.
- Create a culture where ideological differences are discussed respectfully and are not personalized.

Principle 3: Appropriately Trained and Adequate Numbers

Physical, personnel, and fiscal systems support appropriately trained and adequate numbers of school psychologists, and provide adequate financial and physical resources to practice effectively.

School systems assume responsibility for recruiting and retaining qualified school psychologists. In order to provide comprehensive services, school psychologists require appropriate clerical assistance, professional work materials, technology, and work space. Staffing levels must be sufficient to respond to student needs with quality services.

Common Barriers to Adequate Physical, Personnel, and Fiscal Systems

- School districts may value management systems and quality instruction exclusively and fail to also understand the importance of dedicating resources to student learning supports.
- District may inadequately invest in resources, strategies, and practices that provide physical, social, emotional, and intellectual supports essential for student learning.
- There is a disconnect between official policies in the district and national standards for practice.

- District job descriptions do not align with the broad role of the school psychologist or the expectations stated in the performance appraisal process.
- Professional development is teacher-focused and not specific or relevant to the roles of the school psychologists.

Table III.3. NASP Practice Model Organizational Principle 3

Ineffective Practices	Effective Practices
Services are provided to students, but data are not gathered related to workload assignments and related student outcomes.	Data are gathered regularly related to student services, including caseloads, breadth of services, and student performance outcomes.
School and workload assignments are based on seniority, tradition, personal relationships, or other arbitrary or nonobjective or transparent factors. Little or no consideration of national standards is made.	FTE (full time equivalence) assignments are determined objectively through transparent formulas factoring in student needs, services to be provided, and student and school risk factors. District works to maintain ratios consistent with national standards for practice.
Everyone is an assessment expert, and no one will do anything else.	Staff expertise is regularly assessed and efforts are made through hiring and professional development to ensure availability of a broad range of competent services for students.
Assessment caseloads are excessive, resulting in a narrowing of practice and an absence of prevention or intervention services.	Caseloads are reasonable, resulting in delivery of a balance of assessment, prevention, intervention, and consultation services.

Advocacy Tips for Promoting Adequate Physical, Personnel, and Fiscal Systems

- Help analyze current accountability to provide additional information on student outcomes related to the school's improvement plan and the services provided by the school psychologist. (See Section II: Implementation and Services Delivery.)
- Develop a small project that utilizes your broader skills (e.g., small group counseling for students with test anxiety, family engagement activity, piloting a check-in/check-out intervention to improve student attendance) and collect data to demonstrate the positive results of your provision of those services.
- Collaborate with colleagues to develop a menu of potential services not currently being offered but within existing expertise of school professionals, and detail how these services could advance the school's improvement goals and improve student outcomes.
- Use the NASP Self-Assessment for School Psychologists to identify a set of staff-wide professional development goals, as well as how reallocating some of your time to conducting these services will more effectively addresses problems/outcomes. Focus on developing complementary areas of expertise among the staff.
- Join state and national professional organizations and attend relevant trainings and conferences.
- Use the NASP Online Learning Center as a convenient professional development resource.
- Encourage supervisors to use a staffing formula that factors in national standards (student population ratio to one school psychologist), student at-risk indicators (e.g., percent of the population receiving free and reduced lunch, drop out rate, percentage of students in foster care, etc.) and prevention and intervention services (e.g., positive behavior supports program, social–emotional learning curriculum, 1:1 counseling for students in need, etc.).

Principle 4: Positive, Proactive Communication

Policies and practices exist that result in positive, proactive communication among employees at all administrative levels.

Professional communication is essential to effective service delivery. There are clear policies (board policies, statutes, and regulations) that guide professional communications and the development and maintenance of student records. School psychologists are provided with the tools to support confidential communications with students, families, school staff, and outside professionals.

Common Barriers to Positive, Proactive Communication

- Development of community contacts is ad hoc, rather than planned.
- Professionals work alone and compile resources over time without sharing among colleagues.
- Staff lack knowledge about federal statutes.
- Information may be shared among upper levels of administration but is not communicated to building level staff.
- Technology is outdated, and staff lack of knowledge about new technologies.
- Meeting time is inadequate or poorly used.

Table III.4. NASP Practice Model Organizational Principle 4

Ineffective Practices	Effective Practices
School psychologists in the district do not have the opportunity to meet regularly, and all communication with outside providers is ad hoc. Individual school psychologists develop their own network of contacts in the community, but these are not shared systematically.	Time is provided in school psychologists' schedules for collaborative planning and problem solving with each other and with the broader school community. There is regular communication among school-employed and community-based service providers that promotes the availability of a comprehensive set of supports.
School psychologists share desktop computers in a central location and there is no confidential online record storage resulting in the need to print copies of any material they need access to in their schools.	School psychologists have access to a personal computer or tablet (e.g., for conducting observations, writing reports, home–school communication) that is secure and confidential.
There is no standard procedure for storing assessment data or making protocols available for parents to review.	Clear guidelines are developed that state which documents are considered educational records under FERPA or other statutes and which are the personal property of the school psychologist. Well-developed procedures are in place to protect the confidentiality of records and protect test security.

Advocacy Tips for Promoting Positive, Proactive Communication

- Develop a list of community contacts that you refer to regularly. Outline what you know about insurance, waiting lists, types of services provided by each one. Share this with your colleagues, and ask them to add to it. Gradually build a comprehensive list of community supports.

- Share the developing list with the community providers who are included. Ask them to add to the list and correct any misinformation.
- Work with one or two colleagues to review current procedures for record keeping and record release to ensure consistency with FERPA (see Jacob, Decker, & Hartshorne, 2011 for guidance). Ask to have any needed changes reviewed by the school district's attorney. Once approved, distribute the guidelines to principals and other school psychologists.
- Develop procedures to promote information sharing across professionals about student needs and responsive services.
- Collaboratively develop agendas for meetings. Develop clear roles and expectations of meeting facilitators, time keepers, and note takers so that meeting time is productive and focused.
- Research the availability of small grants that would fund the purchase of computers or software.
- Inventory the technology available (e.g., tablets, smart boards, assistive technology) and investigate additional possible uses, perhaps as part of professional learning community activities.
- If you use your personal computer for work, be sure to use proper password and other protective measures to ensure confidentiality. Back up your files regularly to avoid inadvertent loss of educational records. Provide copies of your electronic records stored on your personal computer so that the district has a complete set of educational records related to your work.

Principle 5: Supervision and/or Mentoring

All personnel have levels and types of supervision and/or mentoring adequate to ensure the provision of effective and accountable services.

Supervision and mentoring are provided through an ongoing, positive, systematic, collaborative process between the school psychologist and a school psychology supervisor or other school psychology colleagues. This individualized process focuses on promoting professional growth and exemplary professional practice.

Common Barriers to Effective Supervision, Mentoring, and Accountability Processes

- Supervision and accountability systems, such as teacher evaluation processes, are designed for use with classroom teachers and do not reflect the unique qualities and expectations of school psychology practice.
- Supervisors assigned to evaluate school psychologists have limited knowledge of standards for school psychological practice, the models for service delivery, or the technical skills that are needed to successfully deliver school psychological services.
- Supervisors are responsible for a large number of supervisees that exceeds their ability to offer meaningful and ongoing coaching and mentoring.
- Supervisors are unable to review and provide appropriate feedback regarding work products or observations of practical skills because they are not knowledgeable about school psychological services.

Advocacy Tips for Promoting Effective Supervision, Mentoring, and Accountability Processes

- Contact your supervisor and request that you have a regular meeting time to discuss assessment, intervention, and consultation services that you are providing and any related problems of practice (see the *Communiqué* article "Communicating Effectively to Obtain Supervision of Professional Practice").

Table III.5. NASP Practice Model Organizational Principle 5

Ineffective Practices	Effective Practices
A school psychologist is supervised by someone with little knowledge of school psychology. Feedback is generic and not instructive. Completion of paperwork is the focus of the relationship, instead of the growth of the professional.	A credentialed school psychologist with a minimum of 3 years of experience working as a school psychologist meets regularly with each school psychologist for face-to-face supervision/mentoring discussions where problems of practice are addressed and reports and assessments are reviewed.
Interns are not supervised by credentialed and experienced school psychologists. The interns spend most of their time completing evaluations with little or no opportunity to provide counseling, consultation, or prevention based interventions.	Interns are supervised by an experienced school psychologist. They work collaboratively to plan and provide a broad array of school psychological services and meet regularly to monitor the interns' progress in providing services to students. Feedback is constructive and presented respectfully. The supervisor receives appropriate workload adjustment to compensate for supervision responsibilities.
School psychologists must use a personal/vacation day in order to attend professional development opportunities offered outside of the school district.	School psychologists are granted a specified amount of professional development leave each school year to attend relevant professional meetings or conferences.

- Compile a portfolio of a variety of work products representing your services for your supervisor to review. When ethically appropriate and feasible, prepare video recordings of services as they are being delivered for supervisors to review and include in the portfolio. Collect student-level outcome data, as well as consumer satisfaction information from students, teachers, and parents, and include these data in portfolios.
- Schedule a meeting with your supervisor and share the NASP standards addressing professional supervision and mentorship.
- If you have a designated supervisor that has no experience working as a school psychologist, seek out an experienced school psychologist in your district who is willing to act as a mentor. Meet with this person regularly to discuss problems of practice. Introduce your mentor to your supervisor, and ask your supervisor if it would be OK to include feedback from your mentor in your annual performance appraisal.
- Share the NASP professional practice standards with your supervisor so that they become aware of the NASP Practice Model and *Principles for Professional Ethics*.
- Join NASP and your state school psychology professional association. Plan to attend annual conferences. Volunteer to serve on a leadership committee within your state association.

Individual school psychologists and school systems create annual professional development plans that are adequate for and relevant to the service delivery priorities of the school system.

Professional development is targeted towards the provision of comprehensive and integrated school psychological services. It is tailored to the individual needs of each practitioner with the goal of continual professional growth and improvement. Professional development utilizes effective adult learning models.

Common Barriers to Effective Professional Development Plans

- School psychologists have difficulty identifying professional development opportunities targeted to their professional needs.
- There is a lack of financial support and/or personal commitment for professional development.
- There is a lack of time provided/set aside for professional development.
- There is a lack of appropriate professional development content provided by the district.
- School psychologists are given inadequate time to reflect on professional development and seek ongoing feedback to incorporate new knowledge into practice.

