SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY:

A Blueprint for Training and Practice III

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PROLOGUE

Nine years ago, *Blueprint II* was published to provide a guide to practice and training in school psychology, as well as to serve as a point of discussion regarding future directions for the profession. The *Blueprint* task force identified 10 Domains of Training and Practice, key issues facing the field, and school psychology's accomplishments from the 1960s through the middle 1990s. *Blueprint II* served its purpose well; it generated open discussion and was adopted as an official policy of NASP in July 1997. In addition, the NASP Training Standards used the *Blueprint II* as its template, adding Technology as a separate domain.

Much has transpired in the past nine years both in the United States and internationally. New federal laws—No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004)—were enacted and have increased the emphasis on accountability, high stakes testing, evidence-based practice, and integration and consistency between general and special education. School violence reached the front pages of the news, drawing attention to the relationship between school climate, mental health, safety and learning, and the imperative for schools to support student needs along these lines. A significant focus on prevention and delivering services within the regular educational setting has required a reconsideration of training and practice.
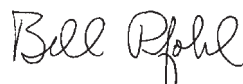
In 2002, the *Conference on the Future of School Psychology* was held in Indianapolis, bringing together trainers, practitioners, and consumers to propose new directions for the field within the context of increased demand and a shortage of both trainers and practitioners. There are an estimated 38,000 school psychologists in the U.S.; however, there continues to be a need for school psychologists to expand our roles and the scope of our practices. As noted in the principles derived from the Futures Conference, "changes in school psychology practices and service delivery will be required … to maximize the benefits to the children and schools that we serve" with the resources available. This transformation will surely build on the profession's achievements thus far. As a testament to the success of school psychology, career development specialists currently regard the field as one of the most desirable occupations. Internationally, school psychology continues to grow as well. Training and practice opportunities are expanding globally as school psychology achieves greater visibility. These changes in the context and focus of practice have made necessary the updating of the *Blueprint* to incorporate discussion of new issues, challenges, and successes of school

psychology. Under the leadership of Dr. Jim Ysseldyke and his outstanding task force, this *Blueprint III* reflects the best vision for future discussion of the field based on input from NASP members, trainers, and other leading school psychology organizations. Now, NASP and the other organizations are asked to review and discuss this document as they consider training and practice needs for the coming decade and beyond.

Blueprint III incorporates several important changes and concepts. Four clear components are defined. First, the *foundation of training and practice* is clearly focused on the principles of psychology and education and the scientific method. Next, there are eight integrated *Domains of Competence.* These competencies are not seen as individually independent domains to be taught or practiced, but as an integrated set of competencies that will require life-long learning. Next, *service delivery* is defined as a tiered model of training and practice to meet the specific needs of the students and the systems we serve. Finally, there are two outcomes specified—to build *capacities of systems* and to increase the *competencies of all students.* These outcomes are new and help focus this document on the overarching goal of student success, which includes the critical academic and mental health aspects of schooling. The two are intertwined and not seen as easily separated. Overall, this model is dynamic with continuous input and improvement from training, experience, and research.

Again, let this *Blueprint III* serve as a springboard to discussion of how practice and training in school psychology should be conducted. School psychology as a field has matured from its roots in educational assessment and psychology to a broad-based model of service delivery and system change, within a prevention-focused context. The challenge will be to incorporate the specific ideas expressed here and to embrace the spirit in which they were developed, namely collaboration, problem solving, and the heart-felt belief that school psychology's evolution is not only in the best interest of those within the profession but also to the meaningful and lasting benefit of the children, families, and school we serve. As school psychologists, we should celebrate our successes and growth, but also plan how to meet our future challenges.

Thank you to the task force for their diligent work and creative thinking, and to the many others whose input helped to make this a better document.

Bill Pfohl

Bill Pfohl, PsyD, NCSP
NASP President 2005–2006

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National Association of School Psychologists

PREFACE

The *Blueprint for Training and Practice* was first published in 1984 and revised in 1997 as a framework to guide the future of training and practice in school psychology. This third edition was produced by a task force of eight school psychologists in response to a request for revision from Bill Pfohl, President of the National Association of School Psychologists (2005–2006).

The series of *Blueprint* documents builds on a solid foundation established by the major professional organizations in our field at the Boulder (1949), Thayer (1954), Vail (1973), Spring Hill (1980), and Olympia (1981) conferences on the future of training and practice in school psychology. Each of the *Blueprint* documents is a statement on the future of training and practice that was prepared by a task force of individuals. *Blueprint I,* developed in 1984 as part of the work of the National School Psychology Inservice Training Network at the University of Minnesota, briefly outlined the functions that could and should be performed by school psychologists. The National School Psychology Inservice Training Network was not, nor was it intended to be, a standing structure in school psychology. Rather, it was a temporary project enabled by federal funding to work with and through the standing organizations in the field: the major professional associations, state and local professional associations, state departments of education, and individual school districts.

In a companion document to *Blueprint I,* entitled *School Psychology: The State of the Art* (Ysseldyke, 1985), 15 authors summarized the knowledge base for each of the expanded functions delineated in the first *Blueprint* and provided an annotated bibliography. *Blueprint I* outlined 16 Domains of Training and Practice, and it was argued that school psychologists should be competent in each domain.

Blueprint II was developed by a task force of six school psychologists who restructured, sometimes combined, and updated the Domains of Training and Practice specified in *Blueprint I.* That task force also was commissioned by Bill Pfohl, then President of NASP (1996-97). The task force delineated 10 domains for training and practice: (1) Data-Driven Decision Making and Accountability; (2) Interpersonal Communication, Collaboration, and Consultation; (3) Effective Instruction and Development of Cognitive/Academic Skills; (4) Socialization and Development of Life Competencies; (5) Student Diversity in Development and Learning; (6) School Structure, Organization, and Climate; (7) Prevention, Wellness Promotion, and Crisis Intervention; (8) Home/School/Community Collaboration; (9) Research and Program Evaluation; and (10) Legal, Ethical Practice and Professional Development.

Blueprints I and *II* have had significant impact on training and practice in school psychology. In the Prologue to *Blueprint II,* Bill Pfohl described the impact of *Blueprint I,* stating:

> Since its publication in 1984, the original *School Psychology: A Blueprint for Training and Practice* has driven much of the progress in training and practice of school psychology. The creation of the National School Psychology Certification System (1988), with its continuing professional development requirements, is further evidence of the impact the first *Blueprint* had upon the profession of school psychology.
>
> Many states used the document to better standardize state licensing and certification for school psychology; today's certification standards typically require competence in the original sixteen domains described in the 1984 blueprint … (p. i)

Blueprint III is written to be a stimulus for discussion and change by school psychologists and those who educate them. It can be used by trainers to develop coursework and practical experience at both pre-service and continuing education levels, and it can be used by practicing school psychologists to help them shape their continuing professional development. Finally, it can be used by professional associations to facilitate strategic planning and inform the revision of standards for practice, training, and credentialing.

Our task force had three key commitments in developing *Blueprint III.* First, to the extent possible we were committed to maintaining the domains contained in *Blueprint II.* Second, we wanted to take into account changes in the field (e.g., scarce resources, the push for evidence-based instruction), as well as major achievements since the publication of *Blueprint II.* Third, we worked to acknowledge and incorporate the results of the *2002 Conference on the Future of School Psychology.* As with the development of previous *Blueprints,* we sought and incorporated input from a broad range of practitioners, trainers, and leading school psychology organizations.

One major change in *Blueprint III* is the recognition that competence in school psychology emerges over time. In past *Blueprint* documents, it was assumed that graduate students would complete training demonstrating competence in all domains. The revised expectation is that those who graduate will demonstrate a *novice* level of competence, will exhibit *competence* in one area following internship, and will demonstrate *expertise* in one or two areas after 5–10 years in practice.

Blueprint III includes a clear statement that school psychologists operate in two overlapping arenas: instructional psychologists as occurring at three levels: universal, targeted, and intensive design and mental health. It also describes the work of school. A prevention focus exists throughout the document, emphasizing the outcome of the Futures Conference.

