



Public Schools of North Carolina

School Psychological Services Barriers to Student Access

House Select Committee on School Safety
Student Health Subcommittee

Raleigh, NC
April 9, 2018



Public Schools of North Carolina

Presenter Information:

Lynn K. Makor

Consultant for School Psychology
NC Department of Public Instruction

lynn.makor@dpi.nc.gov

School Psychology Website:

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/studentssupport/psychology/>





School Psychology Training/Licensure

- Completion of an approved program in school psychology at the sixth-year level
 - Specialist
 - 60+graduate credits
- NTE/Praxis School Psychology. [Educational Testing Service \(ETS\)](#)
- License for LEA employment issued through the NC DPI/State Board of Education

NC School Psychology Training Programs:

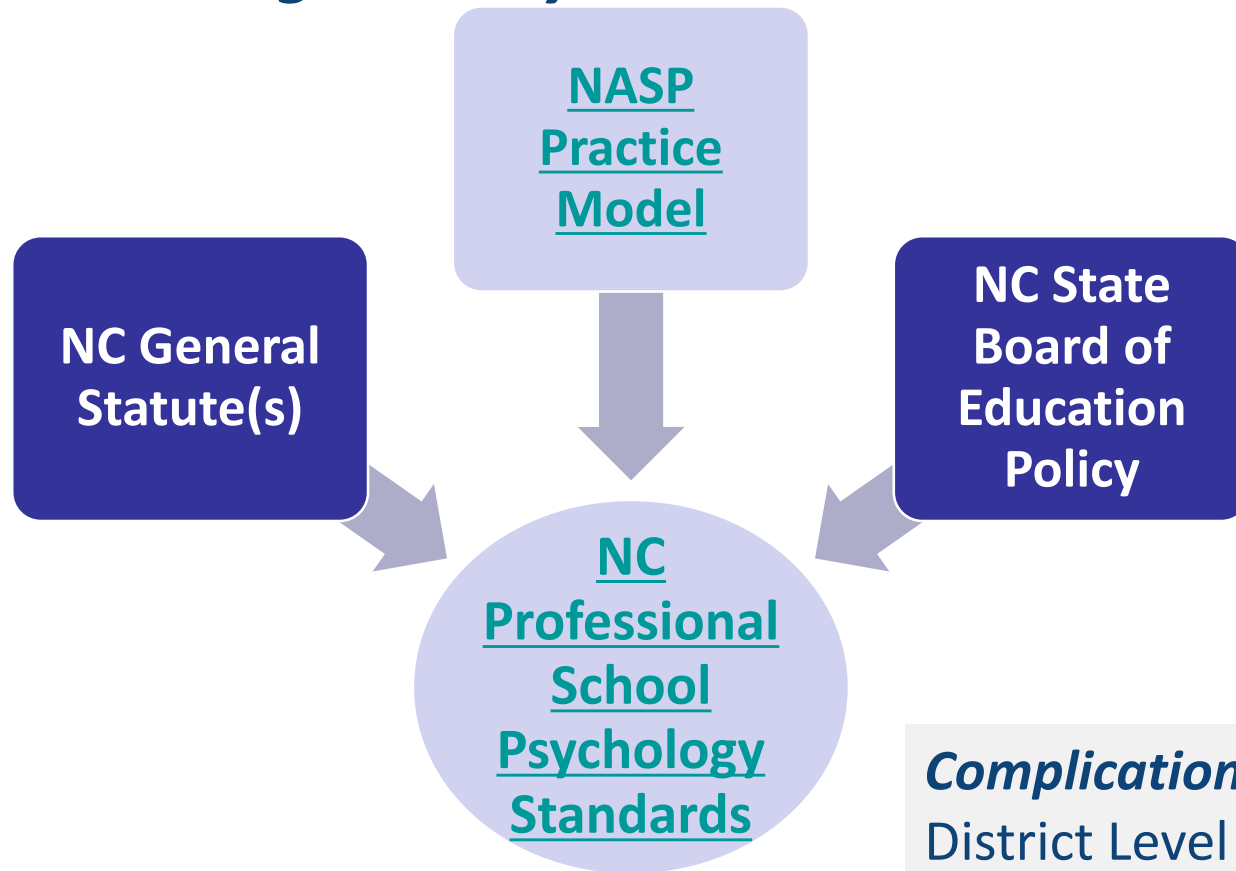
- [Appalachian State University](#)
- [East Carolina University](#)
- [North Carolina State University](#)
- The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
[Doctoral Program](#)
- [Western Carolina University](#)

All are [NASP-Approved Programs](#)



School Psychology Practice

In NC, practice is guided by:



Complications:

District Level Expectations
Workforce Reality



North Carolina by the Numbers:

65 vacancies reported in 2016-2017

65

12 Districts with NO school psychologist employed in 2016-2017

12

| Academic Year | School Psychologists DECREASING | Student Average Daily Membership INCREASING |
|---------------|------------------------------------|--|
| 2013-2014 | 781 | 1,456,330 |
| 2014-2015 | 749 | 1,456,119 |
| 2015-2016 | 749 | 1,525,942 |
| 2016-2017 | 740 | 1,543,518 |

