



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

Texas Association of School Psychologists

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Winter 2017

President's Message

Amanda Real, President

TASP Elected Executive Board:

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Connie Rodriguez

Area II Representative

Cammaron Trujillo

Area III Representative

David Kahn

Area IV Representative

Cassandra Hulsey

Area V Representative

Jessica Greve

Area VI Representative

Kassi Lopez

Graduate Student Representative

Kristin Streich

Past President

Brook Roberts

President

Amanda Real

President-Elect

Thomas Schanding

Secretary

Kelsey Theis

Treasurer

Cheri Waggoner

Treasurer-Elect

Stephanie Barbre

TASP Appointed Executive Board:

Awards & Honors Chair

Mindi Jeter

Convention Chair

Jenna Becker

Government & Professional Relations

Stephanie Kneedler

Historian

Ashley Arnold

TASP Journal Task Force

Jeremy Sullivan

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Amanda Meyer

As the year draws to an end, we may find time to reflect on the year's events: Things that went well, things that did not go well, what we hoped to accomplish, and what we look forward to accomplishing in the future. Reflection fosters awareness, growth, and the exploration and clarification of our values.

The Texas Association of School Psychologists values advocacy, collaborative relationships, continuous improvement, diversity, excellence, integrity, student-centered processes, and visionary leadership. These values inform the Board's thoughts and actions, assisting in our continued growth and development as an organization.

It is equally important to ask ourselves as we review this year: did we embody the same characteristics and skills that we promote in students, families and staff? For example, did our work reflect appropriate management of emotions, promotion of empathy, and maintenance of positive relationships to the degree we desire? Did we measure our ef-

fectiveness and push for continued growth of our evaluations, recommendations, and progress monitoring? Were we

change agents across various systems? We all know these goals are sometimes difficult to achieve. However, in taking a deeper look and considering our personal thumbprint on the successes and shortcomings of the year, we can help focus and prioritize future actions and interactions.

May 2018 be filled with growth, persistence, collaboration, and effective practices, as partners on the path to ensuring all children succeed in school, at home, and throughout life.

P.S. Please join me in giving Dr. Thomas Schanding a warm welcome, as he begins the 2018 year as our new TASP President!

Amanda Real

TASP President, 2017



TASP 2017

Election Results

The votes for the 2017 TASP Election have been counted and candidates were notified of the results. Congratulations to the following members whose new terms on the TASP Executive Board will begin January 1, 2018.

President-Elect: Art Hernandez

Secretary: Kelsey Theis

Treasurer-Elect: Curt Johnson

Area II Representative: Cammaron Trujillo

Area IV Representative: Cassandra Hulse

Area VI Representative: Christy Chapman

Graduate Student Representative: Kristin Streich

In addition, the membership approved a by-law amendment to rename the Trainee member-type category to Early Career.

It has been an honor serving the association and the profession during the past few years, and I look forward to the growth of the profession and association, as TASP continues to partner to achieve student success.

Brook Roberts

Past President



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.

TASP 25th Annual Fall Convention

By Jenna Becker

TASP is proud to wrap up this year's Annual Professional Development Convention. We had over 550 LSSPs from around the state of Texas learn more about various issues in school psychology. Pre-Convention sessions featured Dr. Gill Strait's presentation on Motivational Interviewing and Dr. Gerard Gioia's presentation on Executive Functioning. The Keynote session included a message from TSBEP and an inspiring and uplifting message from Dr. John Kelly, NASP President.

The regular convention featured a variety of sessions, including many 1.5 CPD Mini Skills sessions. Sessions on autism, related services, social emotional learning, restorative justice, legal updates, manifestation determination, and ethics were all particularly well attended. TASP is grateful to all speakers who gave their time and knowledge to present at the Convention.

One of the newest features of this year's Convention was the QR scanning during pre-Convention sessions. With this successful launch, TASP looks forward to continuing to bring efficient ways to track attendance and CPDs at future conventions.

I would like to extend a HUGE thank you to all of the volunteers who contributed to making this year's Convention so successful, including the graduate student volunteers and TASP Board members.

Next year's Convention will be at the same location: the Dallas/Addison Marriott by the Quorum. Mark your calendars now for October 25-27, 2018!

Jenna Becker
Convention Chair



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Dr. Alex Beaujean, program director: Alex_Beaujean@baylor.edu

TASP 2017 Awards and Honors

The annual TASP Awards Ceremony was held on November 2, 2017. Congratulations to the 2017 award recipients—TASP appreciates their outstanding service delivery and contributions to school psychology.

Friend of TASP – TASP recognized Representative Four Price, R-Amarillo, chairman of the House Public Health Committee for his efforts to raise mental health awareness in the state of Texas during the 8th Legislative Session. Bills authored by Rep. Price were HB 10, 12, and 13, which all related to mental health awareness in the public. Rep. Price also demonstrated willingness to consider feedback regarding proposed legislation, and its impact on the practice of school psychology, and to collaborate on suggested improvements and changes needed to address mental health services for students in Texas schools.

Outstanding School Psychologist at the Doctoral Level – Dr. Lisa Daniel was recognized for demonstrating excellence in the 10 NASP Domains of Practice at the doctoral level. Dr. Daniel serves as the district LSSP for Rains ISD. She was recognized for her exceptional knowledge of research-based models and methods of data collection, data-based decision making with respect to evaluations and development of individualized plans for students, excellent communication skills, and participation in community-based supports for students.



Outstanding School Psychologist at the Specialist Level – Lindsay Shockley was acknowledged for her demonstration of excellence in the 10 NASP Domains of Practice at the specialist level. Ms. Shockley is employed by Lorena ISD. She was recognized for her knowledge of behavior, evaluation, and special education legal and ethical practices, as well as her diligence and professionalism. She also participated in the development and implementation of school-wide programs and was recognized for her consultative skills in working with staff and students.

Outstanding Graduate Student Representative – Irma Pedraza was recognized for her impact on graduate education in school psychology after entering a program, and her demonstration of leadership skills, creative endeavors, personal growth, interpersonal skills, professional competencies, and professional presentations while enrolled in gradu-

TASP 2017 Awards and Honors

ate school. Ms. Pedraza is enrolled in the Texas State University's (TSU) school psychology program. Prior to graduate school, Ms. Pedraza worked in Texas as a bilingual educational diagnostician and a bilingual and special education instructor. Ms. Pedraza participated in multiple scholarly endeavors, including TSU's Project SUPERB scholar program, an immersion experience in the Rio Grande Valley. In addition, Ms. Pedraza's presentations related to bilingual education and school psychology, and she recently represented the school psychology program at TSU as a NASP Student Leader.



Outstanding Delivery of School Psychological Services by a School District –

Pflugerville ISD was awarded the Outstanding Delivery of School Psychological Services by a School District based on the ISD's recognition and implementation of best practices or innovative practices of school psychology aligning with the NASP Practice Domains. Pflugerville ISD's team serves 21 elementary campuses, 6 middle schools, 4 high schools, and 1 alternative learning center. LSSPs in Pflugerville ISD participate as members of Student Study Teams, that help to implement academic and behavioral interventions, provide consultation to school staff, provide mental health services, and serve as members of crisis/safety teams. The district's team was also commended for community involvement and participation in research regarding mental health services and support.



