



The Texas School Psychologist  
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# Texas Association of School Psychologists

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Spring 2016

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**Area II Representative**

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**Area IV Representative**

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Calvin Day

## President's Message

*Brook Roberts, President*

Greetings TASP Members,

Anniversary and birthday milestones are important markers of our growth and development. This past year, I celebrated my 40th birthday. I was surrounded by a number of my closest friends and family in this celebration. We laughed, told stories, shed a few tears, and had a great party. I was reminded by those closest to me how important it is to sometimes stop and reflect on our experiences and to also look forward to think about changes we want to make in our future. These celebrations are also marked by associations we make when we're having a party. As a child, I always had to have ice cream cake and lemon-lime Kool-Aid at my parties. While I don't specifically remember many of the gifts I received during those childhood years, I do have a strong recollection of the people that were with me during those celebrations and gatherings.

This year is a very important one for those of us practicing school psychology in Texas. It was 20 years ago that the LSSP was created. In these 20 years of our license, we have attended many ARD meetings; we have written countless evaluation reports; we have consulted with a multitude of teachers, administrators, and parents; and we have helped to make the school experience of thousands of children better.

You should each take a moment as you are reading this newsletter to stop and reflect upon our collective accomplishments in the field but also to give yourself a pat on the back for what you have done as a school psychologist to contribute to these achievements. Not only have you fought and advocated for students you serve, but you have also fought for our profession in Texas.

While the efforts you have worked for have yielded tremendous results over the years, we are not finished. We have much more work to do to advance the practice of school psychology in Texas.

I am honored to serve as the TASP President this year and I look forward to connecting with many of you in different ways. We have ambitious tasks ahead of us this year, and we invite you to join us in taking on our goals. Our main priority this year is to advance our initiatives during the Sunset Commission Review of the TSBEP. For a review of our platforms, read Stephanie Kneedler's article in this newsletter on page 5. We cannot do this alone. We will need your help and we need you to promote our profession and our association to your colleagues. Call on them to partner with you so that we can further our vision and mission this year.

I invite you to share your stories with me by emailing them to [president@txasp.org](mailto:president@txasp.org). Share your triumphs. Share your defeats. Share what it is to be a school psychologist in Texas. We hope to highlight many of your experiences at our Annual Convention in October in Houston. I also welcome your feedback and your comments that may serve to improve our organization.


Let's make 2016 a year of celebrating our past, enjoying our present, and dreaming for our future!


Happy Birthday LSSPs,

*Brook Roberts*

TASP President, 2016







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**For more information:** [baylor.edu/SOE/edp/schoolpsychology](http://baylor.edu/SOE/edp/schoolpsychology)  
**Dr. Alex Beaujean, program director:** [Alex\\_Beaujean@baylor.edu](mailto:Alex_Beaujean@baylor.edu)

# Graduate Student Corner

I am super excited about being your Graduate Student Representative this year.

After attending my first Board meeting, I can tell you that this year is going to be full of new and exciting opportunities. You need to mark your calendars for October 2016 for the TASP Annual Convention in Houston. This year is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the LSSP and the convention will be full of great information for us “newbies” in the field. TASP conventions are a great way to network with other professionals in the field. Here are some tips for networking at the convention or in your own community:

- Prepare business cards. It’s always good to have these on hand, because you never know when you may meet someone who can help you launch your career.
- Talk to others who share your professional interests, or start a conversation with a presenter whose work you admire. Don’t be afraid to put yourself out there – it all starts with an introduction!
- Use your existing network. Ask other students to connect you with others whom they may know share your interests. Ask faculty members how you can connect with alumni from your program.



I would like to challenge you to get your fellow graduate students to become TASP members.

Being a TASP graduate student member has many perks:

- Great way to meet other students and professions in your area and others across the great state of Texas.
- Discounted rate on the annual professional development convention with state and national leaders in school psychology.
- Receive a quarterly newsletter which provides innovative practices, questions regarding “best practices”, state and national events, JOB opportunities, and legislative developments. Did I say JOB opportunities?
- Updates on what is happening around the state.
- Graduate student members are eligible to receive a \$500 scholarship from TASP.

*Nancy Coffey,*

Graduate Student Representative





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# Government & Professional Relations Update

Hello! My name is Stephanie Kneedler and I am happy to be the Government and Professional Relations chair in 2016. Previously, I served as Convention Co-Chair in 2015. I look forward to working together in what is sure to be an exciting chapter in school psychology history!

The Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists is due to undergo Sunset Review by the Texas Sunset Commission in May 2016. The Sunset process is a review of an agency to determine its necessity. The Sunset Advisory Commission is comprised of 12 members: five senators, five members of the House of Representatives and two public members (one appointed by the Lieutenant Governor and one by the Speaker of the House). An important piece to the Sunset review process is the opportunity to make recommendations to improve TSBEP's purpose; this is where we come in!