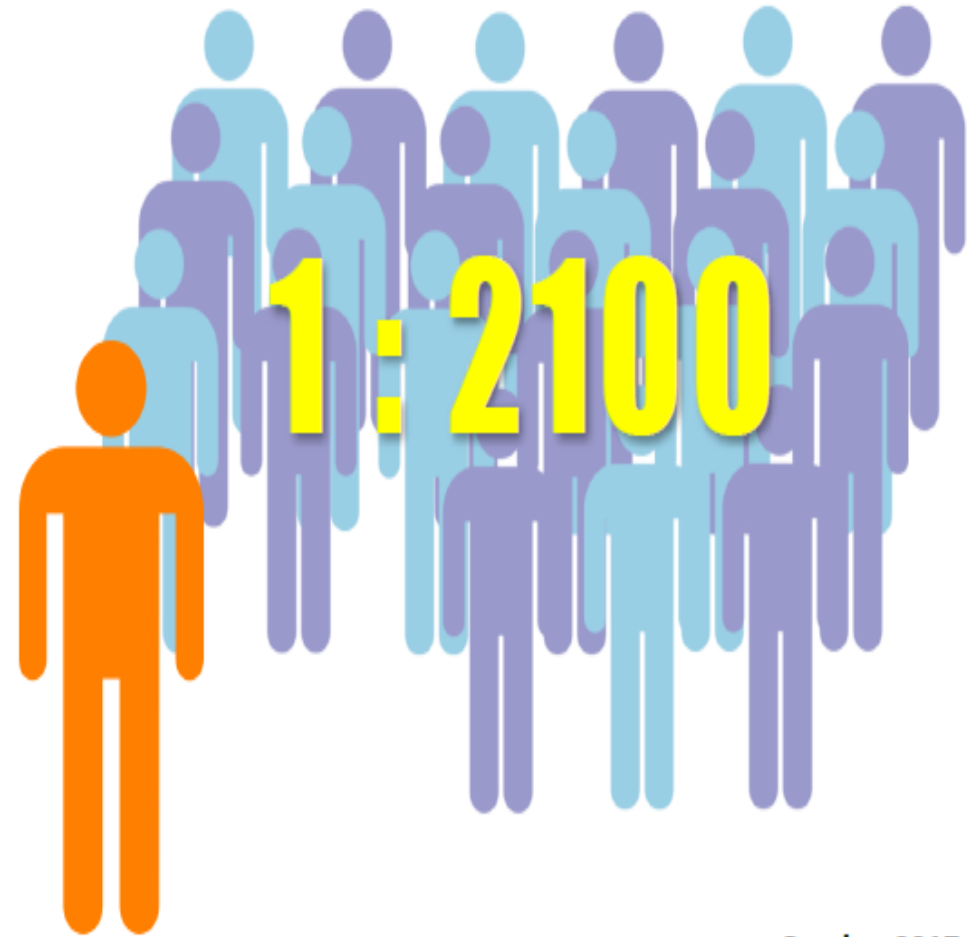


*NASP Recommended Staffing Ratio



*National Association of School Psychologists' recommended staffing ratio for comprehensive service delivery is 1 school psychologist to every 500-700 students. In 2016-2017, North Carolina Public Schools employed 1 school psychologist for every 2100 students.

North Carolina Staffing Ratio



October 2017





2017-2018 Ratio Data

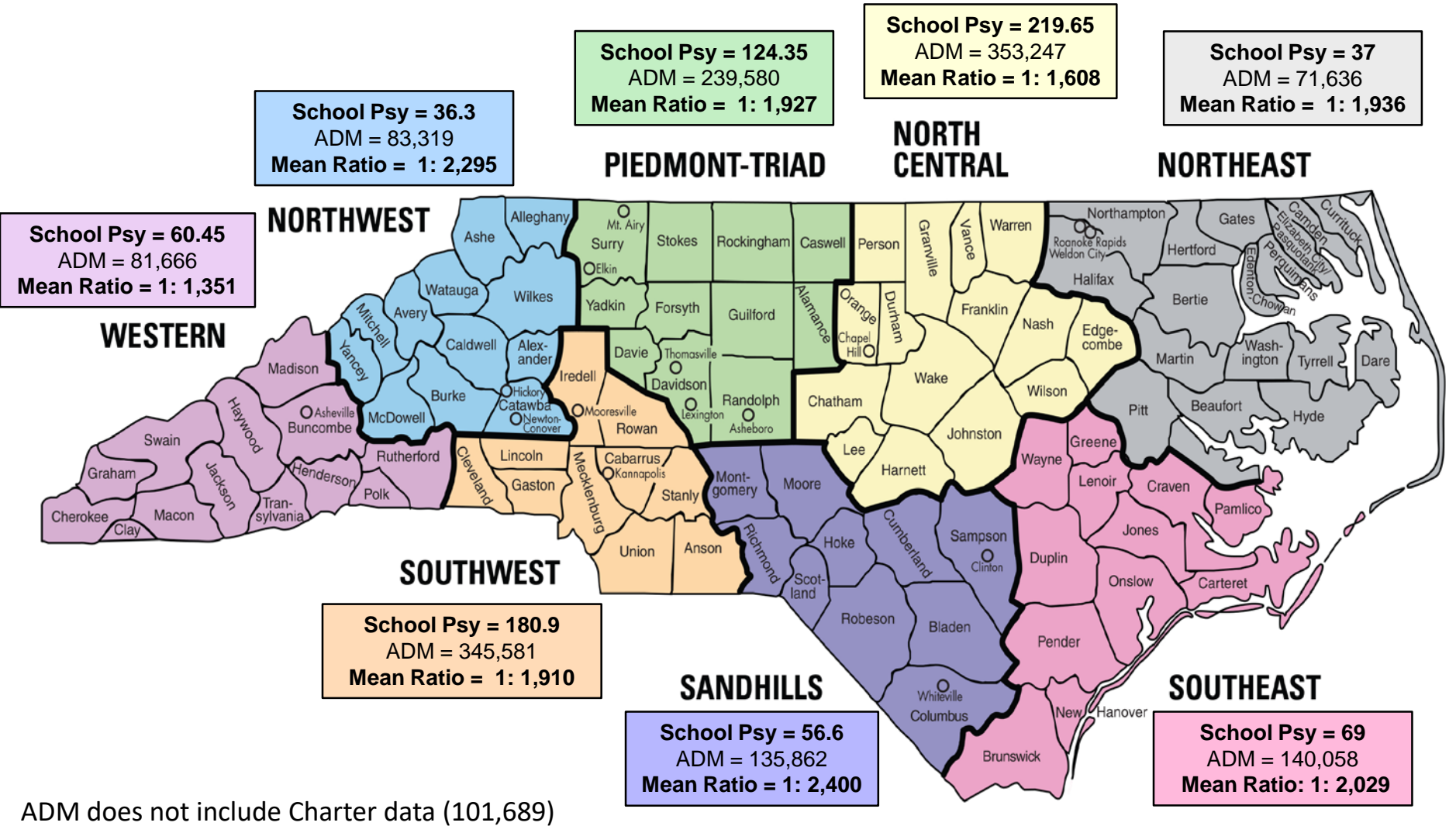
| Total Employed | Total Serving in Non-Traditional Role (i.e., no school assignment) | Adjusted Total (staff: student) | Total Student ADM | 2017-2018 Ratio |
|----------------|---|------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 784.25 | 38.5 | 745.4 | 1,552,638 | 1:2083 |