Outstanding Service to the Profession of School Psychology –

The Outstanding Service to the Profession award is designed to recognize an individual who has contributed to the profession of school psychology in the following NASP Practice Domains: publications and conference presentations, training, and development of procedures and policies; leadership in promoting school psychology at state level and holds membership in state and national associations;



and other areas which show exemplary service to the profession, such as community involvement and participation in task forces or other groups to promote school psychology. This year's Outstanding Service to the Profession of School Psychology award recipient is Ashley Arnold. Ms. Arnold works for Pflugerville ISD, and has been described as a "champion of broadening our roles in the school setting." She has worked to ensure that school psychological service provision in her district is comprehensive and involves appropriate evaluation, implementation of sound academic and/or behavioral interventions, as well as consultation, training, and community outreach. Ms. Arnold has served as an advocate for her profession not only within her district, but also by performing a variety of roles and responsibilities for her state and national school psychology organizations, as well as providing input to state legislators regarding proposed rules and regulations affecting school-based mental health services.

UTSA®

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School Psychology Program

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

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



It may be December, but the TASP Executive Board is preparing for Summer Institute 2018. Historically, the Summer Institute has been offered in Corpus Christi, Texas. The original purpose of offering the Summer Institute was to provide continuing professional development to LSSPs in more remote locations with limited availability to quality sessions relevant to the practice of school psychology. In the past, the Summer Institute was smaller with fewer speakers than the annual convention in the Fall. Based on attendee reviews, those that attend the Summer Institute have appreciated the more intimate setting and often return the following year. However, because of the smaller attendance and accompanying costs, the Summer Institute has not generated revenue in the last five years. Therefore, we needed to strategically adjust in effort to remain fiscally responsible.

Next year, the association is taking a different approach for Summer Institute. We are partnering with the Arkansas School Psychology Association to offer a joint professional development opportunity. Not only will this opportunity allow TASP to collaborate with a neighboring school psychology association, it will also help alleviate expenses for both parties. The intention is to split the cost and profit equally. Ultimately, this will help TASP in our mission to continue to offer the Summer Institute, attract high quality presenters, and decrease costs.

Summer Institute 2018 aims to attract school psychologists in Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana in an effort to increase connectiveness and comradery as a professional body. The Summer Institute will be held on June 21st and June 22nd at the Arkansas Convention Center in Texarkana. This year, we are excited to offer speakers on practical applications of school psychology. While we continue to narrow down our speakers, at the present time, we are expecting Dr. John Murphy from the University of Central Arkansas to present on counseling, Dr. Andrea Ogonosky will share her expertise on behavior Response to Intervention, and Ms. Jaime Goldstein from the North Texas Center for Mindfulness will present on Ethical Considerations and Evidence-Based Interventions in Mindfulness.

Registration is expected to open by March/April 2018. More information will be provided as we move into the new year. We hope you will join us for this exciting event, as it will be a new endeavor for us all. As always, TASP appreciates our members and their continued support in helping us advocate for the profession.

Graduate Student Corner

Happy winter to all of our wonderful TASP graduate students! I am happy to say that we have all officially survived the fall semester.

As most of you can attest, the 2017 TASP Annual Fall Convention was a great success. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting so many of you at the graduate student session, and had a wonderful time hearing about all of your successes to date. I would like to give a very special thank you to Dr. Klose (program director of the School Psychology program at Trinity University, as well as our state NASP representative) and Amanda Real (our wonderful TASP president) for presenting and helping us learn what to expect when seeking licensure and internship placement.



Additionally, I would like to recognize our 2017 TASP Graduate Student Scholarship recipients: Crystal Evans and Brian Kelly. Crystal received her S.S.P. in 2010 from Texas State University and is currently a doctoral student at Texas Tech University. Brian received his M.A. in school psychology in 2007 from Trinity University and is a doctoral student at Texas Tech. Both Crystal and Brian have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement as well as a desire to continue building their professional skill set and assist children and adolescents in attaining success. Congratulations to you both!

As we look forward to the spring semester, many of you have the Praxis exam and internship interviews on the horizon TASP is here to help. Dr. Klose's presentation provides several resources for Praxis study material and internship tips. Feel free to email me at graduatestudentrep@txasp.org, and I will happily send the presentation your way. Have a wonderful winter, engage in some much deserved self-care, and enjoy the holiday season!

Kristin Streich

Graduate Student Representative



TEXAS A&M
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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. Co-ady Lapierre, LSSP, 1001 Leadership Place, Killeen, Texas 76549 or lapierre@tamuct.edu



Children's Fund

of School Psychology, Inc.
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THE CHILDREN'S
FUND OF SCHOOL
PSYCHOLOGY, INC.

The new membership year is just starting! Won't you join us?

We know that you love the auction- so can we count on you for more?

The Children's Fund has been around for over 30 years! We're the group that holds the auction at the NASP Convention and organizes the Host City Project each year. We are also the organization that supports your efforts to aid children in need! Last year, the CF was able to fund more than \$16,000 to projects around the country!

We count on you to support our grants. Join us as a member for only \$20 or if you are able we ask that you more deeply donate to our efforts. On our website you are able to donate to a specific area knowing that 100% of your donation will be used for that purpose. All monies are tax deductible.

Joining the Children's Fund as a member is making a financial commitment to our shared goals! Go to the Children's Fund website (www.childrensfundofschoolpsychology.org) and join today!

The following pictures show some of the projects we covered last year. Applying for these grants is easy. Even if you don't need a grant this year, look at what your membership could cover for others:

Basic Needs Grants support the basic needs of children and youth so that those without the means to acquire these can participate fully in school instruction. These grants have been used to provide such things as food, clothing, eyeglasses, hearing aids, personal hygiene items, and school supplies to those in need.

Mental Health Grants assist school psychologists in acquiring materials for mental health interventions in schools. Such funds have been used to enhance the social skills, emotional regulation, coping skills, and adaptive skills of children and youth.

Youth Empowerment Grants enable school psychologists to assist youth in developing innovative mental health interventions that focus on the development of positive behaviors. In addition to the prevention/early intervention emphasis of these grants, an opportunity for the development of youth leadership skills is provided.

The Children's Fund was founded in 1986 by NASP to advocate for the essential rights and welfare of all children and youth; promote learning environments which facilitate optimal development; research effective interventions that address distressing circumstances of children and youth; and embrace individual differences in children and youth.

Now independent of NASP, the CF continues the tradition as an independent 501(c) (3).

The CF promotes the welfare of children through the specialty of school psychology because as school psychologists we know that our students need to develop social-emotional skills along with their academics and we promote personal growth,

Service Grants are awarded to school psychologists for outcomes-based service delivery to grade levels, entire schools, or school districts. These grants encourage districts to provide services via 'seed' money or matching grants to develop programs for mental health intervention.