During 2015, TASP created the Sunset Review Task Force. Together, this group created a list of recommendations for the Sunset Advisory Commission. Recommendations include:

1. Preservation of TSBEP
2. Proportionate representation of LSSPs on the TSBEP Board
3. Use of the title "School Psychologist"
4. Alignment of LSSP licensure requirements with NASP Practice Model
5. Ability for the LSSP to practice in private schools
6. Ability for the LSSP to practice in private settings (under the supervision of a Licensed Psychologist)
7. Requirement of a degree in School Psychology for LSSP licensure

The Sunset Review Task Force has spent the previous year finalizing one-page position papers that defend these recommendations. These papers will be published to TASP membership – more soon!

At the most recent TASP Board meeting in January, TASP's legislative Consultant, Marty DeLeon, shared the importance of developing relationships with the Texas leadership as we advocate for change within our profession. Interested in who represents you in the Senate and House? Check out this link: <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/Home.aspx>. Stay tuned to future newsletters and emails for more information on what you can do during Sunset review!

For more on Sunset in Texas, check out this link: <https://www.sunset.texas.gov/>

The next TSBEP Board meeting is **May 26, 2016** at 9am. These meetings are open to the public. The Board office is located at 333 Guadalupe, Tower 2, Room 450 in Austin.

Email me for questions or comments: Stephanie Kneedler @ [govtrelations@txasp.org](mailto:govtrelations@txasp.org)

Cheers!

*Stephanie Kneedler*

# Treasurer's Report

It is my honor to serve as the Treasurer for TASP this year. After our first Board meeting this year, I can tell you we have a dedicated group of volunteers working diligently to represent you and the field of School Psychology in Texas! One of the main objectives for the January Board meeting is to approve a budget for the year. As a Board, we sought to ensure the funding of critical areas related to the strategic plan, while keeping an eye on efficiency and being a good steward of the financial resources available. Should you have any questions regarding our organization, please feel free to contact me - [treasurer@txasp.org](mailto:treasurer@txasp.org). Again, thank you for the opportunity to serve our association!

*Thomas Schanding*

Treasurer



## Summer Institute 2016

**June 10-11, 2016**

**EMERALD BEACH HOTEL – CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS**

**(<http://www.hotelemeraldbeach.com/>)**

Become a NASP PREPaRE Trainer of Trainers. TASP wants to help you address school safety in your district. In order to become a PREPaRE Trainer, you need to complete PREPaRE Workshop 1 at TASP's Summer Institute in June in Corpus Christi, complete PREPaRE Workshop 2 at TASP's Annual Professional Development Convention in October in Houston, and complete the Trainer of Trainers program at the NASP Convention in San Antonio in February. Consider bringing your district or campus school safety team. Ask your Director to register district resource officers, social workers, counselors, principals, teachers, interventionists, etc. TASP is providing this opportunity to improve school climate, school safety, and address school crisis prevention and intervention practices.





# Spotlight on a District – Stephen F. Austin State University Charter School

By Lisa McCleary and Lysa Hagan

Stephen F. Austin State University Charter School offers high-quality instruction, resources for teacher development, and opportunities for the research of alternative teaching methods. The Charter School collaborates with teacher preparation and school psychology programs to provide exemplary field-based training experiences for the university students and comprehensive services to 250 Charter School students in grades K through 5.



Teacher preparation and professional development models are continually evaluated and modified through the collaborative efforts of the SFA Elementary Education Department, the SFA Early Childhood Lab, and the SFA Charter School. The combination of cross-program knowledge and resources provide an environment in which student performance is enhanced through research-based instruction. In addition, the James I. Perkins College of Education has designated the SFA Charter School as its Field Based Center. As such, university students from Elementary Education, Kinesiology, Music, Human Services, and School Psychology are provided observational and in vivo experiences under guided supervision.

The SFA Charter School approaches education from a constructivist philosophy in which students develop an intrinsic motivation for learning and self-regulation skills. In addition, the SFA Charter School also implements Responsive Classroom, which is an evidence-based, system-wide social-emotional learning approach that is endorsed by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL).

The SFA Charter School is also a training site for the SFA Pre-Doctoral Internship Program in School Psychology. The SFA Pre-Doctoral Internship Program in School Psychology is a newly developed internship program and was first implemented during the 2014-15 school year. The program continues to be improved through on-going collaboration among the School Psychology Program Director, Human Services Department Chair, the School Psychology Internship Director and Clinical Supervisors, the Elementary Educational Department Chair, SFA Charter School Principal, and the Doctoral Training Committee. The Internship Training Director and Clinical Supervisors are licensed psychologists and licensed specialists in school psychology. The training program currently has two doctoral interns in school psychology and two clinical supervisors. This team works collaboratively with the school stakeholders and staff to provide psychological services to the students at SFA Charter School while

Continued on page 9



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simultaneously maintaining a structured, sequenced training program. While not yet accredited by the American Psychological Association, the program's structure, goals, and curriculum are designed to meet APPIC and APA standards. The program adheres to the internship guidelines set by the American Psychological Association, the National Association of School Psychologists, and the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (TSBEP).