The Domains of Training and Practice in school psychology are essentially the same as for *Blueprint II.* We added one domain: technology. Other domains were combined. For example, we combined two domains from *Blueprint II* (Socialization and Development of Life Competencies; and Prevention, Wellness Promotion, and Crisis Intervention) into one domain labeled Enhancing the Development of Wellness, Social Skills, Mental Health, and Life Competencies. The Domains of Competence also were categorized into "foundational" and "functional" competencies to distinguish among their foci.

We have included in *Blueprint III* two examples of a "slice" of the practice of school psychology and two examples of how training programs prepare students in selected practices described in the document. Additional examples of training and practice will appear on the NASP website.

We *do not urge* blind acceptance of this document. It should be debated at state, regional, and national meetings of school psychologists, and it should be scrutinized by major groups representing trainers of school psychologists. We encourage state and national associations to further the discussion of this document through panel presentations at conferences and through reaction papers in journals and newsletters.

School psychology as a field has matured from its roots in educational assessment and psychology to a broad-based model of service delivery and system change, within a prevention-focused context.

This third edition of *School Psychology: A Blueprint on the Future of Training and Practice* is the product of a joint effort of all members of the task force, and it speaks for all of us.

Matthew Burns	Sam Ortiz
Peg Dawson	Sylvia Rosenfield
Brenna Kelley	Cathy Telzrow
Diane Morrison	Jim Ysseldyke, Chair

SETTING THE STAGE FOR BLUEPRINT III: THE CURRENT CONTEXT

The model for the future of training and practice in school psychology reflected in this document was developed following careful consideration of changes that have occurred since the publication of *Blueprint II,* as well as several contextual variables of relevance. We begin by describing examples of successes and promising trends in today's schools and the school psychology specialty. We then examine factors within society and education that have been influential in shaping our field and the schooling of children.

SUCCESSES & PROMISING TRENDS

Successes & Promising Trends in Today's Schools

- More students go to school and remain in school until graduation today than at any other time in our history.
- Classroom instruction in all states is now directed by challenging content standards in the core academic subjects of reading/language arts, mathematics, and science. Furthermore, comprehensive assessments aligned with these standards are allowing school districts to monitor student progress for the purpose of raising achievement levels for all students.
- Increasingly, schools are using objective data, including those derived from technology-enhanced monitoring systems, to identify students who are not achieving critical academic benchmarks, and are putting in place systematic interventions to assist at-risk learners.
- Over the past several decades, schools have become an access point for mental health services, and child mental health services are more frequently provided in schools.
- Schools increasingly are employing preventive methods and programs to address risk factors before problems escalate. This shift to a "population" perspective allows schools to implement widespread preventive programs for academic and social-behavioral concerns.
- Research-based practices are better described and more widely accessible than ever before. A number of large-scale initiatives are dedicated to the identification of research-based interventions in such diverse areas as reading and children's mental health, and research now informs instruction to a greater degree than was the case a decade earlier.
- Recent data suggest that efforts to improve the achievement levels of minority students and those with disabilities are paying off. These gains have closed the gap in achievement between minority groups and white students to its lowest levels in history, and similarly promising trends are evident for students with disabilities.

Increasingly, there is consensus that schools must find solutions to address the relatively poor outcomes for students of color, those from backgrounds of poverty, children and youth with mental health concerns, and non-native speakers of English.

- More students with disabilities are being provided instruction in the general education curriculum with students without disabilities than at any other time. Furthermore, the proportion of high school students with disabilities in the correct grade for age increased substantially in the past 25 years, and students with disabilities were more likely to take rigorous coursework in math, science, social studies, and foreign language designed to prepare them for post-secondary education. Evidence also indicates that more students with disabilities are staying in school and graduating each year.
- Recent changes in federal legislation have facilitated increased coordination and flexibility in using resources to address student needs.
- Schools are asking the right, albeit tough, questions and focusing on the most challenging issues. Increasingly, there is consensus that schools must find solutions to address the relatively poor outcomes for students of color, those from backgrounds of poverty, children and youth with

mental health concerns, and non-native speakers of English in such areas as school completion, least restrictive environment, and suspension and expulsion. Identifying where these inequities persist and analyzing the factors that contribute to them allow educators to determine where and how to direct resources to obtain the desired results.

Successes & Promising Trends in the Training and Practice of School Psychologists

- Consistent with its heritage of connecting science to practice, the field of school psychology has been a leader in the "evidence-based intervention" movement. An example is the work of the Task Force on Evidence-Based Interventions in School Psychology, sponsored by the APA Division of School Psychology, NASP, and the Society for the Study of School Psychology. The goal of the task force is the development of a manual for the review and eventual dissemination of information about effective prevention and intervention programs for children, youth, and families.

School psychologists are shifting their focus toward improving academic competence, social and emotional functioning, family-school partnerships, classroom instruction, and school-based child and family health and mental health services for all learners.

- More school psychology graduate programs are constructed around a conceptual framework and conform to high professional training standards than at any time in the history of the field. Almost two-thirds of graduate training programs are approved by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE/NASP), and it is anticipated that contemporary training paradigms will increasingly impact school psychology practice over time.
- More than 10,000 individual school psychologists are recognized as Nationally Certified School Psychologists (NCSP). This credential signals to the public that the school psychologist meets NASP's rigorous standards for training and field placement, and engages in continuing professional development. As of 2006, 26 states include recognition of the NCSP in their certification/licensure processes, reflecting the

"highly qualified" requirement in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).
- Although data on how school psychologists spend their time have remained constant nationally over the past several decades, data also indicate some regional variability, and in some states and school districts, an increasing number of school psychologists are engaged in comprehensive services that allow them to affect more students in more meaningful ways. Increasingly, school psychologists work in districts that employ a problem-solving model, and as schools become more systemic and preventive in their orientation, school psychologists are hired to fill more diverse roles.
- In spite of the shortage of school psychologists, the ratio of school psychologists to students is lower in many districts than at any time in the history of school psychology. Furthermore, lower service ratios are associated with practices focusing on prevention and intervention rather than special education eligibility.
- School psychological practice has increasingly incorporated the goals and principles reflected in the *2002 Conference on the Future of School Psychology*. School psychologists are shifting their focus toward improving academic competence, social and emotional functioning, family-school partnerships, classroom instruction, and school-based child and family health and mental health services for all learners.
- As a discipline, school psychology has been an influential advocate for legislation, public policy initiatives, and practice innovations designed to improve educational and mental health services for children and families. The leadership of our major professional organizations routinely provides testimony to inform public policy and shape regulatory language. In addition, these organizations frequently join with other professional associations to establish coalitions to maximize their influence on public policy.

SOCIETAL FACTORS

Diverse Society and Systems

The United States is a country defined and enriched by the diversity of its population. Over 10% of our population is foreign-born, and Hispanics, who now make up 14.1% of the population, have surpassed African Americans as the largest ethnic minority group. The Caucasian (non-Hispanic) majority is shrinking and

within decades will be a plurality of the population. It is estimated that by 2020 over six million children in this country will be English Language Learners.

After a period of decline, the child poverty rate is rising, and the gap between rich and poor is widening. The United States is characterized by increasing racial and social class segregation, and too many children from minority and economically poor backgrounds are receiving inadequate instruction. The range and diversity of educational options is also expanding, as evidenced by dramatic increases in charter and home schooling options for a significant number of children. Diversity and inequities exist among public schools and school districts as well. Insufficient funding, inadequate salaries, poor opportunities for advancement, and unsafe environments have been associated with high teacher turnover and low student achievement in urban schools relative to their suburban counterparts. Additionally, although minorities are increasingly represented among students, the proportion of minority educators is shrinking.

Technology Use and Impact

On average, young people in this country spend just under 1 hour each day doing homework, but approximately $6^{1/2}$ hours using media (television, computer, radio, CDs, MP3 players, and video games). This fact, together with the prevalence of home computers, Internet access, and satellite or cable television, underscores the pervasive use and influence of technology in our culture.

The challenges facing schools today not only include finding ways to make technology accessible to all students but also to ensure that educators have the skills to use technology to enhance student learning.