Host City Project Each year when members of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) travel to a city for the annual convention, the CF works to ensure that our profession is viewed as making a difference in that city. We work with the local NASP Conference Committee and local charities to select a charity or charities in the host city to receive such funds. CF is working on the Host City Project 2018 for Chicago! Last year, in San Antonio we participated in a landscaping and cleaning project at Morgan's Wonderland, a cultural and environmental theme park for children and youth with special needs and a literacy project with San Antonio Reads.

Annual Children's Fund Auction - Each year during the NASP convention, the Children's Fund holds a live and silent auction. Proceeds from the auction are used to help fund grants and the host city projects as well.



Please become a member today! (www.childrensfundofschoolpsychology.org).

With best regards as you start on a great career!

Jeanne Pound, President
Joelene Goodover, Director
Juliette Madigan, Membership Co-Chair
Lynne Thies, Secretary

Joe Gerard, Director
Ellen Winningham, Treasurer
Marjorie Cleminger, Membership Co-Chair
Tom Delaney, Director

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Children's Assistance for Living Committee (CALC)

Thank you! The TASP Children's Assistance for Living Committee (CALC) would like to express appreciation to our wonderful membership. Through the Convention and online donations, TASP raised \$721 for Love for Kids, a nonprofit charity serving the children and families of Dallas. Love for Kids announced that this year our donation will assist with their Annual Children's Holiday Event, which will be hosting over 1,000 underprivileged children from Dallas and Denton Counties. Each child will receive a toy and a new coat.



- 2017
- Dallas
- \$721 raised



- 2016
- Houston
- \$790 raised



- 2015
- Dallas
- \$442.25 raised



- 2014
- San Antonio
- \$541 raised

For more information regarding Love for Kids and the difference they are making in our communities, please check out their website at <http://loveforkidsinc.org/>

Kassi Lopez

Area VI Representative

CALC Member

Spotlight on an LSSP: Laura Renken

Interviewed by Brittany McCreary

What has been the traditional role of LSSPs in your district?

Although we strive to provide the best learning environment for all students through consultation, counseling, and evaluation, the majority of our time is still spent in assessment. We are becoming more involved in the RTI process through the use of consultation, but it has been a slow process and most progress has been at the elementary level.

Tell me about your implementation of Dr. Larson’s *Think First* program. What issues led to its implementation?

Our campus had high rates of aggressive behaviors (fights, verbal and physical aggression towards teachers, etc.), especially with our male students. I also noticed, while sitting in ARD meetings, that many students would share that they had “anger issues” and felt angry and frustrated a lot of the time. I have always had an interest in behavior modification, but had been frustrated with how few interventions there seemed to be at the secondary level. When I saw that Dr. Larson was presenting on an intervention for aggression in secondary-age students at the Annual NASP Conference, I thought it might be helpful—which it definitely was. I bought his book before the presentation was even complete and was pleased with how user-friendly the program was. I wanted to have data to support the need for future groups, so I used a combination of self-reports and quantitative data (e.g., discipline referrals, number of suspension/ISS days) to track what impact the group was having. Despite having to adjust the program’s recommended length and activities, positive changes were seen in all participants. Four of the original six members even requested to come back and join the group again the next semester.



How you were able to participate in more NASP domains of the practice model than your district normally allows?

I had extensive conversations with my supervisor and school staff about the needs that I was observing on my campus and my desire to do something about it. Initially, my supervisor had concerns that taking on this specialized group would take time away from my other duties. However, we compromised and agreed that I could conduct the group once a week during my lunch break—as long as it did not interfere with my primary responsibilities. Something that made this process easier was how the *Think First* program describes all sessions thoroughly, which limited the amount of time needed to prep for group sessions.

What barriers have you encountered in doing this?

Carving out time from own schedule was definitely a barrier for me. Another barrier was that this type of group had never been conducted on the campus by an LSSP before. In addition, my previous group counseling experience was limited, so there was a lot of work I had to do before the sessions could begin. For example, I had to find willing participants, had to have consent forms signed, had to generate screening procedures, and had to secure a location. The program's recommended length had to be shortened due to the school's schedule, and some activities had to be omitted entirely. Lastly, getting consent from parents was difficult, as parental involvement was limited with many of the group members.

What supports did you receive?

I was able to put my supervisor's initial concerns regarding increased time demands to rest after a few weeks passed with no decline in my performance of primary responsibilities. The support from faculty was readily given, as they too noticed that this was an area that needed to be addressed. I also had help from one of the school counselors who offered to co-lead the group with me. She provided valuable help, as she had more general experience leading groups than I had.

What factors have you found to be important for you to be successful as an LSSP?

Personality-wise, I think being willing to help others is one of the most important skills you can have. If you are willing and able to step up and help out even if it is outside your typical role, you build better relationships and I think that is at the core of what we do. Teachers are more willing to work with you, parents and students are more likely to trust you, and that all leads to better student outcomes. In terms of practical skills, being efficient and knowledgeable helps tremendously. If you are able to do things—such as write thorough reports and prep for ARDs quickly—that frees up time to do other things such as consultation, visiting classrooms, and just being generally more visible and accessible on your campus.

What has been your most memorable experience?

Watching the graduations of some of our most challenging students. There are some students that come in with so much stacked against them. Watching these students walk across the stage, and getting to see how all the hard work has paid off, is really special.

What do you enjoy most about being an LSSP?

I like helping people make sense of complicated situations and doing what I can to help them get through those situations. Whether it is a parent wanting answers about their child's abilities, a teacher needing help writing an FBA/BIP, or a student needing someone to talk to about a tough life situation, I like the thought that they trust me enough to know that I will be there for them.

What are your future plans as an LSSP?

Eventually, I would love to be the head of a psychological services department so that I can not only provide help to individuals, but also be able to make systematic changes that will positively influence greater numbers of people. I am also interested in using my experience as an LSSP to teach at the college level to prepare those students that are entering the field.

Diversity in Action

By Kassi Lopez

**Esta es mi historia cuando yo me moví de Perú E.E.U.U.
y algunas diferencias que hay entre los dos.**

Meet Dariana, an 11-year-old 6th grader who moved to the United States from Peru. This is her story.

Dariana is from La Molina, a district within the province of Lima, Peru. La Molina is a growing district with a 2005 census population reported at just under 125,000. La Molina is one of 43 districts that make up the vast city of Lima, which has a total population of 7.6 million inhabitants in the city proper and over 9 million in the urban area.

Five months ago, Dariana, her mother, and her brother came to the United States to live with her mother's sisters and her uncle. She left behind her father and sister in Peru. Dariana reported that her parents separated and her mother came here to work and be closer to family. She said the primary contact she has with her family in Peru is through phone calls and FaceTime. Dariana noted that both her parents and her uncle speak Spanish primarily. Dariana, her siblings, and her aunts are proficient in both English and Spanish. Currently, English is spoken by all students and teachers at school except for her ESL teacher and two friends that she made in school.