Initially, the internship was partially funded by an APA Division 16 Grant Program for School Psychology Internships (GPSPI), which is a grant program to address the shortage of APA approved internships in school psychology. Currently, a second GPSPI is funding certain APA accreditation procedures. The services provided by School Psychology Services at the SFA Charter School include, but are not limited to, implementation of multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS), children of divorce intervention program, crisis response and prevention, counseling evaluations, individual and group counseling, class-wide consultation, social skill instruction, bullying prevention, psycho-educational assessments, academic intervention consultation, and services to enhance family-school collaboration. In collaboration with school staff and stakeholders, School Psychology Services personnel at SFA Charter School provide support for students receiving special education and students in general education. The majority of students served are general education; therefore, many services provided include a variety of systems-level support and consultation, as well as prevention services.

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## Future Conventions

June 10-11, 2016 at [Emerald Beach](#), Corpus Christi (Summer Institute)

Oct. 19-21, 2016 at [Westin Galleria Houston](#), Houston

Feb. 21-24, 2017 [NASP Annual Convention](#) at [Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center](#), San Antonio

June 9-10, 2017 at [Emerald Beach](#), Corpus Christi (Summer Institute)

Nov. 2-4, 2017 at [Dallas/Addison Marriott Quorum by the Galleria](#), Dallas

Oct. 25-27, 2018 at [Dallas/Addison Marriott Quorum by the Galleria](#), Dallas

Oct. 22-24, 2019 at [Westin Galleria Houston](#), Houston

Dear Eddie,

Why don't school psychologists in Texas take a stand against kids playing football? I think it is an outrageous ethical violation that no one is speaking out about the head injuries these children experience. Aren't school psychologists supposed to protect children from harm?

No Fan of Football

Dear No Fan,

This is a hot topic for sure and you raise some valid concerns. However, does not prohibiting participation in football rise to the level of an ethical violation for school psychologists? Probably not, but as you point out there are ethical issues here.

The first ethical concept in the NASP Principles of Professional Ethics (2010) involves "RESPECTING THE DIGNITY AND RIGHTS OF ALL PERSONS: School psychologists engage only in professional practices that maintain the dignity of all individuals. In their words and actions, school psychologists demonstrate respect for the autonomy of persons and their right to *self-determination*, respect for privacy, and a commitment to just and fair treatment of all persons." The second involves "PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE AND RESPONSIBILITY: Beneficence, or responsible caring, means that the school psychologist acts to benefit others. To do this, school psychologists must practice within the boundaries of their competence, *use scientific knowledge from psychology and education to help clients and others make informed choices*, and accept responsibility for their work." Combining these two ethical requirements, the role of the school psychologist can be seen as one who ensures that those parents and children who are considering participation in football be able to understand the risks and benefits inherent in the sport and make an autonomous, informed decision.

In addition, school psychologists have a RESPONSIBILITY TO SCHOOLS, FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES, THE PROFESSION, AND SOCIETY: *School psychologists promote healthy school, family, and community environments*. They maintain the public trust in school psychologists by respecting law and encouraging ethical conduct. School psychologists advance professional excellence by mentoring less experienced practitioners and contributing to the school psychology knowledge base. By educating families and educators, we can create settings where sound decisions are made. Last fall, the School Psychology Forum published a special issue related to concussion management in the schools. In it, various topics, from assessment to policy recommendations, are addressed. [http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/periodicals/spf-volume-9-issue-3-\(fall-2015\)/concussion-management-in-schools-issues-and-implications](http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/periodicals/spf-volume-9-issue-3-(fall-2015)/concussion-management-in-schools-issues-and-implications). School psychologists do have an ethical responsibility to be informed regarding current research and the implications of research in practice.

So, while Eddie is not inclined to take on Friday Night Lights, it is important that school psychologists educate and inform families and educators so that decisions are based on facts and result in situations that are meaningful and beneficial for children.

Ethically yours,

*Eddie*



**TASP ANNUAL CONVENTION—SAN ANTONIO**  
**October 19-21**  
**CALL FOR MINI SKILLS PRESENTATIONS**



TASP would like to invite you to consider presenting a Mini Skills Presentation at the upcoming annual convention in San Antonio from October 19<sup>th</sup> to October 21<sup>st</sup> 2016. This year's conference is the ideal place to showcase your latest research and practice!