Sources:

NC DPI Financial & Business Division [Highlights of the NC Public School Budget](#)
NC DPI Consultant for School Psychology 2017-2018 Workforce Survey (in press)



Regional Distribution of School Psychologists



Sources:

Districts with <1 FTE School Psychologist

| LEA | % Employed | Reason C = Contract only (per case) D = Decrease in position T = Total % Funded V = Vacant position |
|-------------------------|------------|---|
| Northeast | | |
| Gates County | 0 | V |
| Halifax County | 0 | C |
| Perquimans County | 0 | V |
| Washington County | 0 | C |
| Weldon City Schools | 0 | C |
| Southeast | | |
| Duplin County | .80 | D |
| Greene County | 0 | V |
| North Central | | |
| Granville County | 0 | C |
| Warren County | .25 | T |
| Sandhills | | |
| Clinton City Schools | 0 | C |
| Whiteville City Schools | .20 | T |
| Piedmont-Triad | | |
| Caswell County | .40 | V |
| Elkin City Schools | .50 | T |
| Southwest | | |
| Anson County | .75 | T |
| Northwest | | |
| Hickory City Schools | 0 | C |
| Mitchell County | 0 | D |
| Western | | |
| Cherokee County | .25 | D |

At the time of this report, workforce data was not available from the following LEAs:

- Hyde County (Northeast)
- Jones County (Southeast)



Ratios in Low Performing Districts

| LEA: | School Psychologists: | Student ADM: | Ratio: |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|------------|
| Thomasville City Schools | 1 | 2,329 | 1 : 2329 |
| Washington County Schools | 0 | 1,555 | --- |
| Edgecombe County | 3 (2 vacancies) | 5,994 | 1 : 1998 |
| Robeson County Schools | 3 (2 vacancies) | 23,185 | 1 : 7728 |
| Kannapolis City Schools | 5 | 5,306 | 1 : 1061 |
| Anson County Schools | .75 | 3,339 | .75 : 3339 |
| Halifax County Schools | 0 | 2,593 | --- |
| Nash-Rocky Mount Schools | 14 | 15,253 | 1 : 1089 |
| Hertford County Schools | 1 | 2,885 | 1 : 2885 |
| Northampton County Schools | 1 | 1,783 | 1 : 1783 |
| Pasquotank County Schools | 2 | 5,714 | 1 : 2857 |



School Psychologist Vacancies by Region



Total reported vacancies: **74.9**



Source:

NC DPI Consultant for School Psychology 2017-2018 Workforce Survey (in press)



License and Salary Data

Licensure Information:

| | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| NC Active Licenses | 1274 |
| LEA Employed | 781.35 (61%) |

Sources:

NC DPI Licensure Division

NC DPI Financial & Business Division

[Highlights of the NC Public School Budget](#)

Sources:

NC DPI Financial & Business Division

[2017-2018 Salary Schedules](#)

National Association of School Psychologists

[Workforce & Salary Information](#)

Walcott & Hyson (in press)

Salary Information:

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| NC Salary Range | \$43,390 – \$61,920 (0-1yr) (25+yrs) |
| National <u>Median</u> Salary | \$63,000 (2015) |



Required Actions:



Improve NC Staffing Ratio

- Identify steps for aggregate funding
- Consider additional funding sources
- Determine replicable practices

INCREASE:

- Student enrollment in NC training programs
- Intern placement in LEAs
- Recruitment efforts in other states



Needs: Targeted Recruitment Efforts

- NC training programs are necessary, but not sufficient, to close current employment gaps
- States where training surplus appears to exist:
 - California (33 programs)
 - New York (26 programs)
 - Pennsylvania (14 programs)
 - Texas (20 programs)



Needs: Targeted Recruitment

Licensure Reciprocity:

- Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) credential
- Explore other streamline processes to license qualified out-of-state candidates

Competitive Salaries:

- Point of entry for School Psychology licensure is advanced specialist degree (60+graduate credits, including 1200 hour internship)
 - Highest entry level degree requirement for SBE licensure





Needs: Funding of Positions

- Existing positions appear to be mainly funded through special education sources
- Balanced approach to funding (Instructional Support funds and Special Education funds)
 - NC Professional School Psychology Standards are based on comprehensive program of school psychological services (all students)
 - Staffing ratio is calculated by total ADM, not special education child count



School Psychologists – Qualified Mental Health Professionals

School psychologists are uniquely positioned to provide mental and behavioral health services in schools.

School psychologists are trained in:

Data-Based
Decision-
Making


Fostering
Positive School
Climates

Social-
Emotional
Screening

Prevention and
Intervention

Consultation
and
Collaboration

Crisis
Preparedness
and Response

NASP 
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
School Psychologists

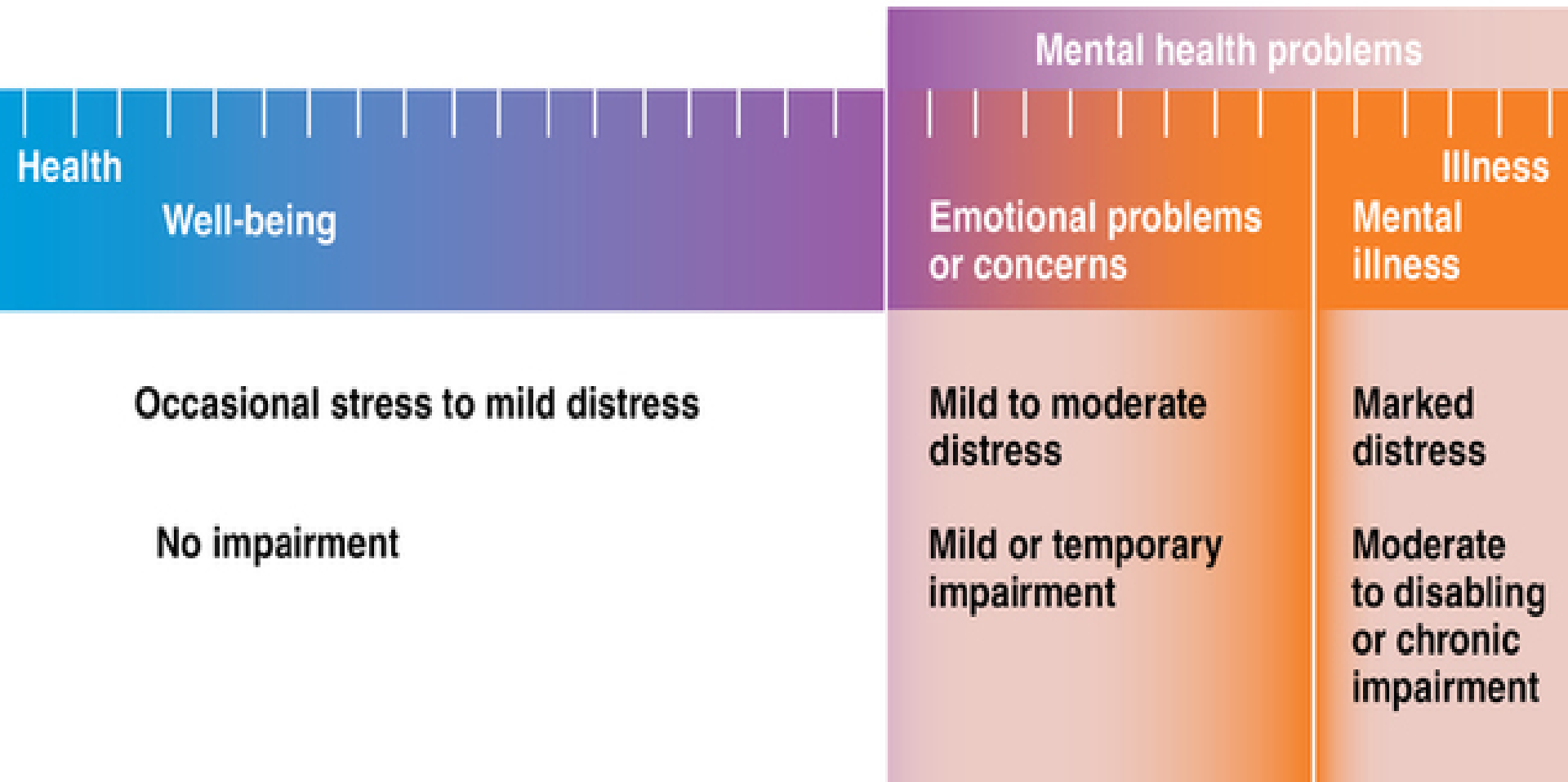
NASP advocates for comprehensive school mental and behavioral health services to ensure that all children and youth thrive in school, at home, and in life.

www.nasponline.org





Mental Health - Mental Illness Continuum



Source: Mental Health America



Comprehensive School Safety Planning

***Continuum* of mental health supports addresses the needs of ALL students:**

Benefits:

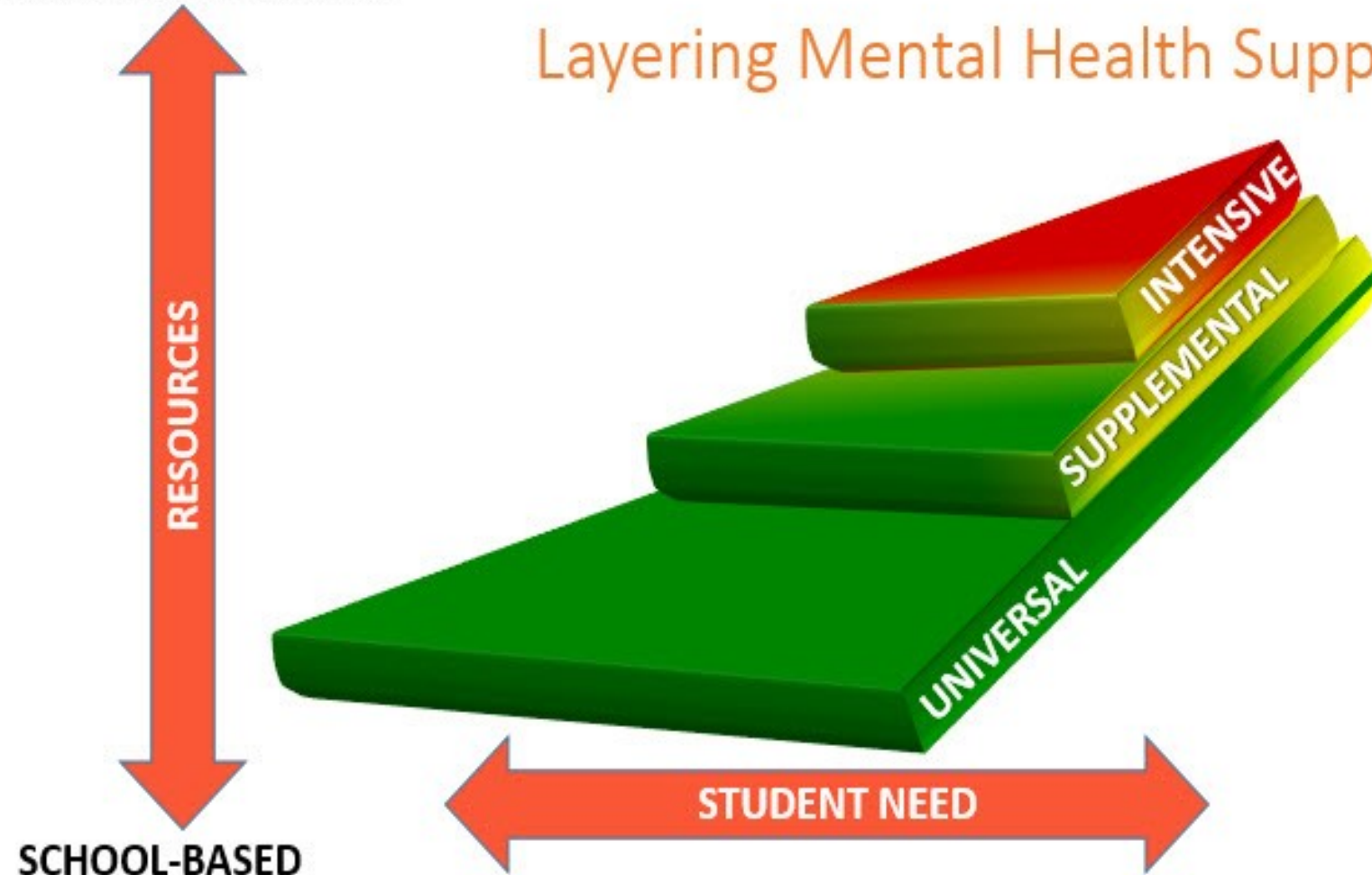
- Healthy students stay healthy
- Positive school climate and positive behavior supports improve students' overall trust in the system and feelings of safety
- Students at-risk are identified early; efficient response to needs reduces risk factors
- Students with intensive needs receive intervention matched to need through effective school-community partnerships, including family engagement