Table III.6. NASP Practice Model Organizational Principle 6

Ineffective Practices	Effective Practices
The school district requires staff to take personal leave to attend the state professional conference and does not provide any financial support.	The school district provides a professional development stipend and release time to support annual attendance at a state or national professional association conference.
Several district school psychologists become certified in the NASP PREPaRE School Crisis Prevention and Intervention training. They inform their supervisor, who congratulates them on this accomplishment. No further conversation or consideration is given to utilizing these new skills.	Several district school psychologists become certified in the NASP PREPaRE School Crisis Prevention and Intervention training. They inform their supervisor and volunteer to participate in the district's crisis intervention team. School psychologists provide leadership in developing and evaluating the district's crisis prevention, planning, and response procedures.
All school employees are required to participate in "whole group" district inservice days. The first topic of the year is geared primarily to teachers: "Creating a Welcoming Classroom: What every teacher should know and do at the beginning of the school year."	School psychologists use the NASP *Self-Assessment for School Psychologists* to identify shared professional development needs. For annual inservice days, school psychologists receive professional development training specialized to their discipline and practice.
The district has a stipend for nationally certified teachers but does not recognize nationally certified school psychologists as eligible.	School psychologists who earn the NCSP credential are eligible for a stipend consistent with that provided for other nationally certified employees.

Advocacy Tips for Promoting Effective Professional Development Plans

- In settings where designated supervisors may not be school psychologists, set up a regular peer consultation meeting with other school psychologists (e.g., a before school breakfast meeting) to discuss professional issues in your setting.

- Provide data to your supervisor showing how regular peer consultation meetings are impacting practice and improving student outcomes.
- Survey the expertise of the school psychologists in the districts and generate a list of possible professional development presenters and topics utilizing existing resources.
- Work with your staff development office to customize your inservice training by utilizing in-district professionals as trainers. Use the NASP self-assessment as a tool for identifying key topics.
- Request permission to organize school psychologists into a professional learning community that meets regularly to discuss student needs, progress, and strategies for promoting positive student outcomes.
- Make a presentation to your school board that explains the comparability of the NCSP to the National Teacher Certification. Request that a stipend be provided for school psychologists also.
- If you have had a presentation accepted for a professional conference, share this presentation with your colleagues in your district during a team meeting or a special professional development event.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How does your district currently organize service delivery?
2. What services are being delivered by school psychologists?
3. What services are missing?
4. What are the primary barriers that impede your ability to fully embrace the NASP Practice Model?
5. What policies, practices, or traditions keep these barriers in place?
6. What resources, professional development, or professional supports do you need to do to overcome these barriers?
7. What are the current policy and practice assets and resources of your district that could support the implementation of the model?
8. Who are the people with influence in the district who can be educated about the benefits of the NASP Practice Model and help lead the district's transition to the model? How can you develop the relationships with these influencers to help facilitate the adoption and implementation of the NASP Practice Model?
9. What contributions will you make to help facilitate the desired change?

NEXT STEPS: CREATING THE ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT TO SUPPORT THE MODEL

Complete the following Worksheet III.1, Examining My School/District's Current Policies and Practices, in collaboration with colleagues, if possible.

1. Identify the strengths of your current service delivery policies and practices.
2. Create a mechanism to recognize accomplishments.
3. Identify your top three changes that will support improved service delivery.
4. Make a personal commitment (short and long term goals) for improving your service delivery.
5. Identify other resources and advocates in your system that can assist in implementing changes in service delivery.
6. Complete an action plan with clear lines of responsibility and target dates.

Worksheet III.1. Examining My School/District's Current Policies and Practices

Principle	Yes (Comment)	No (Comment)	Ideas for Change
1. Services are coordinated and delivered in a comprehensive and seamless continuum that considers the needs of consumers and utilizes an evidence-based program evaluation model.			
2. The professional climate facilitates effective service delivery that allows school psychologists to advocate for and provide appropriate services.			
3. Physical, personnel, and fiscal systems support appropriately trained and adequate numbers of school psychologists, and provide adequate financial and physical resources to practice effectively.			
4. Policies and practices exist that result in positive, proactive communication among employees at all administrative levels.			
5. All personnel have levels and types of supervision and/or mentoring adequate to ensure the provision of effective and accountable services.			
6. Individual school psychologists and school systems create annual professional development plans that are adequate for and relevant to the service delivery priorities of the school system.			

RESOURCES

"Communicating Effectively to Obtain Supervision of Professional Practice" (*Communiqué*, *40*(7), 2012)
http://www.nasponline.org/publications/cq/40/7/communication-matters.aspx

Convene a Cross-Stakeholder Team
http://www.ideapartnership.org/building-connections/the-partnership-way.html

Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services
http://www.nasponline.org/standards/2010standards/2_PracticeModel.pdf

NASP Online Learning Center
https://nasp.inreachce.com/

NCSP to the National Teacher Certification
http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/NCSPstateinitiatives.aspx

Principles for Professional Ethics
http://www.nasponline.org/standards/2010standards/1_%20ethical%20principles.pdf

Self-Assessment for School Psychologists
http://www.nasponline.org/standards/survey/survey_launch.aspx

NASP Practice Model

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Helping schools help students thrive. In school. At home. In life.

Section IV
Evaluating School Psychological Services Using the NASP Practice Model

URLs for resources referenced in blue in the body of the guide are included in the Resources Section at the end of each guide section.

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Section IV

Evaluating School Psychological Services Utilizing the NASP Practice Model

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this section, you will be able to identify steps and resources to:

1. Embed the NASP Practice Model within the personnel appraisal process.
2. Identify effective and ineffective practices related to the application of the NASP Practice Model to the personnel appraisal process.
3. Distinguish between using the model to evaluate individual (personnel appraisal) and district-wide (program evaluation) school psychological services.
4. Advocate for effective evaluations linked to the NASP Practice Model.

KEY IDEAS

- Evaluation and accountability must include both individual appraisal and examination of system effectiveness.
- The NASP *Framework for the Personnel Evaluation of School Psychologists* provides guiding principles for developing effective processes.
- Personnel evaluation rubrics should address the full range of practices school psychologists are trained to provide. However, individuals should be evaluated against only those elements that are reflected in the individual's workload.
- Personnel evaluations should incorporate a continuous improvement cycle in which regular feedback and opportunities to demonstrate growth are provided.
- Use of multiple evaluation measures is critical to the valid evaluation of staff and services.
- Effective supervision and mentoring are critical to a legitimate evaluation process.

This section is made up of two related but independent parts, Part 1: Individual Level—Embedding the NASP Practice Model in Personnel Evaluation, and Part 2: Systems Level—Evaluating School Psychological Services Delivery Programs. Part 1 focuses on the evaluation of individual practitioners and their services. Part 2 focuses on the collective services of practitioners offered as part of the overriding school psychology programs of a school district. While both approaches to evaluation have some common best practices, how an individual evaluation is conducted and used is different from how a comprehensive program of school psychological services is conducted and used. Although improving services and outcomes for students is a common goal of both evaluation systems, the growth of the professional is of critical importance to individual personnel appraisal.

PART 1: INDIVIDUAL LEVEL: EMBEDDING THE NASP PRACTICE MODEL IN PERSONNEL EVALUATION

Schools are regularly required to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the individual services delivered (personnel appraisal) and the quality and effectiveness of the collective services of school psychologists (program evaluation). Many schools are overly focused on the former and almost completely negligent of the latter. Additionally, many states, through statutory policy, are mandating

personnel evaluation practices and requiring student outcome data to be linked to the evaluation and personnel decisions. The NASP Practice Model provides you with an excellent foundation to work with your supervisor and administrators to shape a system for evaluating individual and district-wide school psychological services. Having school psychologists like you involved in developing these systems is critical to ensuring that evaluations reflect your skills, training, and role, not that of other educators.

NASP Framework for the Personnel Evaluation of School Psychologists.

NASP developed *A Framework for the Personnel Evaluation of School Psychologists Utilizing the NASP Practice Model* (NASP, 2012). This framework provides a set of four guiding principles to respond to the current trends in personnel evaluation. The four overriding principles are:

Principle 1: Use the NASP Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services *(NASP Practice Model) as the overarching framework for personnel evaluations.*

Personnel and program evaluations affecting school psychologists should be based upon the standards for practice articulated in the NASP Practice Model. Some of the benefits of using the NASP Practice Model as the framework for personnel evaluation include:

- It establishes the full range of services that can be reasonably expected of school psychologists.
- It recommends organizational guidelines for districts to ensure high quality implementation of service delivery programs.
- It promotes consistency of practice and clarity of expectations.
- It allows for the practical role of the school psychologist to be gradually aligned with the NASP Practice Model.

Individual school psychologists should consider the breadth of needs of the students they serve in relation to the services that they have been trained to deliver in response to these needs. Critical to this is the workload and capacity (e.g., time, resources, and ratios) for an individual to provide those services. On the program level, districts should commit to making available a range of services that can meet student needs. Districts need to consider how these standards are reflected in the professional expectations of school psychologists, including how job descriptions and personnel evaluation articulate these standards. The breadth of services is articulated in the 10 domains of the NASP Practice Model.

Common Barriers to Using the Model as a Framework for Personnel Evaluation

- School leaders often desire to have a single evaluation tool for all school professionals.
- Evaluators are not familiar with the NASP Practice Model standards or the general guidance about evaluations that has been provided by NASP.
- Although districts are familiar with NASP, the national standards for school psychological practice are not always considered in the development of tools or evaluation processes.
- Evaluation tools do not allow flexibility to weigh services of high priority and need.
- Evaluation tools are often designed around a narrowly defined role, thereby discouraging school psychologists from providing more comprehensive services to positively help students and families.

Table IV.1 summarizes ineffective practices that often result from these barriers and what corresponding effective practices might look like.

Advocacy Tips for Using the Model as a Framework for Personnel Evaluation

- Present an overview of the NASP Practice Model to school leadership and request that school psychologists be utilized in linking the national standards to the district evaluation tool and processes.

Table IV.1. Principle 1: Practices in Using the Model as a Framework for Personnel Evaluation

Ineffective Practices	Effective Practices
Job descriptions narrowly define the role of the school psychologist by articulating only services mandated by law (e.g., special education evaluation) versus a full range of student- and systems-level prevention, intervention, and evaluation services. These stated job description services are the only services that a school psychologist is evaluated on, and any other services that are provided are considered ancillary.	Job descriptions align with the NASP Practice Model and are further reinforced as they align with personnel evaluation tools and performance expectations.
One personnel evaluation rating scale is used for all professionals (teachers, school psychologists, speech therapists, nurses, librarians) and generally does not reflect the unique skills or services demonstrated by school psychologists.	The district utilizes a personnel evaluation rubric that reflects the district's personnel evaluation model (e.g., Danielson Model [2013], Marzano [2011]) and specifically includes and/or clearly cross references these components with professional practice standards for school psychologists found in the NASP Practice Model.
The district evaluates the school psychologists on all competencies outlined across all 10 domains even though the school psychologist works in a setting where the school psychologist to student ratio is significantly higher than the recommended ratios articulated in the NASP Practice Model.	A school psychologist's workload and the intensity of student needs in the school(s) that the school psychologist serves is considered in the evaluation metrics applied to any individual personnel appraisal.