Submissions should be sent to Lisa McCleary, Professional Development Chair at [professionaldev@txasp.org](mailto:professionaldev@txasp.org). Include the following in the body of the email: presenter name(s), title of the presentation, and contact information (i.e., phone number, address, and email) for the lead presenter. A blind, peer review is conducted by members of the TASP Executive Board to select mini-skill presentations. You will be informed of acceptance by July 1, 2016. If you do not plan to present an accepted proposal, you must cancel your presentation by August 1, 2016. At any point, feel free to email [professionaldev@txasp.org](mailto:professionaldev@txasp.org) with any questions about your submission.

**Mini-Skill Proposals and/or Panel Presentation Proposals** are welcome. These sessions are designed to provide skills and information that will be immediately applicable for practitioners (“tools to use on Monday morning”). Mini-skill proposals should be submitted using the criteria below. No submissions will be considered after **5:00 PM on May 1, 2016**.

Each proposal will be for a 90 minute presentation. The proposal should be attached to your email which includes your contact information. The content of the actual proposal should consist of the following components:

1. COVER PAGE should contain:

- a. Title of the proposed work
- b. Names, titles, and affiliations of editor(s)/author(s)
- c. Date of submission

2. ABSTRACT

The abstract should be on a separate page and be no more than 100 words in length. It should summarize the focus of the presentation, including the learning objectives of the presentation.

3. SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT

The summary should be no more than 800 words in length. This section should include a summary of the purpose, content, and expected outcomes. It should also discuss how the proposed work will contribute to the field, emphasizing its relevance to school psychology and NASP's practice model.

4. TARGETED AUDIENCE

To match the presentation to participants' specific needs, please indicate the skill level of your presentation: Beginning Skill – Level I; Intermediate Skill – Level II; and Advanced Skill – Level III.



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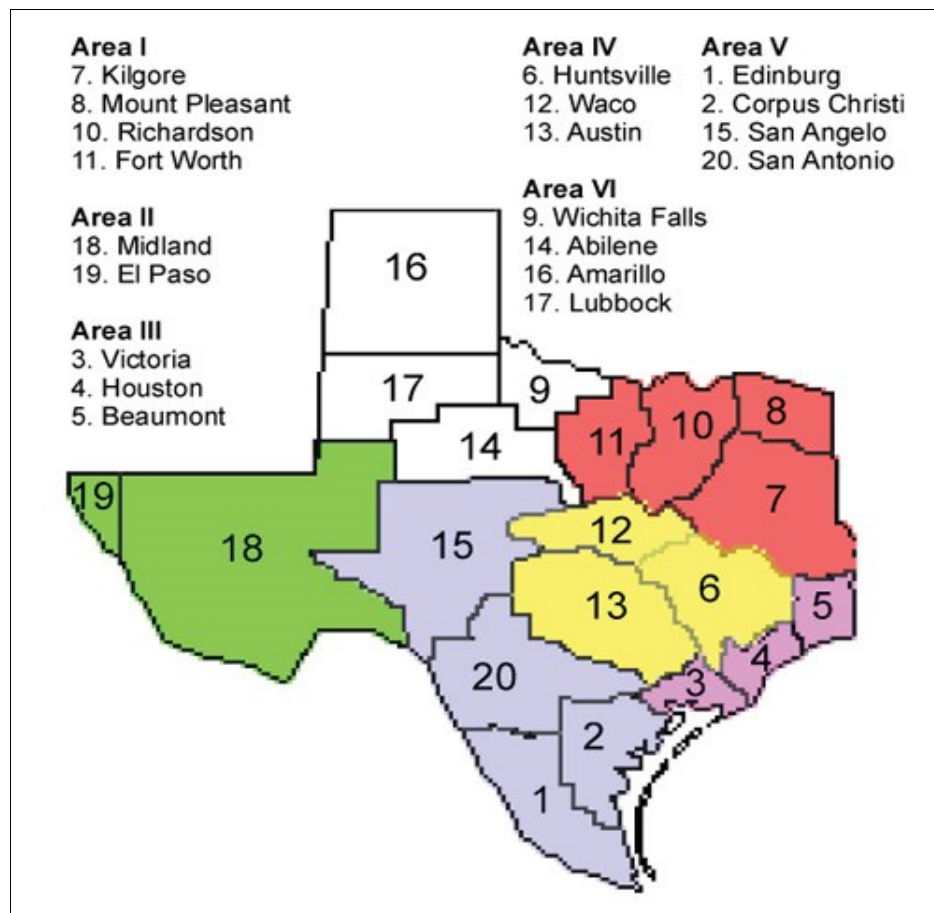
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# Information from the Area Representatives!

## Area Representative Map





## Area II

Hello, Area 2!

I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself as your new Area Representative for the El Paso, Midland/Odessa area. Currently, I work as an LSSP for Socorro Independent School District in El Paso, TX. I am looking forward to representing our area for the next two years. My goal as your representative is to gain more involvement and membership from our many LSSPs in the area. Let's make our voices heard! I plan on personally meeting with LSSPs in the area to discuss concerns in our area, current topics, and proposed changes in our field. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, comments, or concerns at [ctruji01@sisd.net](mailto:ctruji01@sisd.net). Looking forward to hearing from you!