We sat down to explore the similarities and differences between Dariana's educational experience in Peru compared to school in the Texas Panhandle. Dariana reported that the school system is structured differently in Peru, with grades 1st through 6th being primary school and 7th through 11th being high school. At her previous school, all grades were located within two buildings on campus. Students stayed at school from 7:25-2:25 each day to receive instruction. Dariana reported that rather than changing classes in Peru, students stayed in one classroom and teachers rotated into the class to teach them various subjects. She attended 12 classes per day, including a literacy class, mathematics, science, history, and English. Dariana said that in December, in addition to classes, students participated in a fine arts program that included singing, dancing, and playing instruments. She stated that school in the United States seems to be more organized with more rules and expectations. Dariana stated that she likes that she does not have to wear a uniform at her current school.



Dariana also reported differences in access to technology between schools. She said that at her previous school, they had computer labs, but that here they have labs in addition to Chromebooks and iPads in the classroom. In Texas, she frequently listens to audiobooks in class and uses an iPad and electronic translator that she did not have at her previous school. One of the biggest surprises was that in Peru, Dariana's school did not have a library. Instead of an on

campus library, students purchased books from a book store near campus. Dariana said that this resulted in fewer books and novels being read over a semester, but that they would go into greater depth into the texts.

Dariana said that she has enjoyed school both here and in Peru. She wants to attend a university, but she is unsure of what she would like to major in or what her future career might be. Dariana states that she would like to return to Peru to complete her higher education studies. The most challenging thing about moving to the United States, Dariana reported, was leaving her father, sister, and other family back in Peru. She said that the most rewarding experiences thus far have been learning English and getting to live with her favorite aunt. When asked what she would like to tell her teachers to help them better understand her, Dariana responded that she would like them to know that she is nervous a lot. She is not nervous around her friends, because they speak Spanish, but she is afraid to speak English, especially in class. Science is particularly challenging for her, because they often watch short videos and then discuss them with peers. She said that she often does not understand what the video is about because they are presented in English. A solution she proposed was having Spanish subtitles, when possible, to help her better understand the content. Dariana said that she currently uses an iPad and electronic translator to help her, but all of her instruction is in English, so she sometimes struggles. She and her ESL pull-out teacher both reported that Dariana's English is strong, but that she needs encouragement to build confidence in speaking.

Dariana's advice to students moving to the United States ,from countries like Peru, is, "Do your best with the English you know. Do not be afraid to use your English words and work hard."



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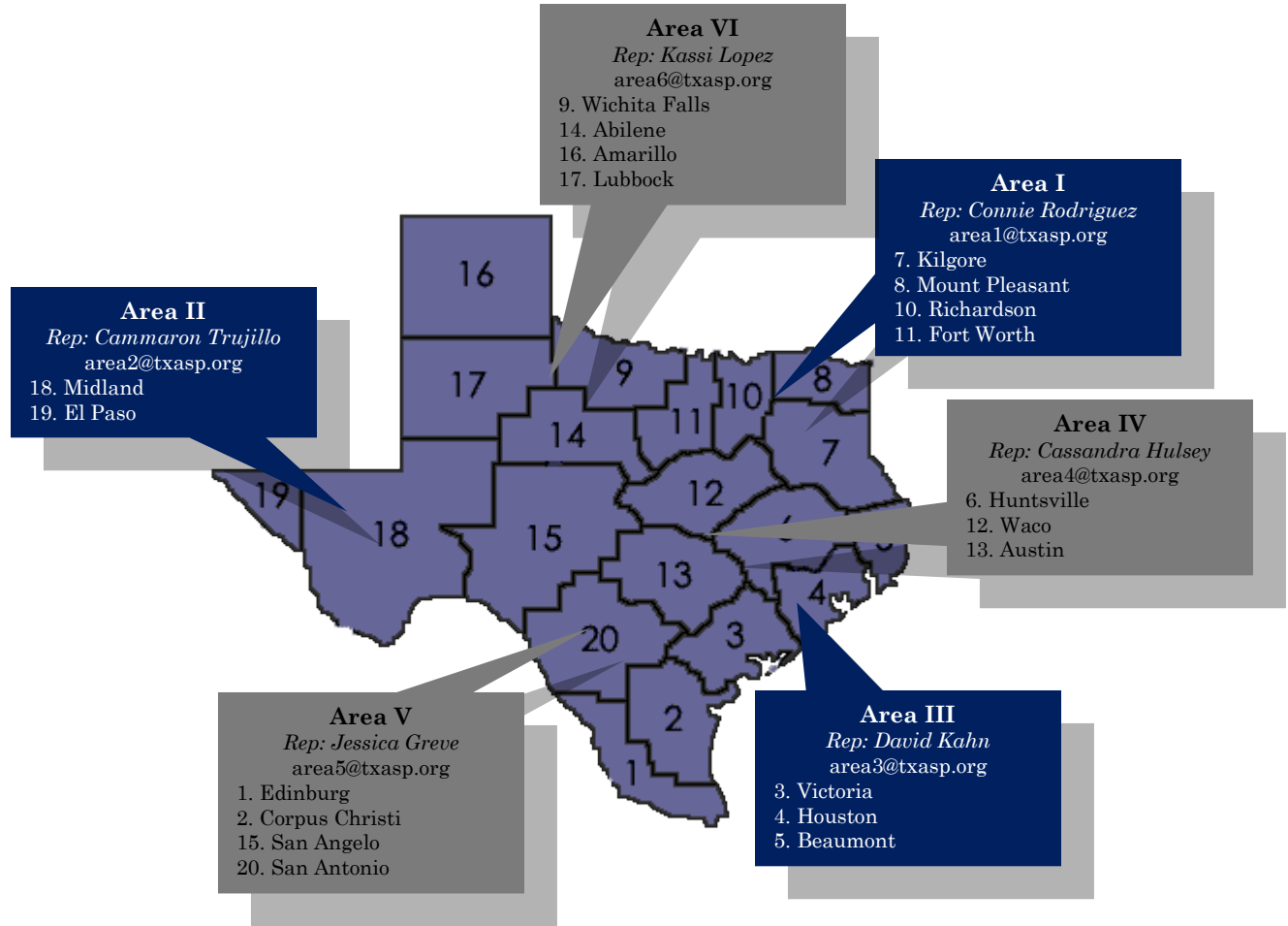
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Information from the Area Representatives!

Area Representative Map



A partner on the path to student success

Texas Association of School Psychologists

Future Conventions

June 21-22, 2018 at Texarkana, co-hosted with the Arkansas School Psychology Association

Oct. 25-27, 2018 at Dallas/Addison Marriott Quorum by the Galleria

Oct. 22-24, 2019 at Westin Galleria Houston

Oct. 8-10, 2020 at Omni San Antonio Hotel at the Colonnade



Area II Update

Hope everyone is hanging in there! Who knew the winter break would come so quickly! I wish everyone a wonderful holiday season full of joy and relaxation. So what is new in the area? Our area service center, Region 19, organized the 1st Annual Mental Health in School Regional Conference, scheduled for February 15-16, 2018. The conference includes 10 breakout sessions each day, including information presented by child and adolescent psychiatrists, school psychologists, school counselors, school district personnel, community mental health providers, and mental health advocacy agencies. Hope to see the school psychologists represented in the area. Again, if you have any concerns or suggestions for the board, please contact me at ctruji01@sisd.net. I look forward to hearing from you.