Technology offers both challenges and opportunities. Research indicates that there is a disparity between those who have access to technology and those who do not, based largely on socioeconomic status and race. While virtually all schools have computers and the vast majority are connected to the Internet, children attending schools in affluent school districts have much greater access to abundant and state-of-the-art technology than do students in poor school districts. In a world where being technologically

literate is a prerequisite for high-paying employment, access to technology can enhance outcomes for students once they graduate.

The challenges facing schools today not only include finding ways to make technology accessible to all students but also to ensure that educators have the skills to use technology to enhance student learning. The use of technology in providing distance learning and online high school instruction affects instructional practices in general.

Learning to use technology and using technology to learn are essential building blocks for life success.

Anxious Times

Although it has become a cliché, the attacks of September 11, 2001, forever changed this country. The nature and intensity of worries expressed by students in schools today, compared to those in earlier times, clearly validate this observation. Furthermore, troubling current events are not limited to terrorist attacks. Since *Blueprint II* was published in 1997, there have been 18 separate high profile incidents of violent student deaths on school campuses, and as this document was being written, relief efforts for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita dominated the national spotlight. Children and youth of previous generations worried about global attacks against humanity (e.g., atomic and nuclear bombs), but recent events legitimize concern about devastating events in their local communities.

There has never been a greater need for school psychologists to take leadership in ensuring quality mental health services for children.

While reading difficulties continue to be the most frequent reason students are referred to school psychologists, children's mental health needs have become a critical public health issue that directly affects teaching and learning. Although there are not discernable differences across majority and minority populations in reported proportions of students considered mentally healthy, access to timely, affordable, and effective care is not equitable across groups. There has never been a greater need for school psychologists to take leadership in ensuring quality mental health services for children.

EDUCATIONAL FACTORS

Accountability in K–12 Schools

The early years of the new millennium were characterized by several public policy initiatives and landmark legislation that dramatically increased accountability in public schools. In 2001, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was signed into law, and school districts became publicly accountable for the achievement of students whose poor performance had previously been explained away as a consequence of race, poverty, language status, or disabilities. A year later, the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education concluded that schools operate within a culture of compliance, and recommended that attention be focused instead on outcomes for students. Also in 2002, the National Academy of Sciences report on *Minority Students in Special and Gifted Education* considered how traditional referral and assessment practices may contribute to disproportionate representation of minority students in special education and delay access to effective, timely interventions. The 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) echoed NCLB's emphasis on accountability and results, and incorporated several major changes to promote preventive practices and the alignment of assessment and intervention.

The Demographics of School Psychology

There are approximately 38,000 school psychologists employed in this country, but the current and future shortage of practitioners is well documented. It is estimated that 15,000 school psychology positions will go unfilled between 2003 and 2020 due to a peak in retirements and concomitant shortage of new professionals. Furthermore, open faculty positions within the school psychology specialty have more than doubled since *Blueprint II* was published, and a significant number of these have remained vacant from year to year.

In addition to documented and predicted shortages, there appears to be considerable mobility within and attrition out of the field, the full extent of which is difficult to estimate. Perhaps this attrition and mobility could be linked to dissonance between training expectations and actual job roles. School psychologists report a high level of job satisfaction, but there continues to be a discrepancy between desired and actual roles with a reported over-emphasis on special education eligibility assessments. Moreover, there are no universally employed mechanisms to assure quality internships at the specialist and doctoral levels, and there is a significant shortage of school-based pre-doctoral internships. The challenge for the profession is to continue to develop the universal skill base among practitioners and the systems capacity necessary to align reality with best practice.

The Disconnect Between Research and Practice

It is intuitively appealing to assume that what happens in schools is informed by decades of research, but there seems to be an especially persistent disconnect between educational research and practice. Whether this is due to lack of relevance, persuasiveness, or access to the research, or because the educational system is resistant to change, it must be recognized that simply putting data in the hands of practitioners will not by itself lead to improved practice. Dissemination and implementation are separate and distinct activities.

Research can be used—or misused—for a number of purposes: to promote a political agenda, to justify current practice, to inform and improve practice, to serve as a report card, or to support biases. The current demand for accountability and evidence-based practice reminds school psychology trainers and practitioners alike to base practice on cutting-edge research, thus using research as a foundation for practice.

BLUEPRINT III: THE MODEL OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY TRAINING AND PRACTICE

INTRODUCTION

Blueprint II has had substantial influence on the training and practice of school psychologists, largely as a result of incorporating its Domains of Competence into the 2000 revisions of NASP's training, practice, and credentialing standards. The group who produced the standards used the 10 domains of *Blueprint II.* They added one domain: technology. So, the NASP standards specify 11 domains of competence. The *Blueprint III* task force sought to maintain those elements of *Blueprint II* that were perceived as most useful and enduring, while attempting to correct some of its shortcomings and take into account the changes and contextual variables just described.

Somewhat paradoxically, the most influential aspect of *Blueprint II*—the Domains of Training and Practice— also represents a source of concern. Trainers of school psychologists, in particular, have reported that it is unrealistic to expect specialist level training programs to prepare their students to be competent in all 11 skill domains specified in the NASP *Standards for Training and Field Placement Programs in School Psychology.* Both faculty members responsible for ensuring that students develop these competencies and their graduate students approach culminating exams with trepidation, knowing that in the 2 to 3 years of a specialist level program it is impossible to ensure skill mastery in 11 Domains of Competence that are so diverse and all-encompassing. In *Blueprint II* domains were viewed as areas in which "school psychologists are leaders in the schools." In *Blueprint III,* these are conceptualized as areas of competence with three levels of expertise. We acknowledge that there is a *continuum of skill development,* and assert that the job of training programs is to ensure that students are at a "novice" level in all domains by the time they complete the coursework phase of their training, and are at a "competent" level by the conclusion of internships, with the expectation that "expert" practice will be achieved only after some post-graduate experience and likely only in some domains. Additionally, there is a recognition that professional preparation within the specialty of school psychology may occur at two differing levels: specialist and doctoral. Advanced training at the doctoral level in such areas as research, program evaluation, and clinical supervision is likely to be reflected in greater expertise in related Domains of Competence.

Another limitation of *Blueprint II* is that the Domains of Training and Practice read like a "laundry list" of skills without a coherent system of integration necessary for the delivery of high quality and comprehensive school psychological services. We felt it important to embed the Domains of Competence within an integrated model of effective school psychology practice. Thus, *Blueprint III* addresses two key questions that were not adequately addressed in *Blueprint II*: (a) What are critical outcomes for school psychology practice, and (b) What is the most effective delivery system by which these outcomes can be achieved? *Blueprint III* is perceived to be evolutionary rather than revolutionary, in that it is built on the strong foundation provided both by the previous *Blueprints* and by other forces that have shaped our field since its inception.

> *We acknowledge that there is a* **continuum of skill development,** *and assert that the job of training programs is to ensure that students are at a "novice" level in all domains by the time they complete the coursework phase of their training, and are at a "competent" level by the conclusion of internships, with the expectation that "expert" practice will be achieved only after some post-graduate experience and likely only in some domains.*

BLUEPRINT III: THE MODEL

The *Blueprint III* Model for School Psychology Training and Practice is reflected in the schematic depicted in Figure 1. The left side of the model illustrates two foundations in our field: a well-confirmed knowledge

Training and Practice in School Psychology

Contextual Issues and Challenges

| Domains of Competence | Delivery System | Outcomes |

Domains of Competence

Functional Competencies

| Enhancing the Development of Cognitive and Academic Skills | Enhancing the Development of Wellness, Social Skills, Mental Health, and Life Competencies |
| Data–Based Decision Making & Accountability | Systems–Based Service Delivery |

Foundational Competencies

- Professional, Legal, Ethical, and Social Responsibility
- Technological Applications
- Diversity Awareness and Sensitive Service Delivery
- Interpersonal and Collaborative Skills

| Psychological and Educational Principles | Application of Science and Scientific Method |