*Cammaron Trujillo*

## Area III

Hello TASP members. I am happy to be your Area III Representative again this year for the second of my two-year term. It was my aim to represent Area 3 to the best of my ability by facilitating information to and from the Board on the behalf our area's membership. Primarily, my calls for updates, news, and/or concerns generated an avenue for others to ask about volunteer opportunities. To meet my personal objective of representing our region by facilitating information to and from the Board, I have started attending Region 4's Student Evaluation and Psychological Services Special Education Leadership Network, which meets on a regular basis and provides information related to current national, state, regional, and local issues. This platform has allowed me the opportunity to hear first hand about some of the issues and celebrations that practitioners are experiencing in our area. My outreach to membership via email and attending the leadership network not only provided me with information about local issues; they have also contributed to my confidence when actively participating in Board discussions and voting on your behalf on topics related to professional practice. For these reasons, I encourage you all to continue to contact me through the website, in person at Region 4's leadership network meetings, or by email ([area3@txasp.org](mailto:area3@txasp.org)) to share positive happenings in your district, concerns or suggestions that you would like relayed to the Board or for me to consider moving forward as your representative this year.

*Evelyn Perez*





**Thinking about Graduate School?  
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## Area IV

### Area IV Update

Hello, Area IV! My name is Cassandra Hulsey and I am an LSSP with Round Rock ISD. I am happy to be serving as your Area Representative this year. As you may have heard, the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (TSBEP) will be undergoing a Sunset Review by the Texas Legislature this year. TASP is hard at work advocating for much needed changes to our practice (including the use of the title "School Psychologist"! ). Make sure you stay up to date with TASP communications for the latest information and ways you can be involved in advocating for the issues that matter to you and your colleagues.

On another note, I am eager to learn more about the issues, challenges, and successes that you all are experiencing in your schools so that I can be a good voice for our area. Please send me an e-mail if there is something innovative being implemented, an outstanding colleague who deserves recognition, new and/or changes to training programs, concerns regarding the practice of school psychology, etc. at [area4@tasp.org](mailto:area4@tasp.org). I look forward to hearing from you!

*Cassandra Hulsey*



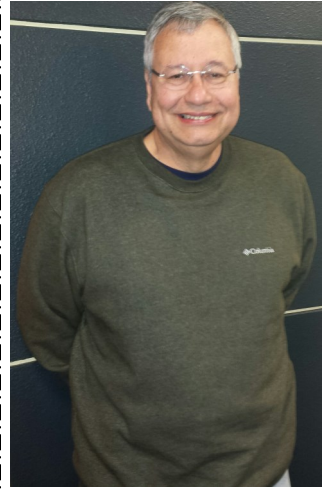
Texas A&M University Commerce

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

## Area V

Greeting Area V TASP'ers!

My name is Arthur (Art) Hernandez and I am your new TASP Area Representative. I have been a member of TASP for 16 years and look forward to meeting those of you who I don't already know. My experience with TASP has been great and I have learned a lot, laughed a lot and grown professionally as a result of my collaboration with LSSP's from across the state in connection with our great organization. Please let me know if you have any questions or suggestions or if you might be interested in contributing your time or talent to the Area or TASP. I am currently planning on an AREA V professional development session in San Antonio (3 hours – Ethics) and will keep you posted on the date and time. You are invited and should consider bringing a friend and convince them to join. Have a great semester!



*Art Hernandez*

## Area VI

Greetings Area VI,

What an exciting start to 2016! Your TASP Board just met to approve the budget, discuss future conventions, consider legislative advocacy, and review the needs of LSSPs in the state. TSBEP has rereleased proposed supervision requirements and TASP has again submitted a position letter based on the feedback we have received from our membership. We are preparing for Sunset and would love to receive your thoughts and concerns as this review approaches.

TASP recently sponsored a luncheon for Region 17 following an LSSP Focus Group. Thank you to all who attended and shared in our discussion about local needs of LSSPs and current issues in school psychology.

I hope to see you all at Summer Institute 2016, June 10-11, at Emerald Beach, Corpus Christi, for fun, sun, and in depth learning and networking opportunities.

Are you passionate about our profession? Let TASP know about your successes, concerns, and needs. Please contact me if you would like additional information at [klopez@canyonisd.net](mailto:klopez@canyonisd.net).

Thanks!

*Kassi Lopez*





# Summer Institute 2016

**June 10-11, 2016**

**EMERALD BEACH HOTEL – CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS**

(<http://www.hotelemeraldbeach.com/>)

School-Based Mental Health Series:  
**CRISIS PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

**SAVE THE DATE!**

Bring your School-Based Crisis Team Members to further develop and refine your school's response to school-based crises. Special discounts will be available for those who bring team members (principals, assistant principals, social workers, teachers, interventionists, counselors, etc.). Learn about the PREPaRE Model for school crisis prevention and intervention.