- Provide the school administrators who are responsible for evaluation tool design with examples of tools from other school districts that have incorporated the NASP Practice Model.
- Volunteer to help with the development of evaluation tools.
- Review the competencies under each domain of the NASP Practice Model and consider how you are already demonstrating each competency with your existing prevention, assessment, intervention, and consultation services.
- Talk with parents and teachers about the services provided in a broad-based role and how these services can strengthen student learning and engagement.
- Share your evaluation tools with colleagues in other school districts or at the state level.

Principle 2: Recognize the critical importance of involving affected professionals in creating a relevant, supportive, and instructive evaluation system.
Personnel evaluations need to be meaningful, informative, and instructive. To accomplish this, evaluation systems need to provide opportunities for reflection, feedback, instruction, and supportive practice. Ideally you are involved in the development of the personnel appraisal system and are providing evidence to support your competencies and effectiveness. Being involved in your personnel appraisal process:

- Increases your investment and trust in the process.
- Promotes a continuous quality improvement cycle.
- Allows you to apply your data-based decision making skills to the natural employment setting.
- Creates a sense of ownership and involvement that can lead to improved job satisfaction, skills, and student outcomes.

Table IV.2. Principle 2: Practices in Involving School Psychologists in the Evaluation Process

Ineffective Practices	Effective Practices
School psychologists are asked to sign off on their own personnel evaluation without first conducting observations or requesting feedback from consumers of school psychological services, or the school psychologist being evaluated.	An evaluator requests input from the school psychologist being evaluated and the teachers, parents, and students with whom the school psychologist works. The evaluator observes the school psychologist in multiple professional settings (team meetings, social skills group instruction, IEP staffings) prior to completing the personnel evaluation and also consults with a credentialed school psychologist mentor or peer to assess the quality of technical products (e.g., assessment reports, protocols, behavior plans, consultation plans) produced by the school psychologist.
The only tangible outcome of the personnel appraisal process is a completed set of required paperwork.	The evaluation process leads to the development of meaningful personnel improvement goals and a related professional development plan.
The school psychologist is providing only a narrow menu of services and is not responding effectively to the needs of students, families, and/or colleagues. Rather than being put on a remediation plan, the practitioner is transferred to a different school. Rarely is constructive critical feedback provided to the practitioner so that he/she is aware of how his/her services are being viewed by others and how they need to be improved.	A struggling school psychologist is provided critical feedback about the quality of his/her services and how they can be improved. This feedback is based on sound data. A plan for remediating inadequate professional skills is implemented with realistic expectations of improvement. A school psychologist supervisor regularly monitors the progress and coaches the school psychologist during the remediation period.

Common Barriers to Involving School Psychologists in the Evaluation Process in a Meaningful Way

- School psychologists are isolated from the decision makers involved in the development and the implementation of the personnel appraisal process.
- School psychologists ignore opportunities to contribute to the evaluation process because of lack of interest in evaluating personal growth as a professional or by prioritizing other activities.
- The school district prioritizes completion of paperwork over the learning and professional growth of employees. Compliance around personnel evaluations is high even though the effectiveness of this process in improving employee performance is poor.
- Administrators have an unrealistic number of evaluations to complete and aren't able to personalize the process to be meaningful for individual professionals.

Table IV.2 summarizes ineffective practices that often result from these barriers and what corresponding effective practices might look like.

Advocacy Tips for Involving School Psychologists in the Evaluation Process in a Meaningful Way

- Work with school leaders so that the official policy and practice of the district reflects that the purpose of personnel evaluations is to improve the specific performance of all school professionals

and that, for this to be meaningfully accomplished, the evaluation tools must provide feedback linked to their specific roles.

- If possible, volunteer to serve on the district's personnel evaluation or accountability committees and offer expert advice about evaluation methods, tool design, data collection, and analysis.
- Request opportunities to personally contribute to the evaluation process by drafting professional goals and professional development plans and submitting them to supervisors for review and potential inclusion in the evaluation.
- Offer concrete examples with relevant supporting evidence of progress in meeting student needs, consulting with teachers and school administrators, and assisting parents in implementing home or community based interventions and supports.
- Help to develop group supervision activities like weekly discussion groups or professional learning communities so that staff can continue to expose themselves to opportunities to review and receive feedback about their work.
- Offer to develop a crosswalk between NASP standards and your district's evaluation tool.

Principle 3: Use measurements that are valid, reliable, and meaningful.
You can apply your data-based decision making skills to help ensure that evaluation measures are useful. Evaluation measures must validly discriminate between levels of competency and proficiency, areas for improvement, and the need to structure performance plans targeting improvement. Effective evaluation tools should also demonstrate interrater reliability over time when used by multiple evaluators and eliminate opportunities for bias to the greatest extent possible. Evaluation systems need to rely on multiple sources of information to determine evaluation outcomes. Single sources of data (such as student test scores) should only be considered within the larger body of evidence of student performance.

Common Barriers to Using Valid, Reliable, and Meaningful Measures

- Policy makers pass legislation or official policy requiring schools to conduct the personnel appraisal process using an invalid or unreliable source of data to measure quality of services (e.g., mandating that student standardized test scores be used as evidence for the effectiveness of all school employees).
- A school board adopts a singular evaluation process with generic evaluation content to be applied to all educators, and the evaluation process doesn't allow for adaptations to be made for different professionals.
- Professionals with data expertise, like school psychologists, are not asked to be a part of accountability or evaluation teams because people are not familiar with their expertise or they are thought to be too busy doing their other duties.

Table IV.3 summarizes ineffective practices that often result from these barriers and what corresponding effective practices might look like.

Advocacy Tips for Using Valid, Reliable, and Meaningful Measures

- Present the NASP Practice Model to your school administration and show how the competencies expected of a school psychologist are unique and connect directly to student outcomes beyond standardized test scores.
- Volunteer to serve on district or building-level accountability and evaluation teams.
- Demonstrate the relevance of student outcome data by collecting pertinent data in response to school psychological services offered and sharing it with district administrators.
- Share and disseminate research on effective evaluation processes, including the impact on validity, when utilizing multiple sources and methods.

Table IV.3. Principle 3: Practices in Using Valid, Reliable, and Meaningful Measures

Ineffective Practices	Effective Practices
The district uses one personnel evaluation tool for all educators and requires the same sources of data (e.g., student standardized test scores, student attendance records) be collected and reported regardless of whether those data provide valid and reliable evidence of competencies being evaluated.	The district uses multiple measures of professional performance for personnel evaluations and the measures closely correspond to specific job responsibilities and services provided by the professional and the competencies being evaluated.
The performance appraisal tool used provides an overall rating of "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory" for school psychologists with no additional ratings made that quantify or qualify the competency levels of the practitioner.	The performance appraisal tool is a rubric which provides concrete examples of specific services and competencies demonstrated by the school psychologist as articulated in the NASP Practice Model. The rubric contains a performance evaluation rating scale that objectively classifies performance at multiple competency levels.
School psychologists are evaluated purely based on frequency data like the number of students that qualify for special education services, students tested annually by the school psychologist, the number of students on the school psychologist's caseload, the number of students who are proficient on state level tests, or the number of behavior intervention plans created by the school psychologist.	The district utilizes multiple outcome measures to evaluate school psychologists, including student progress in response to school psychological interventions, consumer perception surveys, observations of professional conduct during service delivery, and peer reviews of technical applications.
The school psychological service program evaluates the effectiveness of counseling services by tallying the numbers of students that received counseling by a school psychologist.	The school psychological service program evaluates the overall effectiveness of counseling services delivered by school psychologists by examining the percentage of individual counseling goals achieved for students receiving these services during a designated period of time.
A goal of the school psychological service program is to improve student engagement, and so the district collects and reports student attendance data as evidence of this goal.	A goal of the school psychological service program is to utilize school psychological services to improve student engagement. As a result, district school psychologists implement a specific intervention designed to reduce the absenteeism of a defined group of habitually truant students. Evidence that the intervention was implemented with fidelity and that the targeted students improved their attendance is collected and reported.

Principle 4: Administrative structures must ensure meaningful feedback and offer resources in support of continuous improvement.

Personnel evaluation systems should support and measure your professional growth and development over time. This requires effective supervision and mentoring by qualified school psychologists who can

observe and review your work, and provide ongoing feedback and specific expectations designed to improve performance.

Some of the benefits of evaluation systems that provide ongoing meaningful feedback include:

- Minor performance problems or misunderstandings can be addressed before problems escalate into more serious concerns.
- Growth can be easily evaluated over time through regular documentation and progress monitoring.
- Engagement with and personal awareness about your individual competencies is increased.
- Supervisors can respond in a timely fashion with increased support or remediation plans.

Table IV.4. Principle 4: Practices to Ensure Meaningful Feedback and Support for Continuous Improvement

Ineffective Practices	Effective Practices
School psychologists meet with their supervisor twice a year as part of the required personnel evaluation system. This system typically includes two mandatory meetings: one at the beginning of the year where the school psychologist identifies annual goals and the final evaluation at the end of the year where the practitioner's competence and overall achievement of professional goals is assessed. No other meetings, observations, or substantive discussions take place.	School psychologists participate in mandatory personnel evaluation meetings with their supervisor as well as ongoing meetings throughout the year. At these ongoing meetings, school psychologists review their work and receive feedback about the quality of services. Remediation plans are developed and implemented as needed. Opportunities for recognition and advancement are considered. Progress toward annual professional goals is discussed.
The ongoing supervision feedback provided by the school psychologist mentor is provided to the practitioner but is not considered as part of the annual performance evaluation.	The school psychologist's mentor is consulted by the official supervisor as part of the annual performance evaluation process, and the constructive feedback provided is incorporated into the supervisor's assessment and evaluation.
The district uses a classroom observation rubric designed for teachers to evaluate all school employees, including school psychologists.	The district utilizes an observational rubric designed specifically to look at the skills of school psychologists that is based on the 10 domains of the NASP Practice Model.

Common Barriers to Ensuring Meaningful Feedback and Resources That Support Continuous Improvement

- School psychologists do not have a credentialed school psychologist as their supervisor, which leads to feedback unrelated to the practice of school psychology.
- The limited resources of the school district result in supervisors having an unwieldy number of supervisees, which limits opportunity for critical constructive feedback.
- The school district has limited mentoring and coaching opportunities for new employees.