Delivery System

- Intensive
- Targeted
- Universal

Outcomes

- Build Capacity of Systems
- Improved Competencies for All Students
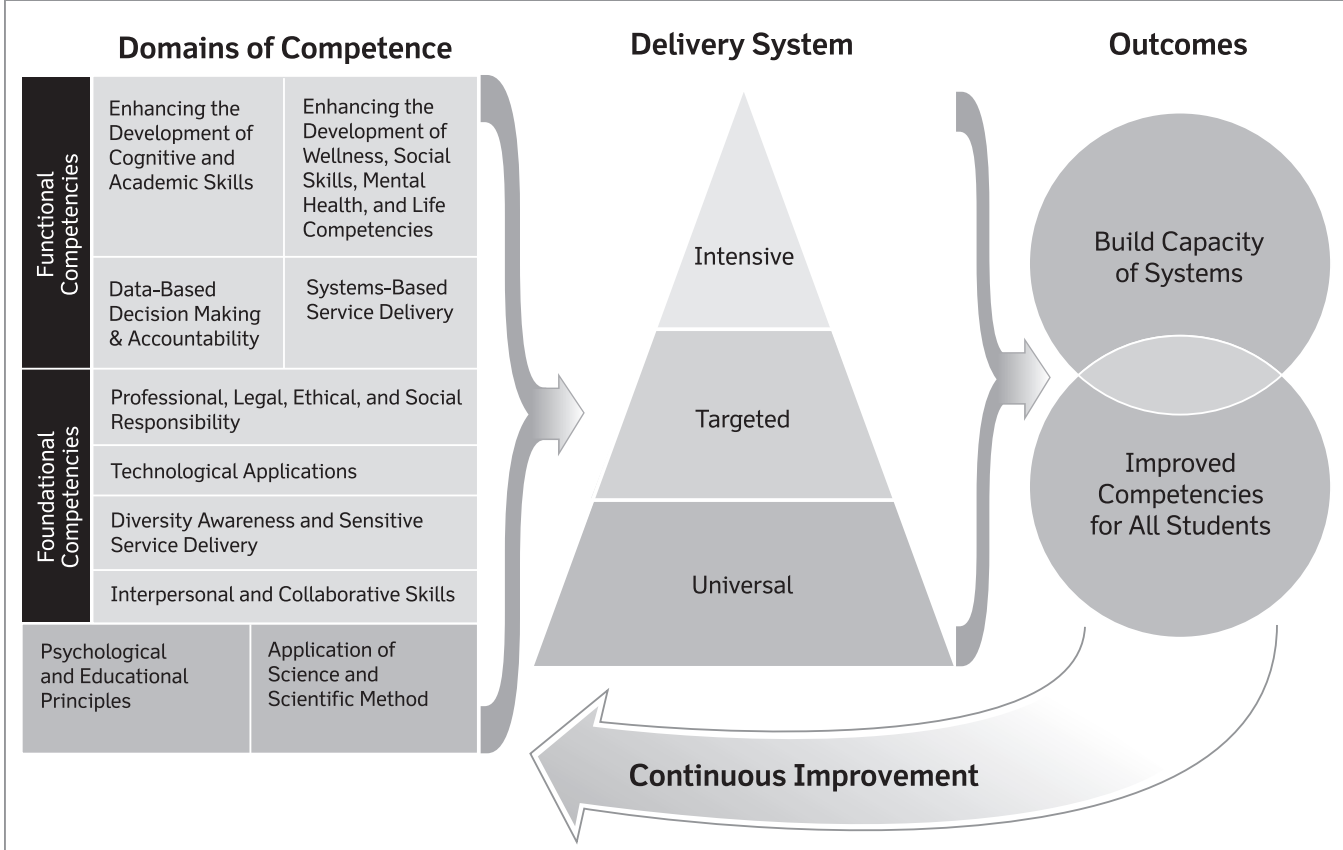
Continuous Improvement

Figure 1

base in psychology and education, and the application of the scientific method to practical delivery of the knowledge base. Eight discipline-specific competencies developed during school psychologists' professional training and applied experience rest on these dual foundations. The delivery of school psychological services, depicted in the triangle that appears in the middle of the model, occurs at three levels: universal, targeted, and intensive. The two major outcomes of our work in schools, enhancement of student competence and development of the capacity of systems to meet student needs, are represented by the two circles at the right side of the model. The model's components are described in detail in the following section.

BLUEPRINT III: MODEL COMPONENTS

In explaining the schematic depicting the model for training and practice of school psychology, we begin with the outcomes and work backwards (right to left) through the model. The goal of education is to help

children become competent and caring adults, involved citizens, and productive members of their communities. School psychology has a significant role to play in this process. Specifically, school psychologists should work to: (a) improve competencies for all students, and (b) build and maintain the capacities of systems to meet the needs of all students as they traverse the path to successful adulthood.

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School psychologists should be **instructional consultants** *who can assist parents and teachers to understand how students learn and what effective instruction looks like.*

Outcome 1: Improve Competencies for All Children and Youth

The competencies we expect individuals to develop during their time in school fall into two broad categories. First, there are important academic and cognitive competencies (including both basic academic skills and functional life skills) that the 21st century demands, in an age where technology exposes students to more information in a day than was available to their ancestors in a lifetime. School psychologists should be *instructional consultants* who can assist parents and teachers to understand how students learn and what effective instruction looks like. Second, we expect students to develop social-emotional competencies. These include both the ability to get along with others and the resilience to cope with daily stressors and major setbacks. School psychologists should be *mental health practitioners* who can guide parents and teachers in learning how to create environments where children and youth feel protected and cared for as well as sufficiently self-confident to take risks and expand their range of competence. Overall, we want schooling to produce responsible adults who relate to and get along with others, who have the necessary academic and functional skills to be independent, and who are healthy contributing citizens. The notion of competence enhancement involves accepting students where they are in skill development, and designing targeted and sometimes more intensive interventions to enable them to make progress toward attainment of eventual (and ever-changing) goals.

Outcome 2: Build and Maintain the Capacities of Systems

It is not enough for school psychologists to be proficient at helping students develop competencies. They must also be proficient at helping systems build capacity to foster and teach these competencies. This requires that school psychologists understand how systems work and what factors contribute to the implementation and success of educational innovations. While schools and educational systems are the most logical targets, school psychologists also need to understand how to impact family and community systems and influence public policy. Children and youth are part of a larger system, and it is only when the individual components of that system work together that optimal outcomes can be achieved. School psychologists must be *systems consultants* to ensure that this happens.

Building capacity requires a shared vision and collective sense of purpose, effective leadership, the involvement of stakeholders, ongoing evaluation, and a commitment to continuous improvement. The end result of building and maintaining system capacity is better alignment and allocation of personnel, resources, and efforts toward a unified goal of improving outcomes for all students.

School psychologists should be **mental health practitioners** *who can guide parents and teachers in learning how to create environments where children and youth feel protected and cared for as well as sufficiently self-confident to take risks and expand their range of competence.*

Delivery System

If the goals of school psychology are to improve competencies for all students and to build and maintain systems capacity, then the logical next question is: What is the mechanism by which these goals can be attained? *Blueprint III* advocates a service delivery system characterized by varying the intensity of interventions depending on the severity of student need. There is a long and rich history supporting this approach in the public health and prevention literature (primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention), and this paradigm is consistent with contemporary models of service delivery. *Universal services* are systems-level programs directed at all and designed to meet the academic and social-emotional needs of the vast majority of students. These include, for example, the use of evidence-based approaches to reading and math instruction or the implementation of a positive school-wide discipline program to reduce problems with behavior management. Universal services should be foundational and accessible to all children and youth.

For the 10 to 20% of pupils for whom the universal approach is insufficient, *targeted interventions* address specific academic or social-emotional skill or performance deficits. For students with reading

problems, a targeted intervention might include a Title I reading intervention to supplement classroom reading instruction or consultation with the classroom teacher to implement an evidence-based strategy not previously in the teacher's repertoire. Targeted interventions for students with social problems might include redesigning environments to help coach students in social interactions that enable them to make friends or play cooperatively, as well as working with the teacher and parents to support a behavioral intervention in the classroom.

Finally, for the 1–7 % of children with chronic and more severe problems, specialized *intensive interventions* are required. This may include more intensive and individualized reading instruction for students who have demonstrated a lack of responsiveness to Title I instruction, or, for youngsters with social-emotional or behavior problems, it may incorporate an interagency component that brings home, school, and community together to address more challenging needs.