Additional workshops will be available as well!

 **TASP**  
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Texas Association of School Psychologists

**NASP**  NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
School Psychologists  
*Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life*

# TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY CENTRAL TEXAS

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



## School Psychology Program

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

**For more information, please contact:**  
Jon Lasser, Ph.D.  
Coordinator, School Psychology Program  
[www.txstate.edu/clas](http://www.txstate.edu/clas)



University of Texas at San Antonio

## School Psychology Program

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

For more information, please contact Dr. Jeremy Sullivan ([jeremy.sullivan@utsa.edu](mailto:jeremy.sullivan@utsa.edu))

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

## Journal Update

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

We have three recent developments that we would like to share with you:

### **Graduate Student Section:**

We are introducing a special section of the journal that will be devoted to publishing the work of graduate students. These manuscripts can include research studies, comprehensive literature reviews on relevant topics, and reviews of books or psychological/educational tests published within the past two years. As with all submissions to the journal, graduate student manuscripts should highlight implications for practice in the schools.

Please note: all manuscripts submitted to the Graduate Student Section must include either a faculty co-author or a faculty sponsor who provides the student with mentorship on the process of preparing and submitting their work for peer review. When submitting their manuscripts for review, student authors should include a cover letter verifying that their work has been vetted by a faculty co-author or sponsor.

### **Call for Graduate Student Section Editor:**

With the introduction of the Graduate Student Section, we are currently accepting applications for the Graduate Student Section Editor. The Graduate Student Section Editor will be responsible for recruiting graduate students to serve on the Graduate Student Editorial Board, coordinating the peer review process of submitted manuscripts, communicating feedback and editorial decisions to authors, and working with the editors to maintain the high standards of the journal.

Applicants should meet the following criteria: member of TASP, currently enrolled in a graduate program in School Psychology, previous success with peer reviewed publication or presentations, editorial experience, and strong organizational skills. Applicants should submit the following materials to [art.hernandez@tamucc.edu](mailto:art.hernandez@tamucc.edu): (1) a letter of interest describing their qualifications in these areas, (2) a letter of recommendation from a faculty member and/or university program director, and (3) a current curriculum vita.

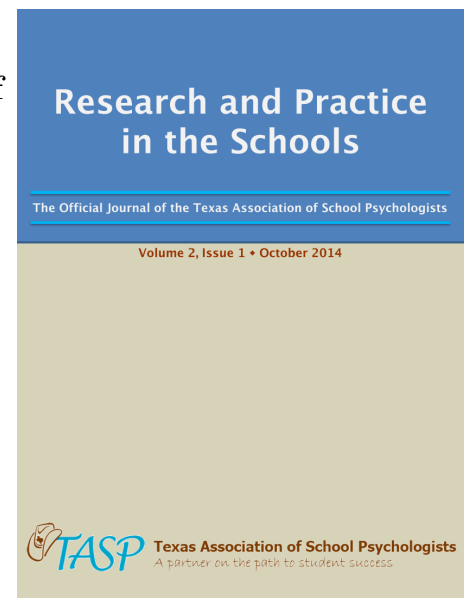
## Call for Special Issue Proposals:

We invite proposals for special issues of the journal, with the goal of publishing one special issue each year in addition to the general issue. Special issues will include collections of papers related to some cohesive theme in the field of School Psychology, and will be edited by Guest Editors who will take the lead in soliciting contributions and coordinating the peer review process. In addition to special issues that focus on research and scholarship in School Psychology, we welcome special issues that cover important practical and applied issues in the field.

Special issue proposals should include a brief description of the theme to be covered by the issue, approximate number of articles to be included, qualifications and expertise of those who will serve as Guest Editors of the issue, and a plan for soliciting manuscripts and conducting the reviews. Proposals for special issues, and questions about the process, should be sent to [jeremy.sullivan@utsa.edu](mailto:jeremy.sullivan@utsa.edu).

Thanks to all who have contributed to the continuing evolution of *Research and Practice in the Schools*. If you have any questions or suggestions, please email [jeremy.sullivan@utsa.edu](mailto:jeremy.sullivan@utsa.edu) or [art.hernandez@tamucc.edu](mailto:art.hernandez@tamucc.edu).

*Jeremy Sullivan and Art Hernandez*  
Editors, *Research and Practice in the Schools*



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

### The Editor:

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The TASP newsletter is published to enhance communication among school psychologists in a manner that advances the general purpose of the Texas Association of School Psychologists. The acceptability of an ad for publication is based upon legal, social, professional, and ethical considerations. All advertising must be in keeping with the generally scholarly, and/or professional nature of the publication. Thus, TASP reserves the right to unilaterally reject, omit, or cancel advertising which it deems not to be in the best interest of the scholarly and professional objectives of the Association, and/or not in keeping with appropriate professional tone, content, or appearance. In addition, the Association reserves the right to refuse advertising submitted for the purpose of airing either side of controversial social or professional issues.