Matching Student Need to Intervention through a Multi-Tiered System of Supports

COMMUNITY-BASED

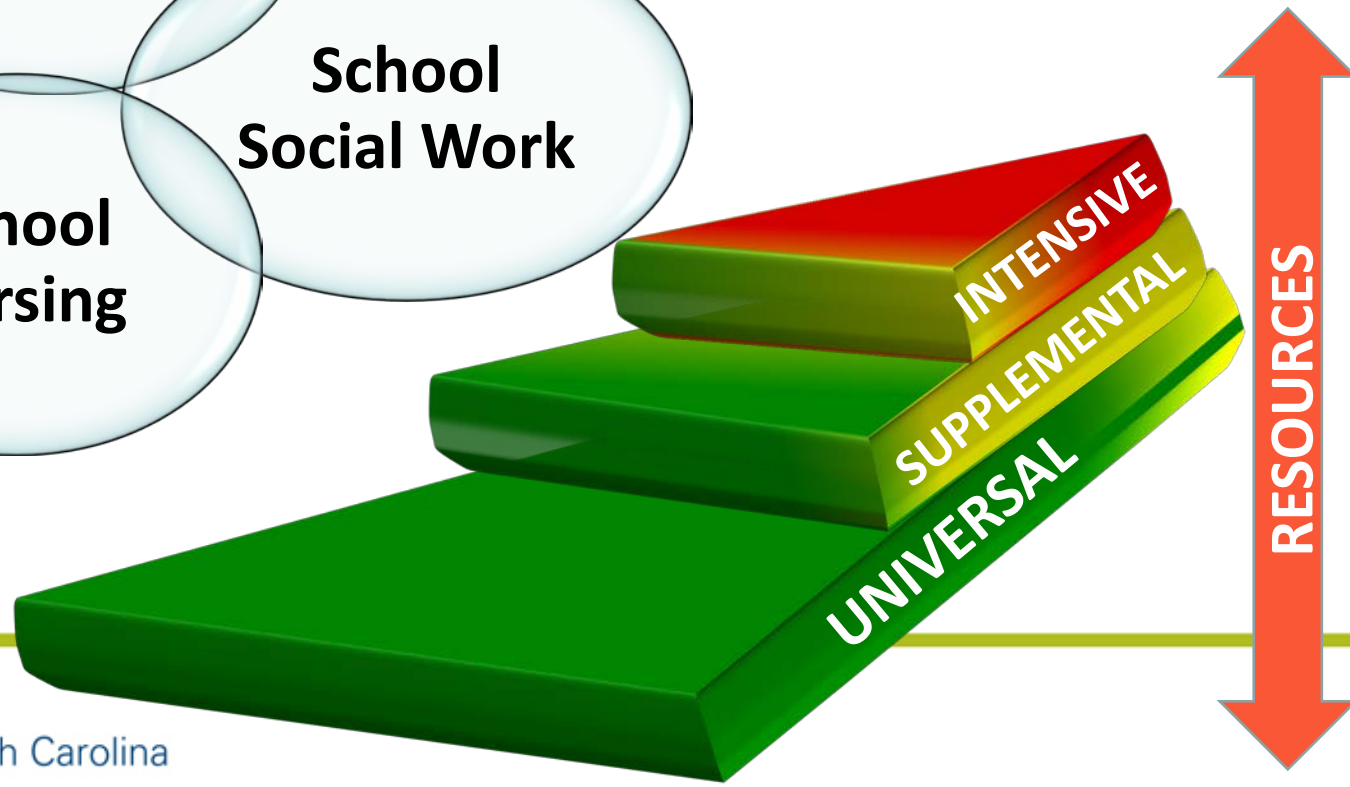
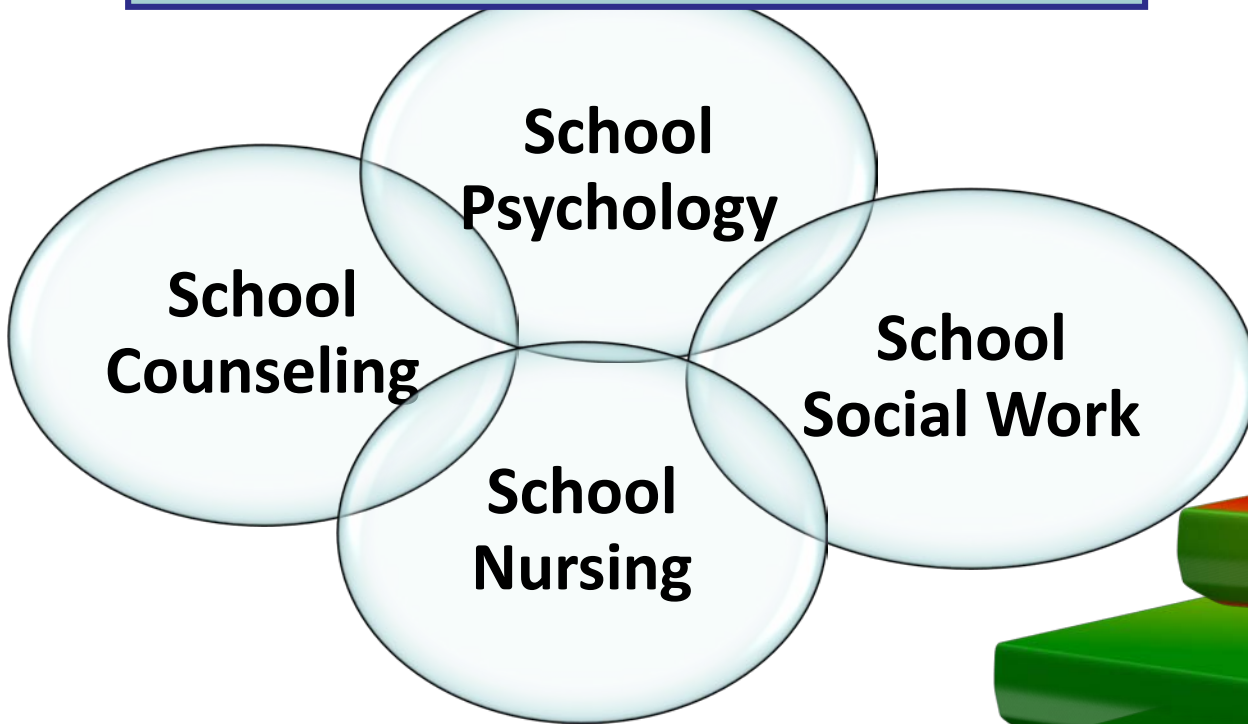
Layering Mental Health Supports