Table IV.4 summarizes ineffective practices that often result from these barriers and what corresponding effective practices might look like.

Advocacy Tips for Ensuring Meaningful Feedback and Resources That Support Continuous Improvement

- Seek critical constructive feedback and support from a credentialed school psychologist by advocating for professional development opportunities, proposing peer supervision programs, participating in mentoring sponsored by professional organizations, and/or seeking out a personal mentor.
- Talk with your supervisor about strategies for receiving constructive feedback. Additionally, the school psychologist should ask that informal peer coaches or mentors have an opportunity to contribute feedback to the personnel evaluations.

Examples of Personnel Evaluations That Incorporate the NASP Practice Model

At the time of the writing of this guide, NASP does not have a recommended template for personnel evaluation tools that incorporate the NASP Practice Model. However, across the country, school districts, states, and state professional organizations are developing tools that reflect these principles. Three examples are offered below to illustrate how the NASP Practice Model can be incorporated into whatever system is being developed. By linking personnel evaluation efforts to the NASP Practice Model standards, school psychologists have the best opportunity to grow from their evaluation experiences.

Johnson County School District, Buffalo, WY
The School Psychologist Evaluation System in Johnson County School District in Buffalo, Wyoming is an example of one personnel appraisal process that was designed for use with school psychologists only and was developed by school psychologists in collaboration with district administrators. The system is constructed around the three broad areas of the NASP Practice Model and then the supporting 10 domains.

The system incorporates many of the NASP Practice Model Framework Principles previously articulated in this guide. It allows for practitioner input, includes an emphasis on professional development, details multiple sources of information that may be included in the evaluation, and addresses the breadth of the domains identified in the NASP Practice Model. Additionally, the evaluation tool includes a scoring rubric that differentiates four levels of proficiency for the school psychologist.

Florida Student Services Personnel Evaluation and Model Guide
The Student Support Services Project of the University of South Florida developed a student services personnel evaluation process on behalf of the Florida Department of Education.

In some states, public policy makers are mandating certain requirements be met in the development of educator evaluation systems or that multiple professionals be evaluated using common tools. The Florida Student Services project is an example of a state-led evaluation system that worked to respond to these mandates while also incorporating professional standards and theoretical teacher evaluation frameworks, such as the work of Charlotte Danielson and Robert Marzano. This project shows how an evaluation tool can be developed and used with multiple professions while also linking that tool directly to the standards articulated in the NASP Practice Model.

Massachusetts Association of School Psychologists (MSPA) School Psychologist Evaluation Rubric
In states where educator evaluation systems have been developed without consideration for the unique skills of the school psychologist, advocacy by the state professional organization could help remedy this disconnect. The MSPA School Psychologist Evaluation Rubric is patterned from an evaluation tool that had been designed by the state department of education for use with specialized instructional support personnel. MASP incorporated the NASP Practice Model framework into the state's tool and then worked

with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education at the state department to ensure that the tool was compliant. They have also worked to see that the specific tool was adopted by local school districts so that school psychologists can be evaluated by tools that are realistic, practical, and informative.

PART II: SYSTEMS LEVEL: EVALUATING SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES DELIVERY PROGRAMS

As noted above, evaluating individuals is only half of the equation in supporting high quality service delivery. The NASP Practice Model can also form the foundation for evaluating school psychological services delivered by a department or group of school psychologists (referred to here as the "school psychology services program"). It is just as important that you are involved in developing program level evaluation systems as personnel evaluations. You can do this most effectively working collaboratively with your colleagues and supervisor(s).

Fundamental Considerations

Smith-Harvey and Struzziero (2008) suggest that evaluating the school psychology services program should:

- provide feedback regarding the overall quality of services
- identify areas of need for enhancement of services
- lead to improvements in procedural or programmatic areas
- guide professional development
- provide opportunities for professional recognition
- allow for the promotion of the effectiveness of school psychological services

To begin this evaluation process, Smith-Harvey and Struzziero (2008) indicate that several questions should be asked related to the effectiveness and quality of school psychological services. Answering each of these questions requires collecting data in different ways and from varying sources.

- Do school psychology services have a positive effect on students and staff?
- Do school psychological service procedures comply with local, state, and federal guidelines?
- How do school psychological services compare with professional standards?
- Do administrators, parents, and teachers consider school psychological services adequate?
- What are the school psychology department's policies and resources?
- Are school psychology services cost effective?

Given these questions, the components of a comprehensive system of evaluating school psychological services would include:

- Evaluation of the overall quality and positive impact of school psychological services on students, families, and staff
- Evaluation of school psychological services in relation to meeting local, state, and federal guidelines
- Evaluation of school psychological services according to the NASP Practice Model—the current professional standards for practice.

Evaluating the overall quality and positive impact of school psychological services on students, families, and staff. School psychologists must increasingly use their data-based decision making skills to provide evidence of the impact of their services on the academic and social well-being of students.

Section II of this guide to implementation of the NASP Practice Model articulates a process you can use for aligning your services to support the strategic goals of schools. Data collected through these processes are useful for showing the contributions that you and your colleagues collectively make to meeting school-wide, grade-wide, or classroom-defined goals. Strategies and indicators for evaluating the impact of school psychological services might include collecting:

- Student performance data (e.g., progress monitoring, goal attainment data)
- Pre and post data from individual or group behavioral plans or counseling cases
- Pre and post data from implementation of social–emotional programs
- Survey data following parent sessions or parent support groups
- Data reflecting response to crises (e.g., describing follow-up activities, direct student intervention, requests for external or community support)
- Survey data regarding the results of teacher consultations and impact on students
- Survey data following systems-level interventions (e.g., perceptions of school safety, attendance rates, reports of bullying)
- Data indicating that services are based on evidence-based practices

Additionally, you should be aware of national standards for data collection that might exist. The What Works Clearing House, housed as the Institute of Education Sciences, identifies evidence-based practices. Selection of programs should include those that have empirical data using rigorous standards for program evaluation. In every case, you should consider the breadth of services being offered in response to the breadth of needs of students and work to identify objective methods for monitoring and reporting student progress in response to those services.

Evaluating school psychological services in relation to state and federal guidelines. Maintaining compliance with state and federal statutory or regulatory requirements is necessary, is an important goal for school administration, and will most likely result in the best outcomes for our students and families. Evaluations should consider the data collected in compliance with federal, local, or state laws. For example, federal law requires states to report data related to graduation rates, achievement in reading and math, and various indicators of school discipline. State and local laws may require collecting and reporting data related to student attendance, incidences of bullying, frequency and type of classroom disruptions, drug or alcohol use on campus, and more. Other accessible data that could reflect on school psychological program effectiveness related to legal requirements are available through state special education compliance monitoring and due process hearings, such as:

- Consistently meeting timelines for meetings and completion of evaluations
- Reducing or addressing common themes in due process hearings/complaints (e.g., clustered in one building, or related to a specific topic)
- Providing prescribed services as identified within IEPs
- Addressing caregiver requests for access to records
- Tracking referrals for special education services

There are many sources of data currently being collected in schools that could support the evaluation of school psychological programs. It is critically important that you and your colleagues are aware of the breadth of data being collected and consider how those data are potentially linked to the quality of school psychological services in the district.

Evaluating district level school psychological services according to the NASP Practice Model. The NASP Practice Model offers several possibilities for assessing whether school psychological services are being delivered according to national standards. The NASP Practice Model can serve as a framework for

evaluating (a) the depth and breadth of services offered by the school district in response to student needs, (b) the quality of supervision and mentoring provided to district school psychologists, and (c) the availability and quality of professional development and support to grow and nurture school psychologists.

The Depth and Breadth of Services. Comprehensive screening for academic, behavioral, and social–emotional risks, and factors that contribute to those risks, helps identify the prevention and intervention programs necessary. Important questions to be answered within this process include:

- Does the district provide a comprehensive range of student-level services?
- Are interventions for instructional support adequate?
- Are mental and behavioral health supports adequate?
- Are school psychologists working at a systems level, particularly the school building level, to address prevention of academic and social problems?
- Are school psychologists routinely collaborating with parents and other school and community professionals in the provision of services?
- Are school psychological services reflective of the practices that should permeate these services—data-based decision making, accountability, and use of consultation and collaboration?
- Do services properly reflect cultural competency, and are they delivered with respect for legal and ethical considerations?
- Are student-level and systems-level services based upon known research or evidence-based practices?
- Are student outcome indicators regularly collected and student progress towards school psychological service goals regularly monitored and reported to relevant stakeholders?

The Quality of Supervision and Mentoring. The NASP Practice Model Organizational Principles advocate for the following quality supervision and mentoring standards:

Qualified supervisors hold a valid school psychology state credential, have a minimum of 3 years of experience as a school psychologist, and have either education and/or experience providing supervision. Supervisors should:

- Provide supervision using methods that are appropriate for the level of expertise of the school psychologist. For example, novice school psychologists may require more intensive supervision, with more opportunities for observation, reflection, and feedback, than a seasoned professional.
- Ensure that practica and internship experiences have appropriate supervision in compliance with NASP's *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists*.
- Provide leadership through participation in school psychology professional organizations and active involvement in public policy development at the local, state, and national levels.

Systems should:

- Allow time for school psychologists to participate in supervision and mentoring experiences.
- Consider reasonable professional alternatives when a qualified school psychologist supervisor is not employed by the district. Alternatives could include providing an opportunity for practitioners to receive supervision by a qualified school psychologist outside of the district or utilizing peer supervision models.
- Have a coordinated plan for conducting professional evaluations of all school psychologists and the school psychology service delivery programs.

Professional Development. The NASP Practice Model also provides guidance for school systems regarding the need to support the professional growth and advancement of school psychologists. It is critically important that a school district support practitioners in identifying areas where professional growth is needed and then also the time and resources needed to access the relevant training, supervision, mentoring, and support to improve practice. Districts can facilitate this process by encouraging practitioners and supervisors to take the NASP Self-Assessment for School Psychologists and to develop personal professional development plans designed to enhance or remediate skills. Many schools can also recognize practitioners' commitment to excellence through employee recognition programs or other merit-based award programs.

Common Barriers to Effective School Psychology Services Program Evaluation

- School psychologist supervisors do not have knowledge or experience working as school psychologists, so they are not able to provide technical feedback about quality of specific services.
- School psychologist supervisors are supervising too many practitioners and are therefore not able to provide the mentoring support and feedback needed to support performance improvement.
- School psychologists do not collect data reflecting how their services contributed to positive student outcomes or the overall district-wide improvement plan.
- The overall effectiveness of the school psychology program is determined by looking only at the annual test scores of the students who have received school psychological services.