Blueprint III endorses this model of universal, targeted, and intensive interventions because of its documented success, because of its emphasis on prevention, and because it is a reasonable way to organize the delivery of school psychology services to meet the needs of all children and youth. The implementation of effective universal programs allows the vast majority of students to achieve academic and social-emotional competence, and minimizes the number requiring targeted and intensive supports. Operating within this paradigm enables school psychologists to practice effectively in schools that have embraced this approach and to promote systemic change in schools that have yet to do so.

Domains of Competence

In order for school psychologists to work toward critical learner outcomes within a three-tiered service delivery model, they must have both knowledge and skills. The knowledge base includes a set of psychological and educational principles and an accepted method for applying those principles (i.e., the scientific method), as well as evidence-based theories, methods, and guidelines to effect change in both individuals and systems. Through its blend of education and psychology, the field of school psychology brings a unique perspective to the goal of helping children become competent and responsible adults. Knowledge alone will not suffice. School psychologists must also possess a set of skills, including the ability to use problem-solving and scientific methodology to create, evaluate, and apply appropriate empirically validated

interventions at both an individual and systems level. Put simply, there is a well-documented knowledge base on instructional practices that work, and there is a strong literature on effective delivery systems that enable us to initiate effective instruction.

Knowledge alone will not suffice. School psychologists must also possess a set of skills, including the ability to use problem-solving and scientific methodology to create, evaluate, and apply appropriate empirically validated interventions at both an individual and systems level.

The eight overarching competencies, while individually articulated in this model, are actually an interwoven set of skills. For school psychologists to be effective, they must have both a broad and deep understanding of the skills encompassed in each domain, as well as an ability to apply and integrate these skills fluently in everyday practice. As noted previously, it is not expected that the new graduate of a school psychology program will emerge at a skill level commensurate with colleagues who have had many years of experience. It is expected, however, that they have been exposed, both in theory and in practice, to all skill domains. As they continue to accrue experience in the field, school psychologists will move from "novice" to "competent" in all domains and will become "experts" in those domains most applicable to their practice.

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DOMAINS OF COMPETENCE FOR THE TRAINING AND PRACTICE OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

The eight Domains of Competence are defined as separate skill and knowledge sets. Nevertheless, these must be viewed as working in concert to achieve the broader aims of school psychology practice: improving student competence and building systems capacity. The extent to which school psychologists draw upon specific competencies depends on both the level of service delivery and the specific prevention or intervention strategies they implement.

The eight Domains of Competence are defined as separate skill and knowledge sets. Nevertheless, these must be viewed as working in concert to achieve the broader aims of school psychology practice: improving student competence and building systems capacity.

Four Domains of Competence form a foundation that sustains training and practice in school psychology. Some aspects of these domains are components of an individual school psychologist's character and makeup, while others are acquired through training and experience. Because these domains permeate all areas of practice for every school psychologist and are the foundations on which the other competency domains depend, they are depicted in the model as supporting the other four domains. These *foundational competencies* encompass (1) Interpersonal and Collaborative Skills, (2) Diversity Awareness and Sensitive Service Delivery, (3) Technological Applications, and (4) Professional, Legal, Ethical, and Social Responsibility. The next four domains represent *functional competencies* that describe the processes and contexts through which our work is carried out, and include (5) Data-Based Decision Making and (6) Systems-Based Service Delivery. With a deep understanding of effective instruction and mental health strategies, together with applied skills to enhance the capacity of systems to promote these student-focused objectives, our work is evidenced by (7) Enhancing the Development of Cognitive and Academic Skills and

(8) Enhancing the Development of Wellness, Social Skills, Mental Health, and Life Competencies.

FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES

Interpersonal and Collaborative Skills

School psychology practice involves children, adolescents, and adults in a variety of capacities, as well as the many systems within which they operate. Accordingly, effective interpersonal skills and the ability to work constructively and collaboratively with diverse individuals and agencies are indispensable for school psychologists. Training programs should seek to admit students with the ability to listen, adapt, embrace ambiguity, and be patient in difficult situations. The school psychologist's repertoire must include the ability to communicate well and disseminate information clearly to diverse audiences ranging from children, parents, teachers, and administrators to school boards, policy makers, community mental health professionals, business leaders, and other school psychologists. At the same time, school psychologists must understand the vital importance of collaboration and be able to facilitate it effectively in multiple contexts, as well as recognize that soliciting input from others may be as important as imparting knowledge or sharing expertise.

A related but distinct skill essential to school psychology practice is collaborative consultation. Irrespective of the philosophy or approach to consultation employed, school psychologists must possess good problem-solving skills that are brought to bear in facilitating the development of harmonious learning environments, reducing the divisiveness and disenfranchisement often found in troubled schools, and promoting the kinds of principled negotiations necessary to achieve consensus.

Effective and well-honed interpersonal and collaborative skills are crucial to functioning as a change agent in the school. Ultimately, school psychologists employ these skills when they promote and effect change at the individual student, classroom, building, district, or even broader levels.

Diversity Awareness and Sensitive Service Delivery

In *Blueprint II,* diversity was conceptualized primarily within the context of student development and learning. It was recognized that the racial, cultural, ethnic, experiential, and linguistic backgrounds of students were increasingly diverse and that these differences needed to be considered when providing appropriate instruction. That perspective, although important, focused primarily on acknowledging differences rather than providing services that were truly responsive to the needs of diverse populations. *Blueprint III* advocates a broader view of diversity and emphasizes its central role in crossing and bridging to other domains.

Addressing diversity is no longer defined simply as acknowledging or being "sensitive" to differences in others. Competence in all aspects of diversity is not demonstrated by an individual's degree of sensitivity to or level of knowledge about a given culture, but rather by the ability to recognize when, where, and how issues of diversity are manifest and operating within the wide variety of activities in which school psychologists engage. When school psychologists are able to recognize the importance of diversity in their practice, they are then empowered and expected to use their knowledge and skills to help schools embrace and address diversity issues effectively at all levels. For example, in developing effective instruction for English language learners, psychologists must know how first and second language acquisition influences cognitive maturation and the learning process. It is not enough simply to be aware that a student is a non-native English speaker; school psychologists must recognize how second language learning and bilingualism affect the design and implementation of appropriate and effective instruction. Similarly, the failure to recognize the impact of language and culture on school performance, and the use of inappropriate or unsystematic methods for assessing English language learners reflects inadequate competence in this domain.

The link between the diversity domain and the interpersonal and collaborative skills domain should be clear. School psychologists must be able to recognize when issues of diversity affect the manner and nature of interactions with other people and organizations. They must have the ability to modify or adapt their practices in response to those being served. Are parents from low SES backgrounds accorded the same level of respect as those from higher SES levels? Are parents who do not speak English made to feel welcome and engaged in their child's education? Do differences in gender or sexual orientation affect the process of consultation? Clearly, considerations related to diversity are apparent in every activity in which school psychologists engage.

Addressing issues of diversity is not an easy task and requires that school psychologists look inside themselves, reexamine their personal world views, and evaluate the nature and extent of their own, often subtle, biases with regard to culture, ethnicity, race, gender, disability, social class, sexual orientation, language, and more. These potential biases and those that may be directed toward the school psychologist by other individuals or agencies will significantly affect the manner in which decisions are made, instruction is developed, behavior is evaluated, interventions are designed, and outcomes are influenced. Competence in diversity is not developed by reading texts about other people and cultures, but rather evolves through experience in recognizing the manner in which diversity affects all school psychology (and all life) activities.

Technological Applications

Perhaps no other contextual influence has emerged with such rapidity and impact as has technology within the past decade. While competence in applying technology at the time of *Blueprint II* may have been defined primarily as word processing skills, the expansion of technology and its integration into every aspect of human life has progressed at a staggering pace. The evolution of the Internet, the ubiquitous nature of email, the proliferation of communication technologies, the widespread use of laptop computers, and software for almost any application, all necessitate that school psychologists be competent (and often cautious) in using current technology in the delivery of services.