Cammaron Trujillo

Area III Update

It was so good to see many of you at TASP's 25th Annual Convention in Dallas. It has been my experience that each annual convention gets better, and this year's convention was no exception. Between the regular convention sessions and the mini skills sessions, there was something available for everyone. If you have not already done so, mark your calendars for the 26th Annual Convention, which will be held at the same hotel, the Marriott Quorum by the Galleria, in Dallas/Addison on October 25-27, 2018.



In addition, be sure to mark your calendar for the Summer Institute, which will be in Texarkana, Texas, on June 21-22, 2018. We are collaborating with the Arkansas School Psychology Association, and this will be the first time TASP has worked with another state organization in the planning of a professional event. This year's Summer Institute promises to be an opportunity to obtain professional development on a variety of topics related to school-based mental health and to meet school psychologists from Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma.

Thank you for being loyal members of TASP. Without you, TASP would not be able to advocate for the profession, particularly during years when our legislature is in session. During the TSBEP Update at the Convention, it was suggested that TASP members must step up their efforts during the next legislative session. In addition, it became clear that there are many different viewpoints within the profession of school psychology regarding what should be the future of the LSSP credential. For these reasons, TASP needs the support of all LSSPs during this time of uncertainty and change. Continue to encourage your colleagues who are not currently TASP members to consider joining. We are only as strong as our membership, so let us work together to ensure that every LSSP in Area III is a member of TASP. Please contact me if there is anything I can do to assist you in your efforts to recruit your colleagues as new members.

David Kahn



Area IV Update

It's hard to believe we're already at the end of another year! As my term as Area 4 representative draws to a close, reflect on all the exciting things that have happened over the last two years in TASP and the field of school psychology, including the passage of ESSA, which highlights the value of social, emotional, and mental health in schools, expanding our LSSP practice to the private school setting, possible changes to our licensing agency, advocating for legislation that protects the children and families we serve...the list goes on and on! Your professional organization, TASP, has been extremely active in each of these issues to ensure that the values we uphold as school psychologists are pursued in policy and legislation. As a TASP representative and a LSSP, my visits to national and state legislative offices and conversations with policy makers have been some of the most eye opening, motivational, and rewarding moments of my career. These experiences have shown me that it is possible (and essential) for an individual to advocate for students, families, schools, and our profession. The journey to change, however, can be time consuming and challenging and it requires steadfastness and commitment. TASP has been, and will continue to be, committed to the advancement of our profession, and will give LSSPs a voice on the issues that are important to us. To increase our chances of demonstrable change and advocacy, TASP needs the support of all LSSPs in our area and our state, through continued membership, willingness to serve in leadership positions, and active participation on issues that arise. I thank each and every one of you for recognizing the value and importance of your TASP membership and the advocacy efforts you have participated in. I encourage you to share with your colleagues the news of what TASP is doing and to get them involved as well. *"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."* --Helen Keller

I can't wait to see what else is to come!

Cassandra Hulsey

Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) in Health Service Psychology (Combined Clinical/School Psychology Program)

The University of Houston-Clear Lake College of Human Sciences and Humanities is proud to offer the first PsyD at a public university in Texas. Graduates are trained as practitioner-scientists for careers as health professionals in clinical and school settings. Interested applicants should hold a masters or specialist degree in clinical psychology, school psychology, or a closely related field. The PsyD program prepares graduates to become a Licensed Psychologist, Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP), Health Service Psychologist, and Nationally Certified School Psychologist.

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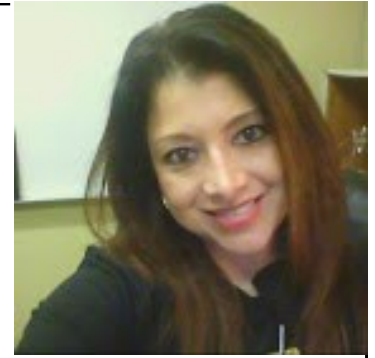


University
of Houston
Clear Lake

For more information, contact Dr. Mary Short
(shortmb@uhcl.edu).
The choice is clear.

Area V Update

The 25th Annual TASP Convention brought many of us together from around the state and provided an excellent opportunity to learn and network. When planning to attend future conventions and looking for opportunities to connect with other LSSP, I strongly encourage you to attend the Connections Luncheon. Please consider attending Summer Institute in Texarkana this summer. Not only can you network with other LSSPs from the state, but attending will give you the opportunity to get to know school psychologists from the neighboring state of Arkansas.



In light of unspeakable tragedy and natural disasters that have befallen our area in recent months, evaluating our readiness for potential traumatic events/disasters is important. As LSSPs, we play a vital role in providing support to schools affected. If you would like more training in crisis prevention, response, intervention, and recovery, please consider PREP_aRE training, or other crisis trainings, that may be offered in your region. TASP has been working with the NASP Crisis Response Team to provide resources and assistance for school staff and families working with children impacted by disaster. A list of resources can be found on the TASP webpage. If you would like to provide information that would be useful to address needs, or if you have resources available to assist others, you can complete the form that is also located on the TASP webpage. Please go to www.txasp.org for more information.

Finally, I hope that you all enjoyed School Psychology Awareness Week! Please do not hesitate to message us if you want to share information about an LSSP that has inspired you to help students thrive and been a positive charge in the field of school psychology. We would love to hear from you!

Jessica Greve

The University of Texas
Rio Grande
Valley

MASTER OF ARTS IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

At UTRGV our graduate program in school psychology prepares you to work with children, adolescents, and families from diverse socio-cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The UTRGV School Psychology program is in accordance with the scientist-practitioner model of training, which emphasizes school psychologists to use empirical research in practice. The program training includes preparation in mental health and educational interventions, child development, learning, behavior, motivation, curriculum and instruction, assessment, consultation, collaboration, school law, and school systems.

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For more information contact Dr. Nancy P. Razo, School Psychology Program Coordinator, at nancy.razo@utrgv.edu or the UTRGV Graduate College at utrgv.edu/grad



Area VI Update

It seems like the year is flying by. How we are already to the holidays I will never know! I was so pleased to see all of you at TASP this year. I attended an excellent session on neuroimaging and learned a lot about restorative justice. I always enjoy seeing new speakers and catching up with friends from around the state. I am impressed by the generosity of our members and am excited to announce that at the Convention and online we raised \$721 for our local charity, Love for Kids!

As I have heard from many of you, Area VI LSSPs have been busy. In Region 16, we hosted an LSSP roundtable, where over 30 LSSPs met and discussed the latest in information relevant to our practice. We discussed the impact of our previous legislative session, TASP's advocacy efforts, what is new in the laws regarding practice, and hot topics including private school practice opportunities, challenges in assessments, and in the many roles and responsibilities that LSSPs fill.