Table IV.5 summarizes ineffective practices that often result from these barriers and what corresponding effective practices might look like.

Advocacy Tips for Effective School Psychology Services Program Evaluation

- In districts where a teacher-specific evaluation tool is to be used for all professionals, including school psychologists, a representative of the school psychology team can meet with district administrators and provide resources on the best practices for personnel evaluation of school psychologists. The representative can offer to organize a team of school psychologists to work with district administrators to develop a unique evaluation tool and process for school psychologists.
- In settings where the system does not provide unique inservice opportunities for school psychologists, the school psychologist supervisor can organize professional development opportunities to be delivered during team meetings (e.g., guest speaker, viewing and discussing as a group an online learning webinar). Topics for discussion should be selected based on the professional skill needs of district practitioners as they relate to district improvement goals and initiatives.
- School psychologists in a district can work together to create an annual report of school psychological services for district administrators and the school board. The report should include data like the types of services offered, the settings, numbers of students, and measurable outcome data. The report and related recommendations can be presented to the school board, district building-level administrators, and the parent–teacher organization annually.
- A team of school psychologists can work with school district administrators to review school board policies, including specific documents like job descriptions and personnel appraisal tools, and determine how the district's policies align and reflect national standards for school psychology practice. Recommendations can be made to the school board and other influential decision makers for improving alignment.

Table IV.5. Practices in School Psychological Services Program Evaluation

Ineffective Practices	Effective Practices
District policy discourages offering ongoing counseling services to students. School counseling staff may meet with students one time about an issue and then are encouraged to refer families for outside of school counseling support.	Counseling services are available in the district for all students in need. For special education students, these services are written into the IEP as needed. The IEP team determines the best qualified provider (school psychologist, school counselor, etc.) to deliver these services. Counseling records are maintained indicating the students who received counseling and the issues that were addressed. Records are reviewed annually to determine if systemic supports offered around particular issues are sufficient and effective.
In a school district with historically low graduation rates and high rates of office referrals, suspensions, and expulsions, data are collected at the school level and are never shared with the district office administrators. No system-wide analysis is undertaken. Interventions offered in schools are driven by interested practitioners and are not driven by system needs.	A multidisciplinary district level data team reviews school and feeder system discipline data on a regular basis. The team then works with school mental health team supervisors to determine a district-wide plan for reducing disciplinary problems, improving student–teacher interactions, and delivering targeted interventions to students at greatest risk for suspension and expulsion. Monitoring and review of the implementation of the plan occurs regularly.
The district ratio of school psychologist to student is three times greater than the nationally recommended ratios. The school psychologist supervisor is told by his boss that with the impending budget cuts in the district, it doesn't even make sense to ask for more positions. The primary responsibility of school psychologists is to complete assessments for multidisciplinary evaluations, leaving little time for any delivery of a comprehensive school psychological program.	Recognizing the valuable contributions of the school psychologist to improving student engagement and achievement, the school board commits to working towards adoption of the NASP Practice Model, including improving the ratios. A 10-year plan is developed to move the district to full adoption of the model. Data is collected annually about ratios, caseloads, the role of school psychologists, and their contributions to student achievement. The district accountability team review data, reports to appropriate administrators, and adjusts the plan as needed.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How do my school district's existing evaluation processes align with the *Framework for the Personnel Evaluation of School Psychologists* (NASP, 2012)?
2. How could my district's evaluation processes and/or professional development be connected more intentionally with the NASP Practice Model?
3. What data are collected annually by individual practitioners, school building leaders, and district officials that reflect the effectiveness of school psychological services?
4. How are school psychologists involved in the district-level school accountability and improvement teams? Where could school psychologists contribute more, and what decision makers need to be engaged to make that happen?
5. What district-level materials (e.g., promotional, website, formal policy) articulate the goals and available services offered as part of the school psychological program? What program effectiveness data are provided to the public for review? How accessible are these data?

NEXT STEPS: USING THE NASP PRACTICE MODEL TO INFORM PERSONNEL AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

1. Inform district educators and administrators on the basics of the NASP Practice Model, and discuss how adopting the model could improve services to students and help make school psychologists more valuable resources to the system, families, and students.
2. Examine school district policy and advocate for the adoption of the NASP Practice Model as the foundational basis for official district policy such as job descriptions, job posting announcements, personnel evaluation systems, and more.
3. Examine the school district's school improvement goals and determine where school psychologists could contribute their expertise. Structure job assignments to ensure relevant participation by school psychologists in school improvement efforts.
4. Examine school district practices as they relate to the organizational principles of the NASP Practice Model. Set school improvement goals that gradually move the district practices into closer alignment with the standards.
5. Design professional development for school psychologists to strengthen skills needed to support the district's school improvement plan.
6. Conduct an annual evaluation of the school psychological services program to determine the cost and benefits of school psychologists working within the NASP Practice Model.

RESOURCES

"A Framework for the Personnel Evaluation of School Psychologists Utilizing the NASP Practice Model" (*Communiqué, 41*(3), 2012)
http://www.nasponline.org/publications/cq/41/3/pdf/V41N3_AframeworkforthepersonnelEvaluation.pdf

An Introduction to the NASP Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services: The NASP Practice Model (Webinar)
http://www.nasponline.org/standards/practice-model/nasp-practice-model-webinar.aspx

MSPA School Psychologist Evaluation Rubric
http://www.mspa-online.com/rubric/

Self-Assessment for School Psychologists
http://www.nasponline.org/standards/survey/survey_launch.aspx

Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists
http://www.nasponline.org/standards/2010standards/1_Graduate_Preparation.pdf

School Psychologist Evaluation System, Johnson County School District, Buffalo, Wyoming
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UuGD5hvUL4ME3_472aVLHyscv6iOXsmDYaQBs5wnCo/edit

Student Support Services Project
http://sss.usf.edu/resources/format/memos/2012/dps_2012_98a.pdf

What Works Clearing House
http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/

NASP Practice Model

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Helping schools help students thrive. In school. At home. In life.

Section V
Advocacy Steps for Promoting the NASP Practice Model

URLs for resources referenced in blue in the body of the guide are included in the Resources Section at the end of each guide section.

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Section V
Advocacy Steps for Promoting the NASP Practice Model

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this section, you will:

1. Articulate how implementation of the NASP Practice Model enables schools to make best use of school psychologist's skills and expertise and improves all students' access to services.
2. Be able to articulate your role by advocating for the NASP Practice Model as an organizing framework.
3. Identify skills and tools to help you advocate and communicate effectively.
4. Identify strategic/tactical steps/stages for advocacy based on the context of your building/district/state.
5. Be able to identify a multipronged approach to advocacy (different audiences and strategies).

KEY IDEAS

- There are specific strategies that you can use to advocate for role alignment with the NASP Practice Model, which can be tailored specifically for different stakeholder groups.
- You are responsible for educating others about your comprehensive knowledge and skills and how you can contribute to school and student success.
- Advocacy for adoption of the NASP Practice Model can help your school(s) better utilize your skills and expertise and improve access to needed mental and behavioral health services.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ADVOCACY

School psychologists have a critical role in communicating the importance of our national standards in improving outcomes for students, families, and schools, and in working towards their adoption. Consistent adoption of these standards across school districts and states helps promote a consistency of practice that ensures the public that students will have access to needed services wherever they live. School psychologists need to recognize that they have a personal and professional responsibility to advocate for themselves and their services with the same passion and strength of conviction that they advocate for the students and families that they serve. Doing so is good for kids, the profession, and you!

BENEFITS OF ADOPTING THE NASP PRACTICE MODEL

To effectively advocate for the NASP Practice Model, it is critical to make sure that you understand the specific benefits of adopting the model so that you can speak clearly and concisely about why adoption of the model matters to schools and kids.

The NASP Practice Model:

- Provides a more organized and coherent framework to advocate for and communicate about school psychological services.
- Provides a concrete tool for advocating for roles and job preservation.

- Promotes consistency of practice.
- Provides direction for excellence in delivery of services.
- Provides guidance for continuing professional development.

Key Messages

When schools invest the time and energy in adopting the NASP Practice Model schools and students benefit directly from the comprehensive services school psychologists provide. Benefits that may be realized include:

Improved Academic Engagement and Achievement
- High expectations and academic rigor for *all* students sets the foundation for schools that both raise expectations and close achievement gaps. However, providing rich content and rigor alone is not enough for struggling students.
- Interventions that foster students' engagement in learning contribute to more positive orderly classroom environments, increase time focused on learning, and increase school attendance and graduation rates.

Facilitation of Effective Instruction
- Rigorous, quality curricula must be matched with effective instruction that meets the individual needs of diverse learners.
- Increasingly, this consultation occurs within a response-to-intervention or problem-solving process, which has been shown to improve achievement for students in the general education classroom and reduce inappropriate referrals to special education.
- Teachers who consult with their school psychologist receive support for working with struggling students, improve their classroom management and teaching skills, and are more able to focus on effective instruction for all students.

Support for Positive Behavior and Socially Successful Students
- Promoting students' positive behavior and social interactions directly supports their academic achievement and contributes to a healthy learning environment.
- School psychologists provide services that promote children's communication and social skills, problem solving, anger management, conflict resolution, self-regulation, self-determination, resilience, and optimism.
- School psychologists provide mental and behavioral health services, including wellness and prevention programming, risk assessment and interventions, and counseling, which are proven to reduce discipline referrals and increase attendance and academic performance. They also coordinate community services provided in schools to ensure their link to learning.

Support for Diverse Learners
- Successfully meeting the needs of a wide range of diverse learners can be a challenge for schools. School psychologists have special expertise in working with students who have disabilities or health problems, who face cultural or linguistic barriers, or whose family or socioeconomic situation affects their learning.
- School psychologists work with school administrators to ensure that education plans are designed and implemented so students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environments.

Creation of Safe, Positive School Climates
- Positive school climate is a critical factor in student achievement. No matter how good the curriculum and instruction are, a negative learning environment will interfere with student outcomes.

- School psychologists work with school leadership teams to help choose, design, and evaluate evidence-based approaches to address issues such as bullying prevention, student connectedness, family engagement, cultural responsiveness, and crisis response planning.
- Positive school climates contribute to improved academic achievement, graduation rates, student attitudes, and connection in school, and to more trusting, respectful relationships among school staff, students, and families.

Strengthening of Family–School Partnerships
- Students whose families are engaged in their school experience do better academically, socially, and emotionally. How and to what extent parents and other caregivers are involved in their children's learning and extracurricular activities depends on many factors, including opportunity, culture, language, attitudes toward school, past experience, access to information, and school climate.
- School psychologists work with staff to enhance understanding and acceptance of diverse cultures and backgrounds and to promote culturally responsive schools, which is essential to engaging *all* families in school life.