Permission is granted to all other school psychology associations' newsletters to reproduce any article, providing the original source and author are credited.

Camera ready artwork or Employment Notices must be received prior to deadline date for desired publication. Contact TASP at [newsletter@txasp.org](mailto:newsletter@txasp.org)



# Position Statement

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## Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Youth

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) supports that all youth have equal opportunities to participate in and benefit from educational and mental health services within schools regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Harassment, lack of equal support, and other discriminatory practices toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth violate their rights to receive equal educational opportunities, regardless of whether the discrimination takes the form of direct harassment of individuals or is directed at the entire group through hostile statements or biases. Failure to address discriminatory actions in the school setting compromises student development and achievement. NASP believes that school psychologists are ethically obligated to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity for the development and expression of their personal identity in a school climate that is safe, accepting, and respectful of all persons and free from discrimination, harassment, violence, and abuse. To achieve this goal, education and advocacy must be used to reduce discrimination and harassment against LGBTQ youth by students and staff and promote positive social-emotional and educational development.

When compared to youth who are heterosexual, youth who identify as LGBTQ or those who are gender nonconforming are more likely targeted for harassment and discrimination. For example, when over 7,000 LGBTQ students nationwide were surveyed regarding their school experiences, 84% reported being verbally harassed, 40% reported being physically harassed, and 18% reported being physically assaulted at school within the past year based on actual or perceived sexual orientation (Kosciw, Greytak, Diaz, & Bartkiewicz, 2010). Of the students who reported harassment experiences to school staff, one third said no subsequent school action was taken. Additionally, LGBTQ students were four times more likely than heterosexual students to report skipping at least one day of school in the previous month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable. While LGBTQ youth appear to experience higher levels of mental health and academic difficulties, school-based social situations like victimization and lack of support are frequently related to these heightened risk levels (Bontempo & D'Augelli, 2002; Goodenow, Szalacha, & Westheimer, 2006).

Whereas members of other minority groups likely share their unique identity with family members and a visible community, LGBTQ youth may have few to no opportunities to learn coping strategies related to dealing with anti-LGBTQ sentiments and behaviors from a family support network (Ryan & Futterman, 1998). Additionally, LGBTQ youth are at an increased risk for emotional and physical rejection by their families and may become homeless as a result of disclosing their sexual orientation or gender identity (Rivers & D'Augelli, 2001). Concealing one's LGBTQ identity may increase a youth's risk for anxiety, depression, hostility, demoralization, guilt, shame, social avoidance, isolation, and impaired relationships (Pachankis, 2007).

## CREATING SAFE SCHOOLS FOR LGBTQ YOUTH

Individual and systems-level advocacy, education, and specific intervention efforts are needed to create safe and supportive schools for LGBTQ youth. These should include, but not be limited to, the following strategies.

*Establish and enforce comprehensive nondiscrimination and antibullying policies that include LGBTQ issues.* Many schools already have nondiscrimination policies, but these may not include reference to sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Explicitly including these characteristics in policy statements gives legitimacy to LGBTQ concerns and keeps schools accountable for enforcing nondiscrimination and antibullying standards. Explicit policies also support staff who may fear repercussions for openly intervening and advocating for LGBTQ youth.

*Educate students and staff.* NASP supports educating students and staff about LGBTQ youth and their needs through professional development about the range of normal human diversity that includes sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. Professional development training can lead to immediate and maintained improvements in students' and educators' motivation to interrupt harassing remarks and increased awareness of LGBTQ issues and resources (Greytak & Kosciw, 2010). NASP also supports the provision of information and training about relevant research, the risks experienced by these youth, effective strategies for addressing harassment and discrimination directed toward any student, and improving the school climate (e.g., inservices, staff development, policy development, research briefs, and program implementation). In addition, creating an educational context that includes the broad array of human diversity can help demystify sexual orientation and gender identity, along with promoting a positive self-concept for LGBTQ youth. This can include infusing issues pertaining to sexual orientation and gender identity into the curriculum, which may decrease feelings of isolation and promote a more positive self-concept. Curricula may include presenting theories about the development of sexual orientation or gender identity in a science class; reading works of famous gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender authors in a literature class; discussing the LGBTQ rights movement in historical context with other civil rights movements in a social studies class; or including LGBTQ demographic statistics in math exercises. In addition, including LGBTQ issues in health education can increase decision-making skills for all youth, by preparing them to make positive choices and reducing unsafe behavior.