Because technology has become embedded in the fabric of everyday life, it is likely that today's graduate students have considerable competence in this area before beginning professional training. Use of technology in the professional arena, however, may require the development of new skills and consideration of new ethical dilemmas. Computers and other electronic devices allow one to perform a wide variety of tasks that enhance and facilitate professional functioning in such areas as data gathering and storage, monitoring student performance and progress, assessment, record keeping, and communication with various audiences. Skill and expertise in gathering and evaluating information for professional practice is clearly a requisite competency. Much as with interpersonal skills and diversity, technological competence cuts across all aspects of school psychology practice, helping to support all other domains. For example, it is difficult to imagine

conducting activities such as communication, record keeping, observation, data-based decision making, assessment, and program evaluation and research without the aid of technology.

The many applications of technology in the schools do not benefit school psychologists alone. Assistive technology supports students with special learning needs, such as those who may benefit from alternative modes of communication. In addition, keyboard skills may assist students with fine-motor difficulties, and computer accessibility options (e.g., large font screens, speech recognition software) can assist students with a wide variety of visual, auditory, and motor problems.

Technological competence should include the ability to help students, parents, and teachers know how and where to access technology, and how to evaluate its safety and value, as well as how to use it to enhance classroom learning.

School psychologists also need to be aware of the potential dangers associated with technology. In professional activities, the use of electronic communication and storage raises new risks to protecting student confidentiality and test security. Youth are seeking information and consultation from the Internet. Many peer sites have been criticized for promoting thinking and behavior that may be injurious (e.g., sites promoting idealized physical attributes, diets, using performance enhancing drugs, bullying). For some students there is potential addiction to technology (e.g., video games, pornography) and the potential to limiting genuine (versus virtual) social interactions.

School psychologists also should be aware of the "digital divide," where technology is often more accessible to those with more economic resources. Technological competence should include the ability to help students, parents, and teachers know how and where to access technology, and how to evaluate its safety and value, as well as how to use it to enhance classroom learning. Technology offers enormous opportunity. It also challenges school psychologists in ways that could not have been envisioned 10 years earlier.

Professional, Legal, Ethical and Social Responsibility

The issues addressed by this foundational domain are relatively straightforward but absolutely central to the efficacy of a school psychologist's work. School

psychologists should be prepared to practice in ways that meet all appropriate professional (practice and ethical) and legal standards in order to enhance the quality of services and protect the rights of all parties. This includes adhering to due process guidelines in all decisions affecting students; maintaining accepted professional and ethical standards in assessment, consultation, and general professional practice; and fulfilling all legal requirements, including those in response to legislative and judicial decisions.

School psychologists also have a responsibility to plan and carry through a continuing education program for their own development as professionals, both in accordance with licensure requirements and in order to grow and stay up-to-date with the field. They should maintain appropriate professional credentials and attend continuing education functions as necessary for their current practice and required by employers and credentialing bodies. Especially important, school psychologists recognize their own limits of competency and do not exceed them. They work with others on the school staff to ensure that teachers and related services personnel have opportunities for continuing professional development. Collaboration improves services delivery, and results in better outcomes for students.

FUNCTIONAL COMPETENCIES

Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability

In *Blueprint II,* data-based decision making and accountability were seen as the organizing themes for school psychology training and practice. In this revision, we view this domain, and the following one, as processes that reflect not only the manner in which school psychologists organize information, but also how and in what contexts they analyze and use that information. The emphasis on practice competencies as processes illustrates the overarching perspective that directs school psychology practice and the contexts in which services are delivered. School psychologists should be good problem solvers who collect information that is

School psychologists should be good problem solvers who collect information that is relevant for understanding problems, make decisions about appropriate interventions, assess educational outcomes, and help others become accountable for the decisions they make.

relevant for understanding problems, make decisions about appropriate interventions, assess educational outcomes, and help others become accountable for the decisions they make. Although school psychologists have historically been responsible for collecting considerable student data, their focus should not remain focused at the individual student level. Training in research methods, statistics, and program evaluation enables them to gather data about school systems, programs, and classroom environments as well.

School psychologists should be well versed in a variety of assessment and evaluation methods. These include the use of observation, interviews, standardized norm-referenced tests, functional behavioral assessment, curriculum-based assessment/measurement/evaluation, ecological or environmental assessment, technology-enhanced assessment, and progress monitoring. Irrespective of the assessment method, the purpose of assessment remains clear—to define problems and student needs and assets, to estimate current status, to link results to the development of effective interventions, and to evaluate outcomes and inform future intervention decisions. Simply put, all assessment activities should relate to prevention and intervention.

> *All assessment activities should relate to prevention and intervention.*

School psychologists need to provide leadership in identifying those instructional environments and cognitive, emotional, social, and behavioral factors that have a significant effect on school achievement and the development of personal competence. They must be able to use this information for the promotion of student competence and the prevention of student difficulties/disabilities. School psychologists should be adept at assessing those aspects of the instructional environment that facilitate or impede learning/behavioral change for students, and they should know how environmental factors and student characteristics (e.g., aspects of diversity) interact to affect academic and behavioral outcomes. School psychologists should be recognized by school administrators as leaders in data collection and interpretation, who can play significant roles in designing assessment practices to meet responsibilities for accountability reporting to the general public.

Systems-Based Service Delivery

Although the name of this domain is new, its nature was captured in *Blueprint II* domains related to home/school/community collaboration, and structure, organization, and climate. Along with Data-Based Decision Making, this domain describes the way in which problems are evaluated and conceptualized. School psychologists can no longer focus exclusively on intervening at the individual level if they hope to enhance outcomes and build capacity. The learning problems of students do not belong to students alone but to the systems charged with helping them succeed and preventing failure.

Schools and other settings where children and youth live and learn must be viewed as systems whose many components affect learning and development in diverse and complex ways. School psychologists must understand how systems work, but even more, they need to know how they can use this knowledge to help organize schools and classrooms in ways that promote learning and prevent problems. Within a 3-tiered service delivery model, school psychologists should be able to design, among others, instruction and instructional interventions, problem-solving teams, programs to train paraprofessionals, school policies for such issues as discipline and grading, communication and referral systems, crisis prevention and intervention programs, transition programs from one aspect of schooling to another, and school-within-a-school programs.

School psychologists should provide leadership in developing schools as safe, civil, caring, inviting places where there is a sense of community, the contributions of all persons, including teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, families, students, and related services personnel, are valued; and there are high expectations for excellence for all students. The application of a systems perspective in delivering services is not limited to the school setting. Students do not learn in a vacuum, nor do they learn only in schools. The home and community represent significant influences in a student's life where intervention, collaboration, and connections to schools must be developed. Consistent with the outcomes endorsed by the *2002 Conference on the Future of School Psychology,* we believe an increased emphasis on the link between home and schools and a greater recognition of the roles parents/caregivers play in their children's educational outcomes are critical to the practice of school psychology in the 21st century. Over the course of their school careers, children have many teachers, most for no longer than a single year. Parents, however, bring to any problem-solving process a unique knowledge and understanding of how their children learn. School psychologists recognize that the likelihood of the success of any intervention, academic, social, or emotional, increases when parents or other primary caregivers are partners in intervention design

and implementation. School psychologists are natural liaisons between the home and the school and play a vital role in helping parents feel they are full members of their children's learning team, as well as ensuring that parents have a voice when critical decisions are made. School psychologists understand that there are many challenges to authentic family engagement in education, and recognize that overcoming these barriers and building home-school partnerships is among their most important roles.

School psychologists not only assist individual parents/caregivers but also participate in developing programs that strengthen the connection among home, community, and school. These efforts may range from advocating for family involvement in systems planning to training parents as leaders or establishing drop-in centers, homework hotlines, or access to mental health services that are convenient and affordable. Relevant activities also include partnering with vital public policy organizations such as parent advocacy groups. Success in these aspects of this domain requires adopting a systems perspective in order to both reduce redundancy and maximize mutually beneficial outcomes.

School psychologists are viewed as leaders for improvement and change. In this capacity, they need to share leadership and coordinating responsibilities with other agencies and help form linkages within the community. The move in many places to make schools less "independent" and more "collaborative" with parents, social and health agencies, corrections authorities, and local businesses is a major and long-term effort. School psychologists should be prepared to help lead and maintain the emerging collaborations.