SCHOOL-BASED

Integrated System of Social-Emotional/ Behavioral Supports

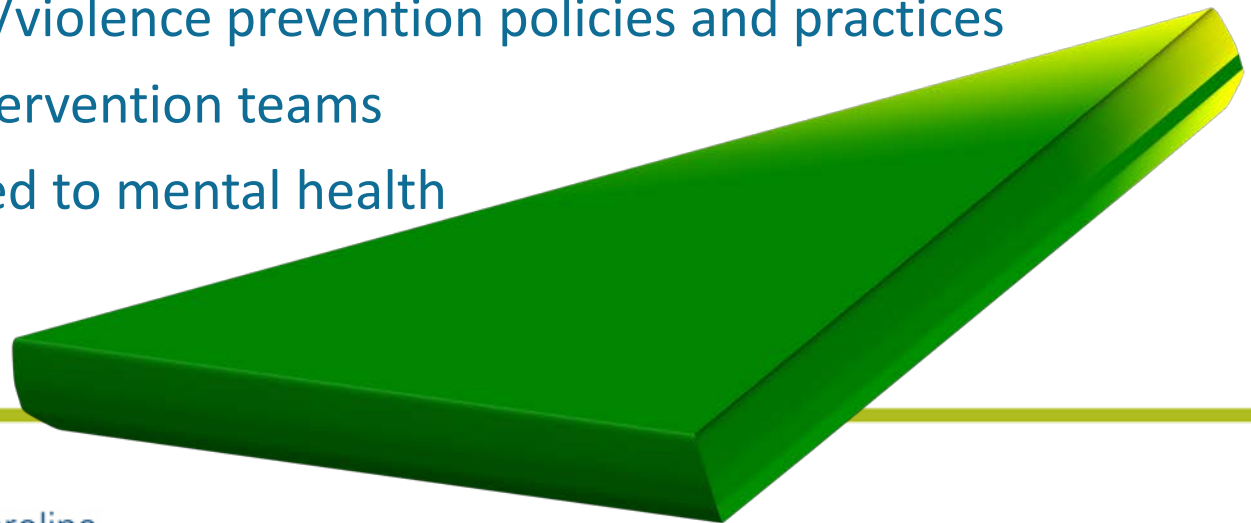
School Mental Health Team of Professionals





Universal Supports Available to All Students

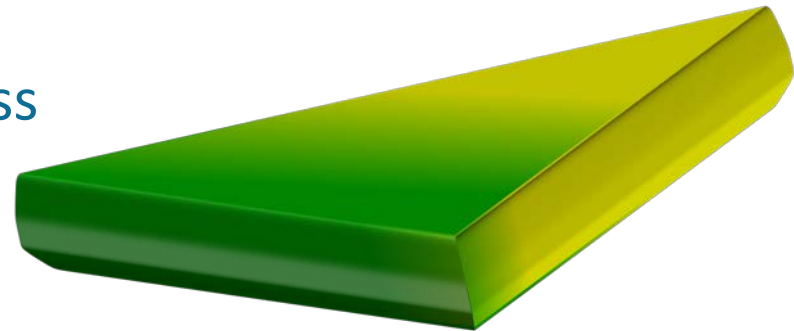
- Universal screening for academic, behavioral, and emotional barriers to learning
- Infusion of social–emotional learning into classroom/curriculum
- School-wide positive behavior interventions and supports; focus on **positive school climate**
- Effective discipline policies and practices, including culturally responsive practices
- Evidence-based bullying/violence prevention policies and practices
- Crisis prevention and intervention teams
- Staff development related to mental health