*Intervene directly with perpetrators.* As with any instance of school violence, harassment and discrimination against LGBTQ youth, or any gender nonconforming youth, should be addressed both through applying consequences and educating the perpetrator. Education should be provided to the perpetrator to help prevent future aggression. Interventions should emphasize that discrimination and harassment must be addressed regardless of the status of the perpetrator. Youth, teachers, support staff, and administrators must be educated to make policies effective.

*Provide intervention and support for those students targeted for harassment and intimidation and those exploring their sexuality or gender identity.* Up to one fourth of adolescents may question their sexual orientation or gender identity (Hollander, 2000). School personnel should make no assumptions about youth who may be questioning, but provide opportunities for students to develop healthy identities. In addition to sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, other diversity characteristics (e.g., gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status) may add additional challenges or serve as strengths toward positive mental health and academic development and should be considered.



Counseling and other supports should be made available for students who have been targets of harassment, for those who are questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity, for those who are perceived as LGBTQ by peers or others, and for those who may become targets of harassment in the future by disclosing their status as LGBTQ (e.g., Gay-Straight Alliance). Interventions should focus on strategies that allow students to experience safety and respect in the school environment, including empowerment of students to address harassment of students who are LGBTQ.

*Promote societal and familial attitudes and behaviors that affirm the dignity and rights within educational environments of LGBTQ youth.* Schools should promote awareness, acceptance, and accommodation of LGBTQ students and their needs in fair ways. Schools can promote attitudes that affirm the dignity and rights of LGBTQ youth by becoming aware of and eliminating biases from their own practice. They can model nondiscriminatory practice by providing services to all students regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, or other minority status. School psychologists can promote and model affirming attitudes, use language that is nondiscriminatory and inclusive, and educate students and staff. Moreover, schools can function as powerful agents of change when they actively address slurs and openly confront discrimination, and they can address the actions or statements of other school staff or administrators who neglect the needs of LGBTQ youth or who actively discriminate against them. School psychologists can provide information, expert opinions, and evidence-based strategies to ensure that effective policies and practices are adopted and enforced, increasing the acceptance and tolerance of differences in the school environment by supporting development of student groups that promote understanding and acceptance of human diversity. Gay-straight alliances (GSAs) have a positive impact on school climate (Kosciw, Diaz, Greytak, & Bartkiewicz, 2010) and should be supported by school psychologists. Students who reported having GSAs in their schools were less likely to feel unsafe, less likely to miss school, and were more likely to feel that they belonged at their school than students in school with no such clubs (Kosciw, et al.). Schools should also be informed about programs in the community that facilitate and support healthy development of LGBTQ youth and support their families, and be prepared to advise parents, school personnel, and youth about these resources.

*Recognize strengths and resilience.* While much of the research has focused on negative factors impacting the development of LGBTQ youth, there are strengths as well. Savin-Williams (2009) posits a developmental trajectory that can impact a student positively or negatively with regard to psychosocial and educational domains. Further review of the research indicates that LGBTQ youth are capable of developing methods to keep themselves safe and find support from their environment. School psychologists should work to identify and build strengths and resilience in LGBTQ youth.

## **ROLE OF THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST**

School psychologists can function as role models of ethical practice and inform staff and students that they are available to all students regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. School psychologists can address issues of sexual orientation and gender identity in inservice training with teachers and programming for parents, actively counter discriminatory practices, and utilize NASP and other resources to advocate for LGBTQ youth. On an individual level, in counseling sessions, school psychologists can be mindful that sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression encompass a broad spectrum, and that many students question their sexual orientation and gender identity or are gender nonconforming. School psychologists are also in a position to educate students about a number of issues related to high risk behaviors that are especially frequent among gay, lesbian, bisexual,

transgender, and questioning youth, creating a more inclusive and healthier environment for both the school population in general and LGBTQ youth in particular.

## SUMMARY

NASP recognizes that students who identify as LGBTQ, or those who are gender nonconforming, may be at risk for experiencing harassment and discrimination, as well as risk factors for social, emotional, and academic problems related to psychosocial stressors (Bontempo & D'Augelli, 2002; D'Augelli, 2006; Ryan & Futterman 1998). A successful program to address these issues educates both those who discriminate and those who are discriminated against because of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender nonconformity. School psychologists can participate in education and advocacy on a number of levels by promoting nondiscrimination policies; conducting school-wide inservice training; actively addressing discrimination and neglect of student needs; sharing information about human diversity and evidence-based practices to address student needs; and modeling ethical practice through accepting and affirming attitudes, language, and behaviors in daily interactions with all students and staff. In addition, school psychologists can provide intervention to individual students. Any program designed to address the needs of LGBTQ youth should also include efforts to educate and support parents and the community through collecting information about services and establishing involvement with other organizations committed to equal opportunity for education and mental health services for all youth. Schools can only be truly safe when every student, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression is assured of access to an education without fear of harassment, discrimination, or violence.

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