Systems change at the local level often comes about through public policy initiatives and it is important that school psychologists understand and actively participate in these activities. Involvement in the development of public policy both provides school psychologists with the information needed to apply the laws and mandates that guide practice and helps ensure that a school psychological perspective is infused in public policy decisions for the benefit of all children and families.

Enhancing the Development of Cognitive and Academic Skills

As described in the previous section, school psychologists use data-based decision making and systems–based service delivery to build and maintain capacity and improve competencies for all children. These final two domains represent both student and systems outcomes in the two areas the profession hopes

to impact: (1) cognitive and academic skills and (2) wellness, social skills, and life skills. School psychologists help schools develop challenging but achievable cognitive and academic goals for all students, taking into account the need to adjust expectations for individual students, as well as implement alternative ways to monitor or assess individual student progress toward goal or standards accomplishment. They can also be of assistance to State Education Agency and Local Education Agency personnel who design state and local accountability systems.

School psychologists know how to apply learning theory and cognitive strategies to the instructional process. They should know empirically supported components of effective instruction and alternative instructional methodologies, and they should be in a position to work with others to improve instruction, enhance achievement and develop attention, problem-solving and study skills. They should work to ensure treatment integrity (the extent to which interventions are implemented correctly) and assist school staff in helping students become increasingly responsible for their own learning (self-regulation and self-assessment). School psychologists should also be prepared to assist teachers and other educators in translating emerging critical research to instructional practice.

Enhancing the Development of Wellness, Social Skills, Mental Health, and Life Competencies

Although the primary responsibility of schools is to aid in the development of cognitive and academic skills, school psychologists recognize that effective learning is significantly influenced by factors beyond classroom instruction and curricula. Unless students' general health and welfare are adequately addressed, optimal learning cannot occur. Recognition of this fact has grown significantly in recent years (in part because of the work of school psychologists), as has the understanding that schools are responsible not only for a set of academic skills but also for preparing students to develop skills that will ensure positive adult outcomes. Graduating students who have high academic skills but who lack critical skills

Schools must attend to general health, mental health, and welfare in order to ensure effective academic development, and school psychologists should provide leadership in these areas.

to function as healthy and independent adults is not a desired result of schooling! Schools must attend to general health, mental health, and welfare in order to ensure effective academic development, and school psychologists should provide leadership in these areas.

As leading mental health experts in schools, school psychologists must be prepared to help design and implement prevention and intervention programs to promote wellness and resiliency. They need to address wellness promotion as well as diverse health issues such as substance abuse, diet, eating disorders, AIDS prevention, and stress management. They need to recognize the behaviors that are precursors to the development of conduct disorders, internalizing disorders, or school dropout, and they need to know how to design programs to prevent and intervene with these problems. Finally, school psychologists need to know how to work with school personnel, students, parents, and the general community in the prevention and aftermath of crises such as suicide, other deaths, natural disasters, murder, bombs or bomb threats, extraordinary violence, terrorism, and sexual assault or harassment. While they are not expected to be experts in every area, school psychologists should have basic competency in a broad array of crisis situations, know how to access resources to address these issues, and understand how to work with others to bring effective services to students and school staff.

This domain encompasses not only health and wellness, but social skills and life skills as well. School psychologists should help schools develop challenging but achievable behavioral, affective, and adaptive goals for all students. They should know how to enhance appropriate pupil behavior and how to develop methodologies such as conflict resolution and social problem-solving/decision-making approaches that will assist teachers and families in teaching pro-social behavior. School psychologists should be knowledgeable about development in social, affective, and adaptive domains and be able to identify and apply sound principles of behavior change within these domains. They should provide leadership in creating instructional environments that reduce alienation and foster the expression of appropriate behavior as well as environments in which all members of the school community-both students and adults-treat one another with respect and dignity.

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THE LINK TO TRAINING AND PRACTICE

The competencies described in this model of school psychology will require a significant rethinking of school psychology education. It has been a challenge for many programs to prepare school psychologists in the competencies needed for the broader roles advocated by *Blueprint I* and *Blueprint II.* The path frequently taken has been to add new courses and requirements rather than rethinking program philosophy or conceptual framework. There is emerging evidence, however, that program accrediting bodies expect a more conceptual approach to training, and that training based on a unified theoretical perspective is a more effective way of training school psychologists. Although *Blueprint II* directed trainers toward a more conceptually driven framework, *Blueprint III* provides a paradigm for fundamental change consistent with validated models of training and practice in our field.

In **Blueprint III,** *programs are asked to move toward an orientation that considers not just student performance data, but also the integration of data for intervening and monitoring outcomes at individual and system levels.*

Like earlier editions, *Blueprint III* recognizes that school psychology is based on the application of psychological and educational principles and the scientific method—contributions with potentially significant influence as educators struggle with the growing importance of both accountability and evidence-based practices. Competency in *Blueprint III* domains must be acquired at the application level, whereas in the past some domains may have received only peripheral attention. For example, surveys of practicing school psychologists have documented their perceived lack of skill in indirect service delivery, including prevention and consultation, although respondents indicated a desire to engage more in these services.

The processes described in this model may also reflect a shift in emphasis for many programs. School psychology programs have a long history of training in data-based decision making, but the focus traditionally has been on describing strengths and weaknesses at the individual student level. In *Blueprint III,* programs are asked to move toward an orientation that considers not just student performance data, but also the integration of data for intervening and monitoring outcomes at individual *and* system levels. As school psychology practice increasingly addresses safe and healthy environments for all students, training program culture will similarly need to reflect consideration of systems-based service delivery.

As training programs prepare their students for expanded roles, appropriate internships must be available to support novice practitioners. Given the anticipated capacity of training programs to build skills relevant to the new domains at the "novice" level during the coursework phase, internship sites will need to provide enriched experiences to assist trainees to develop these competencies by the conclusion of their internships. Developing standards for internships and supporting schools with innovative service delivery systems to become rich internship sites that meet those standards are critical goals.

Practitioners also need support to expand their competencies. Best practice in professional development moves beyond exposure from workshops at professional conventions. For example, research has documented that fewer than 10% of participants in traditional professional development activities actually apply their new knowledge and skills in their practice. Exploring ways to deliver continuing professional development so that school psychologists learn to apply new skills will be a challenge for the future. Technology offers a potential means to help practitioners apply new skills in the districts following workshops and institutes. Professional organizations will need to support and encourage the development of learning opportunities that enable practitioners to receive feedback and supervision in the application of new skills.

There is a growing recognition of the need to build bridges between academic-generated research and applications by practitioners.

Finally, much of the research in school psychology emerges from training programs, through the efforts of both faculty and students. There is a growing recognition of the need to build bridges between academic-generated research and applications by practitioners. Creating networks of practitioners and researchers is one means of ensuring that the problems of practice are addressed and evidence-based solutions are available. Evidence-based practice is facilitated by research that not only is related to practice issues but is also applicable and useful to practitioners. There is increasing recognition of the need for school psychology to bring useful, relevant knowledge to school practitioners in all fields, not just to other school psychologists. The School Psychology Task Force on Evidence-Based Practice is charged with improving knowledge dissemination and use, making more available to practitioners the processes by which evidence-based practices can be implemented with integrity in the schools.

EXAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

BLUEPRINT III PRACTICE EXEMPLAR I

Student Competence Enhancement Focus: (check one)

_____ Effective Instruction and Development of Cognitive/Academic Skills

✓ Wellness, Mental Health and the Development of Life Competencies

Level of Intervention: (check one or more)

_____ Level I: Universal Intervention

_____ Level II: Targeted Intervention

✓ Level III: Intensive Intervention

Practice Description:

A self-monitoring intervention was developed for a high-school special education student in a self-contained classroom. The problem identified was that the student was failing to transition between classes at the high school within the allotted amount of time. Through observation, the educational team identified the specific behaviors leading to slow transition times for this student. The self-monitoring intervention was written based on this problem analysis information and included training the student in the replacement behaviors as well as training the student to time and chart the duration of his transitions. To evaluate the efficacy of the intervention, the percent of transitions the student makes within the allotted amount of time is obtained from the student's self-generated chart. In addition, staff members conduct one intervention integrity check per week to determine if the intervention is being implemented with integrity and to determine the level of independence the student is exhibiting during transitions.