I am concluding my second term as Area VI representative. It has been an honor serving on the TASP Board and representing the hardworking LSSPs in my area. Congratulations to Christy Chapman from Lubbock, the next Area VI representative. She will be an excellent addition to the TASP Board and will represent each of you well.

Kassi Lopez



Thinking about Graduate School? Think about Trinity.

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Ethical Eddie

Dear Ethical Eddie,

I am so very excited that LSSPs can now legally work in private school settings using the LSSP license. I have already been approached and would like to provide academic achievement evaluations as part of the admissions process for Madeupname Private School. Under the new board rules, I understand that this would be allowed, but what ethical and procedural advice would you give?

Private Patty

Dear Patty,

This is exciting news! Be sure and thank your TASP Area Rep and other leaders for their advocacy on this important issue!

Here are some important issues to consider:

When practicing in private schools, you are no longer practicing under IDEA, FERPA, and ESSA. Instead, you must meet all the requirements for practice in a private setting. Remember, as an LSSP, you are licensed to provide *school psychology services*. These services are described in board rule **465.38 Psychological Services for Schools**. Ethical guidance can be found in NASP Principles for Professional Ethics, Principle IV. 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.

You must practice only in the areas for which you are competent through acceptable training and professional development activities as described in board rule **465.9 Competency**. Ethical guidance can be found in NASP Principles for Professional Ethics, Principle II. 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.

Your process for obtaining consent for evaluation must meet the requirements of board rule **465.11 Informed Consent/Description of Psychological Services**. Ethical guidance can be found in NASP Principles for Professional Ethics, Principle I.1. Autonomy and Self Determination (Consent and Assent) School psychologists respect the right of persons to participate in decisions affecting their own welfare.

You must conduct evaluations consistent with the standards set forth in board rule **465.16 Evaluation, Assessment, Testing and Reports**. Ethical guidance can be found in NASP Principles for Professional Ethics, Principle II.3. Responsible Assessment and Intervention Practices School psychologists maintain the highest standard for responsible professional practices in educational and psychological assessment and direct and indirect interventions. Standard II.3.2 School psychologists use assessment techniques and practices that the profession con-

siders to be responsible, research-based practice. School psychologists select assessment instruments and strategies that are reliable and valid for the child and the purpose of the assessment. When using standardized measures, school psychologists adhere to the procedures for administration of the instrument that are provided by the author or publisher or the instrument. If modifications are made in the administration procedures for standardized tests or other instruments, such modifications are identified and discussed in the interpretation of the results. If using norm-referenced measures, school psychologists choose instruments with up-to-date normative data. When using computer-administered assessments, computer-assisted scoring, and/or interpretation programs, school psychologists choose programs that meet professional standards for accuracy and validity. School psychologists use professional judgment in evaluating the accuracy of computer-assisted assessment findings for the examinee. Standard II.3.3 A psychological or psychoeducational assessment is based on a variety of different types of information from different sources. Standard II.3.5 School psychologists conduct valid and fair assessments. They actively pursue knowledge of the student's disabilities and developmental, cultural, linguistic, and experiential background and then select, administer, and interpret assessment instruments and procedures in light of those characteristics (see Standard I.3.1. and I.3.2). Standard II.3.8 School psychologists adequately interpret findings and present results in clear, understandable terms so that the recipient can make informed choices.

Your records must meet the standards set forth in board rule **465.22 Psychological Records, Test Data and Test Materials**. Ethical guidance can be found in NASP Principles for Professional Ethics, Principle II.4 Responsible School-Based Record Keeping: School psychologists safeguard the privacy of school psychological records and ensure parent access to the records of their own children. Standard II.4.1 School psychologists discuss with parents and adult students their rights regarding creation, modification, storage, and disposal of psychological and educational records that result from the provision of services. Parents and adult students are notified of the electronic storage and transmission of personally identifiable school psychological records and the associated risks to privacy. Standard II.4.2 School psychologists maintain school-based psychological and educational records with sufficient detail to be useful in decision making by another professional and with sufficient detail to withstand scrutiny if challenged in a due process or other legal procedure. Standard II.4.3 School psychologists include only documented and relevant information from reliable sources in school psychological records. Standard II.4.4 School psychologists ensure that parents have appropriate access to the psychological and educational records of their child. Parents have a right to access any and all information that is used to make educational decisions about their child.

So, as you can see, there are a number of issues to consider before jumping into the private school world. It is really important to become expert in the board rules and the ethical standards. This knowledge and expertise helps LSSPs protect the public and the profession from inappropriate practice.

The use of the LSSP to provide school psychological services to children in private schools creates an avenue for access to mental and behavioral health services for those children. This allows an LSSP to utilize their broad skill set to serve even more of the children of Texas. It is a good thing and has the potential to increase the visibility of the profession and to increase positive educational outcomes for more children.

Ethically,
Eddie

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

Journal Update

The first four 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.

We are very interested in receiving your manuscript submissions. If you would like to submit a manuscript for publication consideration, please email jeremy.sullivan@utsa.edu or see the latest issue for the Instructions for Authors.

We were excited to see such a wide range of high-quality poster and paper presentations at the recent TASP convention in Dallas, and we especially encourage those presenters to submit manuscripts based on their presentations.

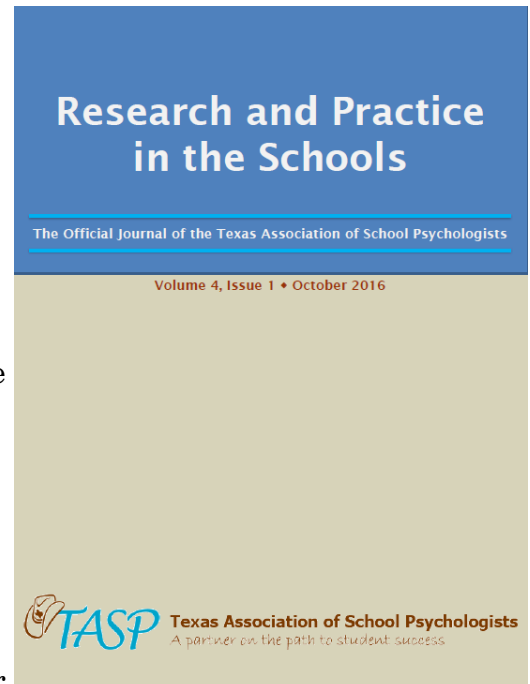
Graduate Student Section:

Ashley Doss, doctoral student at Stephen F. Austin State University, serves as Graduate Student Section Editor for the journal. The Graduate Student Section is devoted to publishing the work of graduate students, including 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. If you are a graduate student and you have questions about how you can best contribute to the journal (as an author, reviewer, or both), please email Ashley at: dossan2@jacks.sfasu.edu.

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 Special Issue Proposals:

Are you interested in proposing a special issue of the journal? Perhaps an issue on crisis inter-



vention, assessment of emotional disturbance, or training/supervision in school psychology? If so, please let us know about your ideas. 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.

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 or aeherna8@uiwtx.edu.