Improved Assessment and Accountability
- A critical part of making informed decisions is the effective use of data. School psychologists bring extensive knowledge of data collection and analysis to school improvement efforts.
- The capacity to both collect the right data and know what to do with the information is essential to meeting the needs of students and making adequate yearly progress and other mandated accountability measures.

Wiser Investments of Existing Resources
- School psychologists serve in almost every school in the country. They are a ready resource. Adopting the NASP Practice Model enables schools to make best use of the school psychologist's skills and expertise, and to give all students access to the services that can help them stay engaged and successful in school.
- The comprehensive implementation of school psychological services has consistently been shown to support teachers' ability to teach and students' ability to learn, and is a cost-effective investment in the success of all students.

ADVOCACY STEPS FOR PROMOTING THE NASP PRACTICE MODEL

NASP created an *Advocacy Roadmap for Promoting the NASP Practice Model* which is intended to help state associations promote the model at the state level. Users of this guide are encouraged to review the contents of the roadmap for helpful suggestions for systems level promotion of the NASP Practice Model.

This section of the *NASP Practice Model Implementation Guide* is geared more towards an individual's advocacy at the building or district level. The eight advocacy steps below provide a broad landscape for evaluating advocacy needs and planning advocacy actions and should be considered as suggestions rather than a recipe for advocacy. Think creatively, broadly, and collaboratively with others in your school or district about how the materials in this section may be adapted for use in your individual setting.

> **Step 1: Examine the landscape for school reform in your building and district and consider the impact the NASP Practice Model could potentially have on you and your students.**

What challenges are you currently facing as a school psychologist?
It is important to be fully aware of the forces (local, state, or federal) shaping policy and practice in your school or district. Additionally, in many districts, there continues to be confusion about the role and

services of the school psychologist and the distinctions between other specialized instructional support personnel. This confusion and lack of awareness can add to the complexity of advocating for a comprehensive role. By understanding and considering these issues as they apply to your role as a school psychologist, you can identify the more critical issues to address and adjust your messaging for different audiences (principals, teachers, parents) so that your advocacy messages are heard and received.

Common Issues

Movement Towards Multitiered Systems of Support. Increasingly schools across the country are moving away from traditional evaluations for special education to increased screening and implementation of problem solving approaches like response to intervention, positive behavior supports, and multitiered systems of support that flow from general education. This evolution is very much in keeping with the NASP Practice Model, but in some districts, school psychologists are not viewed as integral to these practices and systems involved, as they occur outside of the special education assessment process. In other settings, offering a multitiered system of supports has had a direct impact on school psychologists as they worked to contribute their data-based decision making expertise to these processes while also balancing the traditional demands of their roles.

Race to the Top Program (2009). The Race to the Top program was spearheaded by President Obama's administration and was the catalyst for sweeping policy reforms at the state level. This program spurred new policies and practices including new academic standards, changes in educator evaluation and compensation, an increasing presence of community agencies in the delivery of services to children in schools, and changes in how we measure student progress and help failing schools meet the needs of students. As a result, in many states school psychologists are being called upon to prove their value, adapt or modify their role, collaborate more with external stakeholders, and serve a population of students with growing needs.

Common Core Standards. School psychologists are in a position to assist students in meeting the Common Core State Standards by removing barriers to learning. Although the emphasis on standards varies by state and district, the budget constraints combined with policy changes associated with these standards have created a professional crisis for some school psychologists as school administrators, teachers, and parents are asking "What do school psychologists do?" and "How does it impact student performance on standards assessments?" As with any crisis, there is both danger and opportunity in this discussion requiring school psychologists to become keenly aware of the forces that may act as a catalyst for, as well as an agent against, their advocacy for the NASP Practice Model.

School Safety and Mental Health Needs. High profile school violence events have contributed to increased efforts to improve school climate, safety, and learning and to improve access to mental and behavioral health services. However, for many school psychologists, the link between a school's need for improved safety hasn't always connected to the skills and expertise of the school psychologist. Schools often give more attention to physical safety measures (e.g., hiring school resource officers or installing metal detectors) rather than psychological safety measures (e.g., implementing strategies to improve school climate or providing greater access to mental and behavioral health services). School psychologists need to advocate for the design, funding, and implementation of comprehensive school-wide approaches that facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration and build on a multitiered system of supports. Ensuring that mental and behavioral health and safety programming and services are appropriately integrated into the overall multitiered system of supports presents a real opportunity to align your role with the practice model. For more information on NASP's work related to safe and successful schools, see *A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools*.

Step 2: Assess your capacity to advocate for the NASP Practice Model.

To what extent are you able to talk about the NASP Practice Model and why it matters? The key questions below can help you assess your capacity to advocate for the NASP Practice Model.

Key Questions
I. Current Climate and Role

A. What is your current professional role?
- Describe your current role as a school psychologist (check all that apply).
  - ☐ broad-based role with a balance of assessment, intervention, and consultation activities
  - ☐ services primarily focused on special education students and involve assessment, classification, and IEP services
  - ☐ prevention services, intervention, and promotion of mental and behavioral health services like bully proofing, social–emotional learning, etc.
  - ☐ crisis team planning and crisis intervention services
  - ☐ consultation services focused on academic and behavioral issues
  - ☐ active participant in general education multidisciplinary teams (e.g., school improvement, RTI, PBIS)
  - ☐ direct services to special and general education students such as counseling and skills training
- To what extent do you intentionally provide services aligned with the NASP Practice Model?
- What services would you like to provide that you are not currently offering?
- What are the barriers to you providing those services (e.g., large caseloads, students with intense needs)? What factors contribute to those barriers (e.g., lots of time spent writing reports)?

Findings:

B. What is your current professional value?
- What do your administrators, colleagues, and consumers of your services (students and their families) value about what you do?
- How are you generally regarded in the district/state by different stakeholder groups (teachers, principals, parents, central administrators)?
- What have you proactively done to establish your value and worth as service providers for all students in your school buildings?
- What current data do you collect that speaks to the positive impact of your work on students and your schools?
- What else could you be doing in your building or district that would be of value to others? (Think about domains/roles not yet explored or embraced.)
- How are you working with other school or community-employed professionals to provide comprehensive and coordinated services for children and families? What impact are these services having on student and school success?
- What are the unique services and supports that you are providing that are not offered by others (school counselors, school social workers, school nurses) in your school? How are these services valued by your school administrators, teachers, and parents?
- In what advocacy efforts have you engaged in the past, and how were they received?

Findings:

C. What are your current professional threats and risks?
- What are the current threats or risks to the implementation of the NASP Practice Model in your district by you and your fellow school psychologists (e.g., budget cuts, loss of reputation, narrowing of role, school reform efforts)?
- Are these threats real or perceived? Evidence?
- Are there any current efforts or initiatives going on to prevent position cuts and/or cuts to school psychological services?
- To what extent are you working collaboratively with other school-employed mental health professionals? To what extent do you compete for resources and positions? Is there competition, real or perceived, between the professions? What impact does this competition have?
- What other professionals *in the district* might assume some of your role if cuts do occur (e.g., behavior specialists)?
- What other professionals *outside of the district* might assume some of the roles you provide if cuts do occur (e.g., contracted services through local mental health agencies, privately employed clinical psychologists)?

Findings:

D. What is your job stability?
- Are you at risk for losing your job? YES or NO
- If yes, is this because of a performance-related issue, or are school psychologists as a whole targeted for cuts? If school psychologists are under attack, how are they approaching these cuts?
    - Whole group (e.g., 40% of existing school psychologist positions being cut)
    - Individuals (e.g., all employees with only 1 year of experience are being terminated)
    - Across the board cuts (e.g., every department is required to cut 2% of staff)
    - Shifting to contractual services (e.g., contracting for specific activities and services provided by alternative providers instead of comprehensive services by existing employees)
    - Reduction in the qualifications required for school psychologist positions (e.g., replacing school psychologists with lower skilled educational diagnosticians, paraprofessionals)
- How are your role and the roles of other school psychologists changing in your district? Are these changes narrowing or expanding your services? How are you and the other school psychologists responding to these changes?
- When a school psychologist retires, what typically happens to their position?
- Which school psychologists in your district are considered the most valuable to your system? Why? What do you have in common with them?

Findings:

II. Agency Profile and Priorities

A. System Priorities and School Psychologists
- How are you involved in key educational reform and accountability initiatives (e.g., school improvement efforts, RTI, PBIS, progress monitoring, school safety initiatives)?
- How are you demonstrating leadership in areas related to administrator priorities and initiatives?
- What have you done to create awareness of the NASP Practice Model (e.g., presentations to the board of education, district/state newsletter articles, community media outlets)? How have these efforts been received?
- How are school psychologist positions typically funded in your district? (check all that apply)
    - ☐ through local educational agency funds (school district funds)
    - ☐ through state education agency funds (state department of education)
        - Title I
        - IDEA

□ federal grant funds
□ other (please explain)
- What other funding sources contribute to school psychologist positions? (Check all that apply)
  □ Building principal discretionary funds
  □ School-based health clinics
  □ School–community partnerships
  □ Grants from businesses to other foundations
  □ Other:

Findings:

B. Decision Making
- How are you included in building-level and district-level decision making?
- Do you have a supervisor who is a school psychologist?
  - If yes, how is your supervisor representing your skills, services, and value with other school administrators? How are they involved in district-level personnel decisions? How influential and successful are they at securing resources for school psychologists?
  - If no, who, in a position of influence, can you build a relationship with and ask for support?

Findings:

C. Local School Board
- How familiar is your school board with the NASP Practice Model and the value of school psychologists?
- What presentations to the board by school psychologists have been made in the past, who delivered them, and how were they received?
- How can you and your fellow school psychologists use the NASP Practice Model to demonstrate alignment with the current priorities of the board?
- What board member can you build a relationship with who might advocate for the NASP Practice Model and be an advocate for school psychologists' value during tight budget periods?

Findings:

III. Students/Families

A. Key Stakeholders
- How can you use the NASP Practice Model to highlight the role of school psychologists in helping to remedy problems faced by students, families, and school personnel?
- How does the NASP Practice Model describe your services that benefit the whole school population? What do you do to support special or vulnerable populations? What do you do to support teachers? How are you currently assisting your school principal?
- What students, parents, and families can you ask to help advocate for your services (e.g., share their story about the value of your services and their fears if the services are reduced or lost)?
- Do you utilize any specific tools for tracking the services and supports you provide to students? If so, to what extent do those tools align with the NASP Practice Model domains?