Supplemental Resources Required for Some Students

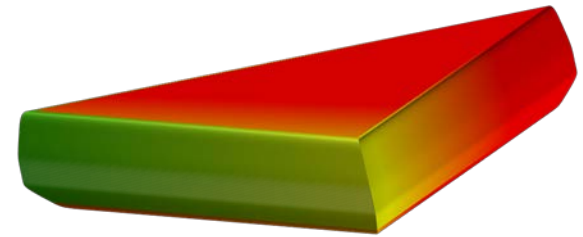
- Suicide risk/threat assessment
- Protocols for responding to bullying
- Evidence-based mental & behavioral health programs
- Skills group counseling (e.g., social skills training, anger management, stress reduction)
- Development and monitoring of individual student behavior intervention plans
- Educator–family collaboration to address mental and behavioral health problems
- Collaboration among family, school, and community to address mental and behavioral health





Intensive Supports Required for Few Students

- Direct therapeutic services, including individual and group counseling
- Cognitive–behavioral therapy, behavior therapy, and dialectical behavior therapy
- Psychological assessment of social, emotional, and behavioral problems
- Suicide intervention and postvention
- Crisis intervention/crisis response
- Collaboration among school providers with community agencies and other outside mental and behavioral health providers





Recommended Readings/Resources:

- [Addressing Shortages in School Psychology-Resource Guide \(NASP\)](#)
- [NC School Psychology Infographic](#)
- [NC School Psychology Infographic – Supporting Details](#)
- [NC School Psychology Workforce Report \(2016-2017\)](#)
- [NC School Mental Health Initiative](#)
 - [Full Report](#)
 - [Executive Summary](#)
 - [Final Recommendations](#)
- [NC State Board of Education School-Based Mental Health Policy \(SHLT-003\)](#)
- [Pay Scale Determination for School Psychologists \(NASP\)](#)
- [Research Studies: Shortages in School Psychology \(NASP\)](#)



School Counseling



- Specialized Master's Degree required
- Current School Counseling graduate master's programs are 48 to 60 semester hours
- School counselor training and position make them uniquely qualified to provide education, prevention, intervention and referral services to students and families
- Appropriate roles of school counselors are supported by NC Professional School Counselor Standards and by NC G.S. 115C-316.1 Duties of School Counselors
- Paid on the Teacher salary scale at the Master's level



School Counseling

School
Counseling

- Comprehensive school counseling programs serve all students and include three domains
 - Academic
 - Career
 - Social/emotional
- The social/emotional domain is most directly connected to mental health services
 - unmet mental health needs can be significant obstacles to student academic, career and social/ emotional development and compromise school climate and safety
- School counselors are often the first, sometimes the only, mental health professional with whom a student interacts



School Social Work

- Specialized area of professional practice in the broad field of social work with specific training to address barriers to student learning
- Minimally required to have a Bachelors' degree in social work with additional course work specific to education for School Social Work licensure by NCDPI
- Serve as a vital link between the home, school, and community, working with families and community agencies
- Paid on the Teacher salary scale at the Bachelor's degree level



School Social Work

School
Social Work

School Social Workers often work to address children's unmet physical and emotional needs that interfere with their school attendance and ability to learn by

- engaging families with the school and student learning
- connecting families to needed physical and mental health community resources
- educating and assisting families with school policies and student needs
- Serving as a liaison team member with other specialized instructional support personnel and school staff



School Nursing

School
Nursing

- School nursing is a specialty nursing practice of a Registered Nurse (RN) with Baccalaureate Degree and School Nurse Certification
- 20% of Baccalaureate RN preparation includes training on mental health
- Students with mental health issues often present to the school nurse with physical complaints, so there is no concern that others may know the reason for a visit



School Nursing

School
Nursing

- School nurses often refer emotional or mental health concerns to other specialized instructional support personnel, such as school counselors, while they continue to work with the student on the physical manifestations
- School nurses provide care management services to students in need of long term support
- Students with known mental health issues, who are under the care of a mental health professional, often receive related support services from a school nurse





G.S. 115C-316.1 Duties of School Counselors

- G.S. 115C-316.1 Duties of School Counselors law originated in Part II of 2013 House Bill 452 which lead to the School Safety Act
- Prohibits school counselors from serving as school testing coordinators, but allows them to assist other staff with the coordination of standardized testing.
- Directs that school counselors shall implement comprehensive developmental school counseling programs in which they spend at least 80% of their work time providing direct services to students as defined in this statute.





G.S. 115C-316.1 Duties of School Counselors

Defines direct services as

(1) Delivering the school guidance curriculum through large group guidance, interdisciplinary curriculum development, group activities, and parent workshops.

(2) Guiding individual student planning through individual or small group assistance and individual or small group advisement.

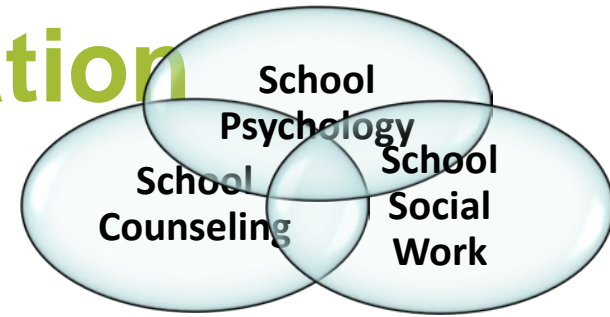
(3) Providing responsive services through consultation with students, families, and staff; individual and small group counseling; crisis counseling; referrals; and peer facilitation.

(4) Performing other student services listed in the DPI school counselor job description that has been approved by the State Board of Education.





Related Proposed Legislation



- 2013 House Bill 452 where the G.S. 115C-316.1 Duties of School Counselors statute originated also included grant funding for additional School Psychologists, School Counselors and Social Workers in Part II of Editions 1 and 2
- Edition III kept focus on physical safety and security and emergency planning and response which was included in the School Safety Act, but did not include the original content related to specialized instructional support personnel





Public Schools of North Carolina



NC Center for Safer Schools

NC DPI
School Operations

Executive Director, Kym Martin

04/09/2018

Roles of N.C. Center for Safer Schools

- ❖ Mission- Develop and Implement Strategies to ensure that students are safer in school.
- ❖ Vision- All schools in the state are safer, secure and offer an environment conducive to learning.