Jeremy Sullivan and Art Hernandez

Editors, Research and Practice in the Schools

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From the NASP Resource adopted by the TASP Executive Board August 2014



Position Statement

Racial and Ethnic Disproportionality in Education

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) is committed to advocating for the rights, education, mental health, and behavioral needs of all students, and believes that all students are entitled to a free and appropriate public education in a positive and inclusive educational environment. All students—whatever their race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identification, gender expression, or sexual orientation—are entitled to an equitable and high quality education, including access to core curricula and evidence-based educational practices that are delivered to all students in age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, and linguistically appropriate general education classroom settings. Additionally, NASP maintains that all students learn best in inclusive environments that implement high quality, evidence-based instruction. NASP endorses the implementation of inclusive schools where specific groups of children are not disproportionately represented in restrictive educational settings.

DEFINING DISPROPORTIONALITY

Disproportionality refers to a group's representation in a particular category that "exceeds our expectations for that group, or differs substantially from the representation of others in that category" (Skiba et al., 2008, p. 266). *Special Education Disproportionality* has been referred to as "the extent to which membership in a given group affects the probability of being placed in a specific disability category" (Oswald, Coutinho, Best, & Singh, 1999, p. 198). Students from some certain racial/ethnic groups have historically been disproportionately identified as in need of special education services and placed in more restrictive special educational settings. *Disciplinary Disproportionality* encompasses the disproportionately high rates at which students from certain racial/ethnic groups are subjected to office discipline referrals, suspensions, school arrests, and expulsion (Skiba, Shure, & Williams, 2012).

DISPROPORTIONALITY: RACIALLY AND ETHNICALLY DIVERSE STUDENTS

Several decades of research document that students from certain racial/ethnic groups, particularly Black/African American students, are disproportionately represented in special education programs (Blanchett, 2006; Harry & Klinger, 2006; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2009) and are subjected to higher rates of exclusionary disciplinary practices, such as suspension and expulsion (Children's Defense Fund, 2004; Losen & Skiba, 2010). Researchers have also recognized that special education and disciplinary disproportionality produce inequitable opportunities to learn. Special education has been considered a paradox by some in that while it provides access to additional educational opportunities, it can also serve to stigmatize children and marginalize them from general education (Sullivan, Kozleski, & Smith, 2008). As noted by Sullivan et al. (2009), there is ample evidence indicating that groups who are disproportionately represented in special education are negatively affected by factors such as stigmatization, lowered expectations, fewer opportunities to learn, substandard instruction, and isolation from the general education environment.

Consistently, research literature and government reports have documented disproportionality among students of different backgrounds in special education referrals and discipline practices. Specifically, Black/African American boys have been referred for special education at rates far in excess of their presence in the population at large. The *29th Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2007* revealed that Black/African American students (6–21 years of age) were about 1.5 times more likely to receive special education services in general. They were specifically 2.86 times more likely to receive special education services for mental retardation and 2.28 times more likely to receive services for emotional disturbance (ED) than same-age students of all other racial/ethnic groups combined. Other research has documented that Black/African American students receive harsher discipline, such as corporal punishment (Gregory, 1996; Shaw and Braden, 1990), and are less likely than other students to receive mild disciplinary alternatives when referred for an infraction (Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002). Welch and Payne (2010) reported that, regardless of levels of misbehavior and delinquency, schools with a higher percentage of Black/African American students had higher rates of exclusionary discipline, court action, zero tolerance policies, and enhanced school security measures, and had fewer mild disciplinary practices. A nationwide report from the Civil Rights Project at UCLA (Losen & Gillespie, 2012) found that Black/African American students' out-of-school suspension rates were approximately 3.5 times more than that of White students.

Although a systematic study has yet to be conducted, there is consistent evidence that the suspension disparity persists despite controlling for poverty (Noltemeyer & McLoughlin, 2010), socioeconomic status (Wu, Pink, Crain, & Moles, 1982), family structure and parent education (Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace & Bachman, 2008), and teacher ratings of disruptive behaviors (Rocque, 2010). The suspension rates are equally striking for certain racial/ethnic groups of students with disabilities. Suspensions for certain racial/ethnic disabled students were approximately twice the rate of their nondisabled peers. Welch and Payne (2012) reported that students who received free/reduced price lunch and/or were of Latino background had increased odds of receiving expulsion as a disciplinary consequence. Given these alarming statistics, NASP believes that school psychologists are in the unique position to facilitate systematic change to eliminate such disparities.

CONSEQUENCES OF DISCIPLINARY DISPROPORTIONALITY/EXPULSION

Out-of-school suspensions mean lost classroom time and often disconnection from school. A landmark study conducted by the Council for State Governments Justice Center (Fabelo et al., 2011) of nearly a million children in Texas showed that school suspension increased the likelihood of grade retention, landing in the juvenile justice system, or dropping out of school. The expulsion of students from school, particularly Black/African American male students, frequently results in their placement in alternative education settings and juvenile detention centers. The NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund (2005) has argued that there is a lower quality of education and more opportunities for negative modeling in such settings.

These data show that the disproportionate suspension and exclusion from school of Black/African American students significantly contributes to a path for these students from the educational system to the juvenile justice system—also known as the school-to-prison pipeline (Kim, Losen, & Hewitt, 2010; NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, 2005; Noguera, 2003). It has been asserted that zero tolerance policies and punitive discipline practices contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline, which disproportionately affects students from certain racial/ethnic groups and those with disabilities

(Noguera, 2003). Regardless, the long-term consequences of disciplinary disproportionality include lower rates of graduation, employment, and secondary education, as well as lower wages and higher arrest rates compared to White peers (Affleck, Edgar, Levine, & Kortering, 1990; Sullivan, 2009).

EVIDENCE-BASED SOLUTIONS TO DISPROPORTIONALITY

According to Skiba et al. (2008), no single factor produces disproportionality—it appears to be a complex phenomenon that is influenced by a number of factors that vary from one context to another. Additionally, there are only a few research studies that address outcomes from efforts to reduce disproportionality. However, given the long-standing detrimental impact of disproportionality on the education of specific groups, particularly African American students, education researchers need to be creative and direct their attention to evidence-based programs that specifically address the correlates of this problem. Interventions targeting these correlates are found in the promising programs that may fall within a multitiered system of support (MTSS). These efforts have made a positive impact on behavior, increased instructional minutes, and promoted better educational outcomes for all students in a building. As described in the related NASP Position Statement, “Appropriate Behavioral, Social, and Emotional Supports to Meet the Needs of All Students” (NASP, 2009), MTSS, which may incorporate school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports (SWPBIS), initially focuses on preventing behavior concerns before they occur through the direct teaching of behavior to all students in the building (Averill & Rinaldi, 2011). The process is followed by supplemental supports delivered to groups of students and individualized interventions for those most in need.