Findings:

In order to for you to be able to respond to the issues and challenges facing your school buildings and district, you need to be knowledgeable and familiar with the purpose, design, and benefits of the NASP

Practice Model. One of the important steps to effective advocacy for the practice model is becoming knowledgeable about the model itself, how it benefits students and schools, and the basic information supporting the importance of advancing national professional standards.

The NASP website has an extensive amount of information about the NASP Practice Model and as you embark on advocacy for the model. Here are few suggested activities:

1. Watch the NASP Practice Model webinar.
2. Become familiar with the NASP Practice Model webpage http://www.nasponline.org/standards/practice-model/
   a. Review the promotion and implementation materials.
   b. Become familiar with the NASP Practice Model brochure. This resource will be the primary document that you will share with stakeholder groups when talking about the model.
3. Review the basic talking points that can be used to promote the model and answer people's questions about the model. These points were summarized in a 2010 *Communiqué* article.
4. Review the NASP key messages for school psychologists, and be familiar with how these messages connect to the NASP Practice Model.
5. Take the online learning session that was offered as a 2015 NASP convention session, "One Step at a Time: Using the NASP Practice Model to Improve Your Role." The handouts for the session (DS001) may also be reviewed online.

Once you are prepared and understand the basics of the model and the benefits to be achieved from adoption of the model, then you are ready to begin planning your advocacy campaign.

> **Step 3: Assess your practices and the climate for advocacy for the NASP Practice Model in your building and district.**

Once you are familiar with the NASP Practice Model and the important policy issues impacting your building or district, you can begin to consider specific advocacy steps to address the needs of your students and their families. Consider your current role (where you are) as compared to the NASP Practice Model (where you are going). You also want to assess the climate for advocacy. This will help you consider key questions about the professional reputation of school psychologists in the district. You should also consider the risks or threats to the profession, systems and leadership perspectives related to school psychologists, and key stakeholder relationships that can be important to advocacy.

By asking yourself and your colleagues the questions outlined below, you can begin to plan to advocate for practice and policy changes needed to transition your role to one that is aligned with the NASP Practice Model.

> **Step 4: Assess and overcome common barriers to advocacy.**

Many school psychologists struggle to embrace advocacy for the profession as a personal responsibility. However, for the advancement of our professional standards to be realized, we must all work together as advocates. In order to plan an effective advocacy campaign, we need to consider what the commonly stated barriers are and how to overcome them:

- School psychologists are reluctant to advocate because they believe that advocacy for the profession is simply about self-promotion and not ensuring access to school psychological services. Overcoming This Barrier: Students benefit from access to appropriate services designed to address their needs.

Advocacy for our profession is about helping to ensure that students have access to the school psychological services they need. It is about the students first.

- School psychologists lack knowledge about effective advocacy and communication strategies. <u>Overcoming This Barrier:</u> Many school psychologists report that they don't feel that they have the knowledge about how to craft advocacy messages or the advocacy strategies that are most effective. NASP has communication resources and advocacy resources available to assist school psychologists in developing the skills, strategies, and resources to effectively talk about our profession.

- School psychologists prefer certain roles over others and focus on providing services in those areas despite the need to provide comprehensive, integrated services to be more responsive to students and schools. <u>Overcoming This Barrier:</u> We all have our likes and dislikes when it comes to our jobs. However, it is critical that we consider the breadth of services we offer based on the needs of our students, not just our own personal preferences. School psychologists have both a contractual obligation and an ethical obligation to provide quality school psychological services and supports to students in need. The national standards that articulate the scope of practice for school psychologists are found in the NASP Practice Model standards. The NASP Self-Assessment for School Psychologists is a great tool to help school psychologists begin to consider what they do and how it matters to the consumers of their services.

- School psychologists assume that school administrators, teachers, and parents are familiar with their training and expertise, so they work in response to what is asked of them instead of what they could offer to meet the needs of students, educators, and schools. <u>Overcoming This Barrier:</u> It is our responsibility to educate administrators, teachers, and parents about our knowledge and skills. We need to make the connections for others between what a student needs and the type of services we can offer to support those needs. Sharing the NASP Practice Model brochure is a great way to begin helping others understand how we can be the best possible resource to them.

Step 5: Assess the existing policies that guide school psychologists in your building or district.

In many districts, specific policies determine the practice of school psychologists. These might be articulated in job descriptions, school board policies, formal evaluation tools, or public information sources such as district websites, brochures, or annual reports. In order to change a person's role, it is important to know the district's expectation for school psychologists. Official policies can help advocates or can act as barriers to action. The key is to take the time to see what policies exist and to consider how these policies can be used, adapted, or expanded to promote the change that you seek.

I. Current Building or District Policy

- What is your stated job description as articulated in:
  - your contract
  - personnel handbook
  - school board policy
  - personnel evaluation
  - other
- Do these documents align with each other?
- What roles, services, and skills are examined as part of your personnel evaluation process?
- To what extent do the written policies of your district align with what is expected of you in your personnel evaluation process?
- Does your school district policy reference the NASP standards or NASP Practice Model in any way? If so, what specific language makes the connection to these standards?
- Does your district have any caseload or workload guidelines or state policies for ratios of school psychologists to students?
- Does your school building or district have a description of the role and services of school psychologists in their communication materials (e.g., website, brochure)?

Findings:

II. State Policy

• Does your state have a formal policy (statute or regulation) recommending a student to school psychologist ratio? YES or NO
   o If yes, what is the ratio?
   o How does this ratio compare to the new standards (500–700 students for every school psychologist practicing a broad based role) in the model?
   o If there is an explicit policy, where in statute is this policy?
• Does your state have a formal policy (statute or regulation) explicitly defining the role of the school psychologist and/or the scope of services? YES or NO
   o If yes, where is this policy and what does it say?
• Does your state have a formal policy (statute or regulation) that explicitly addresses the personnel evaluation of school psychologists? YES or NO
   o If yes, where is this policy and what does it say?
 	
Findings:

Step 6: Develop an action plan.

Once your have thoroughly evaluated needs, resources, climate and capacity for change, possible barriers to advocacy, and existing policies and practices, it is time to develop a plan of action for how you intend to align your current practice with the standards outlined in the NASP Practice Model. Whether you work alone or collaboratively with colleagues, considering all of the issues previously stated and then writing down your plan of action, who is responsible, what resources are needed, and your proposed timeline for action is critical to maintaining a systematic approach to improving practice and policy. Use Worksheet V.1, the *Advocacy Action Plan Worksheet* for your individual or team action planning.

Worksheet V.1. Advocacy Action Plan

Your School Building or District: _____

Advocacy Participant(s): _____

Goal #1_____

Activities	Timeline	Person Responsible	Resources Needed	Anticipated Outcomes

Goal #2_____

Activities	Timeline	Person Responsible	Resources Needed	Anticipated Outcomes

Goal #3_____

Activities	Timeline	Person Responsible	Resources Needed	Anticipated Outcomes

Follow Up and Progress Reporting

Advocacy Action Plan Item	Date for Completion	Who Is Responsible for Submitting?
Date of Completed Action Plan:		
Monthly Progress Report Due:		
Annual Summary Report Due:		

Describe how ongoing progress reports will be recorded and communicated to interested stakeholders:

Step 7: Identify and advocate with influential decision makers for the adoption of the NASP Practice Model.

One of the most important parts of effective advocacy planning involves identifying the people of influence who need to hear your messages, be convinced that change is needed, and have the power to effect change. Elected or appointed public officials and district and building administrators are key stakeholders at the local level that need to be engaged in advocacy campaigns promoting the NASP Practice Model. Communicating with these influential people requires understanding their roles, priorities, and scope of influence and crafting key messages around these factors. Below are some tips for effective communications with school administrators and school board members.

Tips for Educating School Building Leaders

1. Identify your influential school building leaders and become an asset to their work. Who are the decision makers in your school building, what are they working on, and how can your skills as a school psychologist help them? In most cases, your building principal will be right at the top of the list. But it is likely that your principal is supported by other people you should also connect with, such as assistant principals and department chairs. It is important that, for each identified person of influence, you learn what his or her priorities are and work to become a valuable resource to him or her in some way. We typically recommend that you schedule a weekly meeting with your principal where you sit down together and ask, "What are you working on and how can I help you?" The more indispensable you are to influential leaders, the more readily these leaders will work to support your efforts to align your role with the NASP Practice Model.

2. Participate and contribute to your building's faculty meetings. Participating in faculty meetings is critical for establishing relationships and being viewed as a valued member of the school community. It is important that you contribute your expertise when appropriate, make presentations when possible, and volunteer for committees and other responsibilities. When making a formal presentation, be sure to rehearse your statement and emphasize 2–3 key messages that will resonate with your audience. Be concise and present your points in order of importance within the time allotted to you.

3. Review and make public school and student outcome data that are linked to your school services and the NASP Practice Model. Take the time to educate key school leaders on the NASP Practice Model services and how your work aligns with these standards. Share the data you have collected with school leaders, staff, families, and the community about the needs of your school and students and the positive outcomes experienced as a result of your.

4. Ask your school administrator and other essential school leaders to help you transform your role to align with the NASP Practice Model. Once you have established a positive relationship with school staff and leaders, discuss how adopting the model is a way to ensure that these positive practices persist beyond your work in the school. Work with other stakeholders (teachers, parents, other school-employed mental health providers) to ensure the collaborative and comprehensive

> **TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY COMMUNICATIONS**
>
> Identify your key stakeholders and understand their roles related to yours.
>
> Know your audience's level of knowledge, primary concerns, past experiences, possible barriers to listening, and likelihood to take action.
>
> Determine the three most important points you need them to understand and focus on those.
>
> Keep improved outcomes for students at the center of your communications.
>
> Be clear and concise and provide concrete suggestions.
>
> Provide data to demonstrate both need and outcomes. (See Section II)
>
> Put a face on your arguments by sharing brief stories illustrating your point.

nature of this model. Ask that the school administrator assist in having your school and/or school district officially adopt the model as the goal for school psychological services.

5. Communicate your school's intent to align services and supports with the NASP Practice Model. Through school newsletters, brochures, website postings, and more, communicate how your work is aligned with the NASP Practice Model and how this standard of practice is to be the model for school psychologists serving your building/district. Provide ongoing evidence of data that supports the positive relationship between the model, your services, and school and student outcomes.

Tips for Educating Superintendents and School Boards About Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services

1. Identify your local school board members and superintendent. Review facts about them including involvement in education, children going to school in the system, and personal connections you can make to their bios. Educate yourself on the jurisdiction the school board has over local policy and budget decisions, as this can vary across districts and states. Assess their knowledge about school psychological services and associated positive school and student outcomes.