- ❖ Strategies:
 - Collaborative Partnerships with State Agencies
 - Convening and supporting the Advisory Board: Task Force for Safer Schools
 - Filling gaps in research, training, and information sharing
 - Seeking grant and legislative backing to increase support personnel at schools, and enhance school safety planning
 - Serve as a repository for best practices and model programs



Comprehensive School Based Mental Health Model

- Schools/Mental Health Provider Partnerships
- School mental health programs supported by university training programs
- School based health clinics with behavioral health component
- School employees provide counseling services and increasing Student Assistant Programs.
- Memorandum of agreements with community mental health providers for mobile crisis services within schools
- Trauma Sensitive and Resiliency Schools
- Continuum Social Emotional Support



School/Mental Health Provider Partnerships

- Founded in 2004 to address the multiple unmet mental health needs of the student population of Jackson County Public Schools
- Schools were staffed with social workers and guidance counselors dealing with increasingly large numbers of students and family needs; and the local area mental health program had divested of direct child services (NC Mental Health Reform)
- JCPS is a group of professional mental health clinicians based in a Jackson County school to serve the mental health needs of that school
- Goal of the school-based model was to establish a symbiotic relationship between the school community and agency personnel
- Currently in their 11th year, Haywood, Macon and Swain counties have been added



CONTACT PERSON: Greta Metcalf 828-399-1399

greta.Metcalf@meridianbhs.org



School Mental Health Programs Supported by University Training Programs

Definition: university partners with local school systems to provide school mental health services using graduate students across disciplines (Psychology, Social Work, etc.) supervised by licensed faculty and staff at the University.

Example: ASC Center at ASU (Assessment, Support and Counseling)

- Established in 2006 at Watauga High School, now has been implemented in 3 school districts- Watauga, Ashe, and Alleghany
- Goal is to collaborate with the professionals already in the building (support staff) and provide evidence-based services at school which removes barriers
- Involves MoA from both agencies, hiring a fulltime master's level social worker by WHS to coordinate the project

CONTACT PERSON: Kurt Michael (828-262-2272)

MICHAELKD@APPSTATE.EDU



School Based Health Clinics with Behavioral Health Components

Definition: Partnerships between schools and community health organizations to provide physical and mental health services at or near schools. Currently over 90 sites in NC, 26 counties.

Example: New Hanover High School Wellness Centers, WHAT- Wilmington Health Access for Teens

- Committee began meeting in 1994 to address unserved and underserved adolescents; and, increasing risks of poor health outcomes and avoidable deaths among adolescents
- Today has merged with Coastal Horizons Center and has SBHC at all NHHS
- **Provides:** Wellness Physicals, Mental Health Counseling, Vaccinations and
- Immunizations, Alcohol and Substance Use Screening and Counseling, Risk
- Reduction Health Education, Insurance eligibility and enrollment for Medicaid



School Employees Provide Counseling Services and Students Support Peers

Definition: teachers or other school staff work with students to assist them in peer tutoring and mentoring. A counselor can assist teachers, and older students are assigned to younger students.

Example: STAMP, Student Tutoring and Mentoring Program, designed to meet the needs of the whole child, and meet the emotional needs of students who are struggling. Each student who participates has one close peer mentor, and a teacher who watches out for them.



S.T.A.M.P. Focus Areas

Topics taught include

- Responsibility
- Integrity
- Cyber Safety
- Being a Good Citizen
- Trustworthiness
- Perseverance
- Positive Attitude
- Kindness and Being a Good Friend



S.T.A.M.P Celebrations

The first year of S.T.A.M.P. (2016-2017) proved very successful.

- Discipline referrals were down 69%.
- Absences were down 11%.



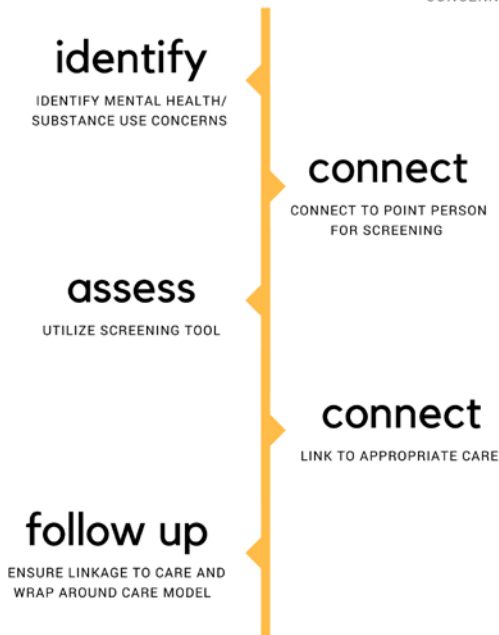
Threat Assessment Teams and Oversight Committees

- The Center has been contacted by school and law enforcement personnel, asking for ways to handle the uptick in threats against schools by students, and bomb threats. The Task Force on Safer Schools is looking at a threat assessment instrument and process.
- Student Walk-outs and Walk-ins have been planned for April 20th (the 19th Anniversary of Columbine High School) “National School Walkout”
 - Organized by SchoolWalkoutsUS (Twitter Handle)
 - Begins at 10:00 am
 - Urges students to walk out of schools, sit outside of their schools and peacefully protest
- VA Legislation: Each local school board shall adopt policies for the establishment of threat assessment teams, including the assessment of and intervention with individuals whose behavior may pose a threat to the safety of school staff or students consistent with the model policies developed by the Task Force for Safer Schools and the N.C. center for Safer Schools.



Access to Care Protocol

TO MANAGE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND SUICIDAL/HOMICIDAL CONCERNS IN SCHOOLS



1. **Identify:** All school Faculty and staff need to be equipped to identify warning signs of at-risk behaviors
2. **Connect:** Schools should have one or two point persons at each school to receive referrals of identified students presenting warnings signs
3. **Assess:** An evidence based, cost effective, user friendly screener is essential
4. **Connect:** Linkage to care is essential when students present urgent/emergent, while preventative/routine care is equally important for those who do not present as urgent/emergent
5. **Follow up:** Ensuring linkage to care occurs and there is wrap around care model is in place