While direct outcomes on disproportionality are yet to be realized, when implemented as planned, system-wide supports such as SWPBIS, positive outcomes—such as reduced discipline referrals, more instructional time, and increased minutes for academic engagement—have been achieved (Horner, Fireman, & Wang, 2010). Further, promising programs that adopt constructs such as social-emotional learning (SEL) and restorative justice (RJ) are working to improve school climate and create an atmosphere of respect and learning while focusing on long-term success rather than punishment (Osher et al., 2010). Finally, managing and correcting student behavior by implementing programs that aim to develop student self-discipline skills such as disciplinary practices consistent with the positive psychology framework also show promise in reducing disparities (Bear, 2011). The aforementioned programs share a common systems focus and emphasis on prevention and teaching rather than removal and punishment, which is associated with the disproportionate removal from school of students from certain racial/ethnic groups.

Individually, school psychologists and other school specialists are in a unique position to employ promising practices and interventions to reduce the disproportionate identification of certain racial/ethnic students in special education and placement in more restrictive special educational settings. Application of culturally responsive practices and procedures that allow special education evaluation teams to conduct evaluations that are ecological in nature and culturally considerate, that use prereferral interventions and corresponding eligibility criteria, that are multidimensional (Jones, 2009), and that allow for a cross-battery assessment approach in analyzing and interpreting the cultural-linguistic loading of intelligence batteries (Ortiz, Flanagan, & Alfonso, 2007) have shown promise in reducing bias and increasing appropriate educational placement for culturally and linguistically diverse students (Hernandez, Ramanathan, & Socias, 2008).

ROLE OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

School psychologists have a professional and ethical obligation to address the persistent racial and ethnic disproportionality in discipline and special education. They are also in the unique position to research and evaluate prevention-oriented programs and alternatives to suspension in schools, with a specific focus on reducing disproportionality. Additionally, school psychologists' knowledge and understanding of MTSS, school climate, SEL, culturally responsive practice, and SWPBIS can be instrumental in assisting schools to interrupt the school-to-prison pipeline. School psychologists can take active steps to reduce inappropriate placements and assist in addressing the disparity in school disciplinary practices by:

1. Using evidence-based and research-oriented frameworks that integrate knowledge of diversity, child development, and learning to solve problems of school ineffectiveness and to facilitate alternatives to special education placements and traditional punitive disciplinary practice;
2. Examining their own biases to be sure that they do not act in ways that negatively affect the families and children they serve;
3. Acknowledging that consistent exclusion of historically marginalized groups of students is not acceptable and must be questioned, whether such exclusion is observed overtly or covertly;
4. Empowering children and families to self-advocate for effective discipline procedures when inequities exist;
5. Acquiring supervision, consultation, and professional development to continuously expand our multicultural understanding and knowledge of nondiscriminatory practice and improve our levels of competency in working with diverse populations;
6. Implementing MTSS, which may include SWPBIS, SEL and RJ approaches that empower all students to succeed in school (NASP, 2009);
7. Collaborating with others to review, disaggregate, and analyze district-wide data to identify systems-level biases with certain racial and ethnic groups;
8. Assisting administrators and school teams in analyzing yearly academic and behavioral data in evaluating current practices, policies, and procedures related to special education identification rates and school discipline; and,
9. Consulting with educational stakeholders such as parents, students, families, teachers, and policy makers to develop appropriate school discipline policies.

If data review and analysis reveal consistent failure or exclusion of certain student groups, school psychologists can address disproportionality by:

1. Working to develop, evaluate, and sustain alternatives that promote access to effective education for all students and groups;
2. Implementing evidence-based educational/academic interventions that afford *all* groups access to educational opportunities through access to the general education curriculum and scientifically based instruction leading to an increased likelihood of graduation by all students;
3. Working collaboratively with community counseling agencies and law enforcement for prevention and intervention, as appropriate; and
4. Ensuring that there are processes in place, at the school and district levels, to examine disaggregated data to identify disparities in academic or behavioral outcomes, and to monitor progress towards closing those gaps.

School psychologists should attempt to be leaders in developing, implementing and evaluating culturally responsive supports that address disproportionality. Although SWPBIS, SEL, RJ, and positive psychology frameworks have yet to show direct evidence in addressing disproportionality, these positive approaches and preventive disciplinary strategies remain promising (NASP, 2009). These and other practices need to be substantiated by ongoing research. Additional activities for school psychologists to integrate into supporting the needs of all students are:

1. Conducting culturally responsive functional behavioral assessments and behavioral intervention plans that always consider a student's cultural and social background;
2. Identifying family and community system-level supports to be used with all students in a population and ensuring that a continuum of integrated supports are provided for those requiring further assistance;
3. Developing and implementing Tier 1 (core/universal) evidence-based practices such as SWPBIS, SEL, RJ practices, and peer programs (e.g., buddy, conflict managers, friendship clubs);
4. Integrating Tier 2 (supplemental/targeted) counseling and academic intervention groups for all students (e.g., conflict management/resolution, gang prevention, small group academic instruction);
5. Developing benchmarks to monitor progress for both negative indicators (e.g., rates of office referrals, detentions and suspension, dropout) and positive indicators (e.g., numbers of students in Advance Placement classes and gifted programs, degree of parent involvement, and graduation rates);
6. Providing clear data to the entire school community of progress made and promoting regular school-wide celebrations of success;
7. Promoting positive disciplinary options to keep students in school and to improve overall school climate while being mindful of the research on school connectedness offered by the CDC (2009), making personal connections with racially and ethnically diverse students, and implementing strategies that will engage all students in school and in learning.

SUMMARY

NASP believes that all students are entitled to an equitable education in the least restrictive environment that leads to academic and lifelong successes. Excessive use of special education and harsh disciplinary actions limits students' access to general education, produces inequitable opportunities to learn, and contributes to negative educational outcomes, especially for Black/African American students. Through the MTSS process, school psychologists can become actively involved in determining how racially/ethnically diverse students are identified to receive appropriate interventions to meet their needs, rather than assuming a need for special education or harsh disciplinary actions. Before these interventions are employed and monitored, school psychologists should guide the school-based team in carefully reviewing the exclusionary criteria associated with determining a racially/ethnically diverse student's eligibility for special education services. School psychologists should also consider these exclusionary criteria when conceptualizing and conducting comprehensive evaluations with racially/ethnically diverse students. Consistent with the goals of the Supportive School Discipline Initiative offered by the United States Departments of Justice and Education (2011), NASP supports implementation of effective disciplinary practices to foster safe, supportive, and productive learning environments in all classroom settings. In supporting schools, school psychologists must proactively assist to develop, implement, and monitor the delivery of effective learning and positive behavioral strategies to all students at both the local and system levels (NASP, 2010). Reducing racial and ethnic disproportionality in education is a complex, multifaceted problem that requires further

research and use of disaggregated data to examine the impact of universal academic and behavioral interventions.

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School Psychology Program

The University of Houston-Clear Lake's College of Human Sciences and Humanities offers a Specialist in School Psychology (SSP). Approved by the National Association of School Psychologists, the UHCL School Psychology program seeks to prepare students to become Licensed Specialists in School Psychology (LSSPs) and Nationally Certified School Psychologists (NCSPs).

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- crisis prevention/intervention; and
- consultation and collaboration with schools and families.

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