2. Communicate with your school board members and/or superintendent that you may be an untapped resource and can be an asset to their work. Determine what the priorities of your school board and superintendent are and work to support best practices associated with those priorities. Offer to be a resource if they have questions about a particular issue. Be sure to use your personal e-mail address. If pertinent to the issue, provide a written summary of research, data, and other information that supports your issue. NASP has a variety of fact sheets, position papers, brochures, and other information available online on the NASP Research Center and Advocacy Resources pages.

3. Sign up to speak at your school board meetings. You may team up with other colleagues and specialized instructional support personnel (e.g., school counselors and school social workers) to present at school board meetings. This is particularly effective during budget deliberations. Develop a brief statement summarizing the importance of comprehensive and integrated school psychological services, and give specific examples that pertain to your district. Relate at least one real-life example illustrating how critical comprehensive and integrated school psychological services are to educational success. Be sure to know the time allotted to you and rehearse your presentation or statement so that your key messages are communicated succinctly and efficiently.

4. Invite school board members and superintendents, in collaboration with other school personnel, to visit your school(s). Make your invitations personal and be determined to include them. Share with them exciting services you are delivering and the positive outcomes being experienced. Make sure that you check with your school principal and supervisor before you invite the superintendent and school board members to visit your school. Coordinate your invitation with your building administrators and supervisor.

5. Review district board policies related to school psychologists and suggest improvements that align policies and practices with NASP standards. Directly ask if they would be willing to support specific policy proposals and/or modifications. Offer to be a local resource person if the member has questions about the relationship between comprehensive and integrated school psychological services and strong outcomes for students. Suggest specific ways that policies can be strengthened to improve services and supports for students.

6. If the school board member or superintendent says something you disagree with, practice good active listening skills, and politely offer facts (if you have them) to rebut the statement. A polite, positive approach is always best. After you leave, you may think of a point or find relevant information to

support your argument. This gives you a perfect opportunity to follow up with the school board member and restate your point. The more they hear from you (without you being annoying, defensive, or confrontational), the more you will make the issues known and you will become a resource to them. Sometimes it takes years to correct faulty information or beliefs … be patient, polite, positive, and persistent.

7. Remember to keep track of your connections. Keep a record of contacts made with your school officials including meetings (date, time), issues you discussed, and any other personal tidbits that help personalize and prioritize your issues. These connections help personalize the relationship and will help the official have a greater interest in your work. Also, always follow through with any request made by an elected official. Failure to follow through can result in negative impressions, including perceived untrustworthiness.

Step 8: Utilize NASP Resources for Promoting the NASP Practice Model

As you can see from the steps that we have outlined, advocacy planning is thoughtful and intentional. It requires careful assessment and planning and is strengthened by having clear messages and resources to support the advocacy. NASP is committed to supporting advocacy efforts around the NASP Practice Model and has developed a variety of materials to assist advocates. The following brochures, handouts, and other materials have been developed specifically for the purpose of advocacy and professional relations. These materials describe the roles and services of school psychologists and the critical impact of this work.

General Information on the NASP Practice Model

Advocacy Roadmap for Promoting the NASP Practice Model
http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/roadmaps/practice-model/index.aspx

An Introduction to the NASP Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services: The NASP Practice Model (Webinar)
http://www.nasponline.org/standards/practice-model/nasp-practice-model-webinar.aspx

The NASP Practice Model: A Framework for Promoting and Implementing a Comprehensive Role
http://www.nasponline.org/publications/cq/mocq394CommMatters.aspx

NASP Practice Model Brochure
http://www.nasponline.org/standards/practice-model/Practice_Model_Brochure.pdf

NASP Practice Model Main Page http://www.nasponline.org/standards/practice-model/

NASP Practice Model Resource Page
http://www.nasponline.org/standards/practice-model/Implementation-and-Promotion-Resources.aspx

NASP Practice Model Standards
http://www.nasponline.org/standards/2010standards/2_PracticeModel.pdf

NASP Practice Model Talking Points
http://www.nasponline.org/publications/cq/mocq394CommMatters.aspx

One Step at a Time: Using the NASP Practice Model to Improve Your Role
https://nasp.inreachce.com/Details?resultsPage=2&sortBy=&category=1837bfbd-96fd-41ee-98bd-9c2bff70de84&groupId=7fc7cacc-1a3b-4279-8330-4ec78c27caef

One Step at a Time: Using the NASP Practice Model to Improve Your Role Session Handouts
http://www.nasponline.org/conventions/2015/program/session-handouts.aspx

Promotion and Implementation Materials
http://www.nasponline.org/standards/practice-model/Implementation-and-Promotion-Resources.aspx

School Psychologists: A More Valuable Resource
http://www.nasponline.org/resources/principals/PLNov10_schoolpsych.pdf

Communications Resources

Communication Matters: Promoting and Preserving Your Role in a Tough Professional Climate
(PowerPoint)
http://www.nasponline.org/communications/documents/SS22_Convention_presentation_2012.ppt

Communications Planning Worksheet (Word)
http://www.nasponline.org/communications/documents/Communications_Planning_Worksheet.doc

Communication Resources: Communication Planning, Message Development, and Implementation
http://www.nasponline.org/communications/commplanning.aspx

Effective (and Easy) Communications: Tips for School Psychologists (Word)
http://www.nasponline.org/communications/documents/Effective_Communication_Tips_for_School_Psychologists_2012.doc

NASP Key Messages Linked to the Practice Model
http://www.nasponline.org/communications/documents/NASP_Core_Messages_2012.pdf

NASP Featured Organizational Documents and Materials

A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools
http://www.nasponline.org/resources/handouts/Framework_for_Safe_and_Successful_School_Environments.pdf

NASP Advocacy Resources
http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/advocacyresources.aspx

NASP Research Center
http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/researchmain.aspx

NASP Vision, Mission, and Goals
http://www.nasponline.org/about_nasp/strategicplan.pdf

Principles for Professional Ethics
http://www.nasponline.org/standards/2010standards/1_%20Ethical%20Principles.pdf

Professional Practice Standards (adopted 2010) http://www.nasponline.org/standards/2010standards.aspx

Ready to Learn, Empowered to Teach
http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/2008educationpolicydocument.pdf

School Psychologists: Improving Student and School Outcomes
http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/SP_Improving_Student_School_Outcomes_Final.pdf

Self-Assessment for School Psychologists
http://www.nasponline.org/standards/survey/survey_launch.aspx

NASP Brochures and Handouts: School Psychology

Estimated Number of School Psychologists by State in 2004
http://www.nasponline.org/about_sp/spratios.pdf

NASP Downloadable Handouts and Brochures Landing Page
http://www.nasponline.org/resources/freepubs.aspx

Overview of School-Based Mental Health Providers
http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/overview_sbmh.pdf

School-Based Mental Health Services and School Psychologists
http://www.nasponline.org/resources/handouts/sbmhservices.pdf

School Psychologists: Providing Mental Health Services to Improve the Lives and Learning of Children and Youth http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/mhbrochure.aspx

What Is a School Psychologist? (Brochure—English)
http://www.nasponline.org/resources/handouts/What%20is%20a%20School%20Psych.pdf

What Is a School Psychologist? (Handout—Spanish)
http://www.nasponline.org/resources/translations/whatis_sp.pdf

What Is a School Psychologist? (Narrative) http://www.nasponline.org/about_sp/whatis.aspx

What Makes a School Psychologist a School Psychologist? (*Communiqué, 36*(4), 2007)
http://www.nasponline.org/publications/cq/mocq364commmatters.aspx

Research Summaries

Facts About School Mental Health Services http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/mhschools_facts.pdf

Removing Barriers to Learning and Improving Student Outcomes: The Importance of School-Based Mental Health Services http://www.nasponline.org/press/removingbarriers.pdf

Research Citations on a Variety of Topics Impacting Students
http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/citations.aspx

School Psychologists: Improving Student and School Outcomes
http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/SP_Improving_Student_School_Outcomes_Final.pdf

Related NASP Position Statements

Appropriate Academic Supports to Meet the Needs of All Students
http://www.nasponline.org/about_NASP/positionpapers/AppropriateAcademicSupport.pdf

Appropriate Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Supports to Meet the Needs of All Students
http://www.nasponline.org/about_NASP/positionpapers/AppropriateBehavioralSupports.pdf

The Importance of School Mental Health Services
http://www.nasponline.org/about_NASP/positionpapers/MentalHealthServices.pdf

The Necessary Use of the Title School Psychologist
http://www.nasponline.org/about_NASP/positionpapers/UseofSchoolPsychTitle.pdf

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Who knows what you are trained to do, how you could be providing support to students and schools, and why these services are integral to student success?
2. What professional development training (e.g., GW/NASP Public Policy Institute) have you participated in that would build your professional advocacy skills?
3. What people with influence (e.g., superintendent, principal, school board member, PTA president, lead teachers) have you gotten to know and asked how you can help them with the work that they are doing to support school improvement and student success?
4. How have you responded to legislative alerts and other requests for advocacy from your state professional organization or NASP?
5. What policies could you advocate for at the local and state levels that would help school psychologists move to the broad-based role articulated in the NASP Practice Model?
6. How will you evaluate the effectiveness of your advocacy plan?

NASP Practice Model Guide

The NASP Practice Model Improves Outcomes for Students and Schools

The *NASP Practice Model Implementation Guide* is designed to help school psychologists and other school decision-makers align school psychological services with the comprehensive role described in the NASP Practice Model. Implementation of the NASP Practice Model creates the capacity to make the best, most cost-effective use of school psychologists' skills and expertise, which are an existing but sometimes underutilized resource in schools. Using concrete suggestions and tools that can be used and adapted to specific contexts, this guide provides a wealth of resources to leverage the unique skillset of school psychologists to best meet the needs of students, families, schools, districts, and states.

All children deserve a high-quality, genuinely accessible education that supports their high academic achievement and healthy development, and prepares them for responsible citizenship and success in a global economy. Services and supports that lower barriers to learning, like those provided by school psychologists, are central to this mission. By making a commitment to aligning school psychological services with the NASP Practice Model using the strategies providing in this guide, schools are taking an important step in helping students thrive in school, at home, and throughout life.

For additional resources and information, visit **www.nasponline.org/standards/practice-model/**

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
School Psychologists
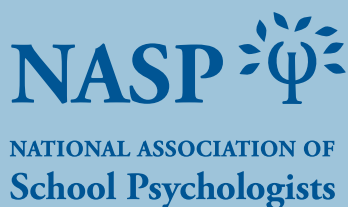
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