School Psychologist's Involvement in This Practice Including Illustration of Relevant Domains of Competence:

Domains of Competence:

1. Interpersonal and Collaborative Skills
2. Diversity Awareness and Sensitive Service Delivery
3. Technological Applications
4. Professional, Legal, Ethical, and Social Responsibility
5. Data-Based Decision Making & Accountability
6. Systems-Based Service Delivery
7. Enhancing the Development of Cognitive and Academic Skills
8. Enhancing the Development of Wellness, Social Skills and Life Competencies

The school psychologist participated in all steps of the problem solving process for the development of this intervention. She (a) identified and analyzed the problem using record review, interviews with staff, and behavioral observations, (b) designed the self-monitoring intervention, (c) trained both the student and members of his educational team to implement the intervention, and (d) assisted with the collection of progress monitoring data and intervention integrity data. Throughout this process the school psychologist used skills in several Domains of Competence including: data-based decision making, development of life competencies, interpersonal and collaborative skills, and competence in aspects of diversity.

Impact on Student Competence Enhancement and Capacity Building of Individuals and Systems:

After one month of intervention, the student was transitioning within the allotted time 82% of charted opportunities with approximately 15 verbal prompts, which represents an improvement from the baseline of transitioning within the allotted time 50% of opportunities with 5–15 verbal prompts. This reflects a student competence enhancement in independence skills. The educational team plans to continue the intervention while decreasing the number of prompts provided during transitions to further develop the student's independence skills. The educational team has generalized this strategy for use in other aspects of the student's instructional program including vocational training.

BLUEPRINT III PRACTICE EXEMPLAR II

Student Competence Enhancement Focus: (check one or more)

✓   Effective Instruction and Development of Cognitive/Academic Skills
✓   Wellness, Mental Health and the Development of Life Competencies

Level of Intervention: (check one or more)

✓   Level I: Universal Intervention
✓   Level II: Targeted Intervention
____   Level III: Intensive Intervention

Practice Description:

The school psychologist wanted to bring the consultation model to the school(s) served and move them to prevention and early intervention rather than the IEP team meeting/test model more typical of services. The school psychologist perceived the school as a system and wanted to implement system-wide changes. To do this, the school psychologist developed a multi-pronged approach. The first goal was to introduce the idea of a systematic social skills training program in the primary grades. The second goal was to have teachers become familiar with the presence of the school psychologist in their classrooms as an advocate, helper, and educator/psychologist who can help with instructional objectives and delivery. The third goal was to empower teachers to learn more effective behavioral management skills. Fourth was having the staff and administration see the school psychologist as a problem solver and information source. Fifth was to make daily child performance and information more readily accessible to parents through technology. The final goal was to raise awareness of the existence of the school psychologist by writing articles for the school newsletter as often as feasible on a topic important to the principal.

School Psychologist's Involvement in This Practice Including Illustration of Relevant Domains of Competence:

Domains of Competence:

1. Interpersonal and Collaborative Skills
2. Diversity Awareness and Sensitive Service Delivery
3. Technological Applications
4. Professional, Legal, Ethical, and Social Responsibility
5. Data-Based Decision Making & Accountability
6. Systems-Based Service Delivery
7. Enhancing the Development of Cognitive and Academic Skills
8. Enhancing the Development of Wellness, Social Skills and Life Competencies

1. Introduction of a social skills training program in the primary grades by:

   a. Introducing information over a three-year period using part of the Stop & Think/Project Achieve system.
   b. Training primary grade teachers to use the program and providing support the first year as they implemented the program and designed the instruction.
   c. Keeping data on the number of referrals, types of referrals, and sources of the greatest number of referrals to the main office, comparing this data to previous years and providing targeted assistance.
   d. Maintain effectiveness by providing on-going support year-to-year.

   Domains Addressed: Level 1 (Universal) and Level II (Targeted) interventions: 1, 5, 7, 8

2. The second goal was to have teachers become familiar with the presence of the school psychologist in classes through a multi-year plan by:

   a. Entering classrooms, helping students, watching instruction and developing working relationships with staff the first year.
   b. Making suggestions regarding instruction in reading and math, consulting with teachers about specific students and the class as a whole during the second year.

    c.   Attending staff meetings as a participant and contributor of information on "authentic" learning, and presenting information on student motivation during the third year.

    d.   Serving as secretary for the School Improvement team during the fourth year.

    e.   Cowriting a reading grant funded by the NASP Children's Fund in and dovetailing it with the NEA/NFL Read Across America program.

Domains Addressed: Level I (Universal): 1, 4, 6

3.   Empowering teachers to learn more effective behavioral management skills by:

    a.   Coupling social skills with behavioral management techniques for the general education population through development of a PowerPoint presentation and follow up consultation.

    b.   Assisting teachers in the implementation of effective data keeping for all students and for targeted students.

    c.   Assisting teachers when analyzing data to compare student progress behaviorally and academically noting how the changes in teacher management of the classroom affects outcome.

    d.   Introducing self-management programs including use of a computer based program.

Domains Addressed: Level I (Universal) and Level II (Targeted) interventions: 3, 5, 7, 8

4.   Developing working relationships as a problem solver and source of information by:

    a.   Providing information to teachers, administrators and teachers formally during school team meetings (IEP/SST) and informally in the teacher's lounge and hallways.

    b.   Discussing research on a topic and following up with copies of articles or summaries of information.

Domains Addressed: Level I (Universal) and Level II (Targeted) interventions: 1, 4, 7, 8

5.   Making daily child performance and information readily accessible to parents through technology by:

    a.   Developing and introducing daily email home notes on targeted students' performance.

    b.   Teaching classroom teachers how to use a template, copy attachments, and save data.

    c.   Presenting data to teachers using Excel and graphs and using data during student team meetings.

Domains Addressed: Level I (Universal) and Level II (Targeted) interventions: 1, 3, 5

6.   Raising awareness of the school psychologist in the system by writing articles for the school newsletter by:

    a.   Writing articles for the school newsletter, following Alex Thomas' suggestion to de-stealth the profession systematically, and making schools and communities aware of the existence and work of the school psychologist.

    b.   Generating ideas for articles by asking the school principal about her concerns. For example, the principal was concerned about the speed of parents' cars at the end of the day. The article written to addressing this concern was on prosocial behavior.

Domains Addressed: Level I (Universal): 1, 8

Impact on Student Competence Enhancement and Capacity Building of Individuals and Systems:

The initiative built teacher capacity to use technology and data collection to inform parents, track progress, make decisions, and provide Level I and Level II interventions for all students and specific students. The initiative fostered collaborative skills, built social responsibility, and focused the interventions on academic areas. It included parents as partners by recognizing the primacy of parental involvement with the school and brought the largest number of parents and students ever to the school in the evening for a night of reading.

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TRAINING EXEMPLARS

The following training exemplars illustrate how school psychology preparation programs provide training in specific Domains of Competence; how these relate to the program's conceptual model of training; and the manner in which the program addresses, assesses, and documents student/graduate attainment of competency in the identified objectives.

BLUEPRINT III TRAINING EXEMPLAR I

Domains of Competence That Relates to Program Objective: (check one or more)

____	Interpersonal and Collaborative Skills
____	Diversity Awareness and Sensitive Service Delivery
____	Technological Applications
____	Professional, Legal, Ethical, and Social Responsibility
____	Data-Based Decision Making & Accountability
✓	Systems-Based Service Delivery
____	Enhancing the Development of Cognitive and Academic Skills
____	Enhancing the Development of Wellness, Social Skills and Life Competencies

Program Objective:

• Understand and assess the culture and norms of schools in order to optimize entry into schools and make important contributions to the school system
• Serve as change agents to improve the quality of education for all students with whom they work

Description of Way(s) Program Addresses Program Objective:

Students are exposed to the concept of schools as systems in the first course they take, *PSYC 713 Role of the School Psychologist,* through lectures, readings, and activities. They shadow a school psychologist in a local school system and integrate what they learn from class readings regarding the organization and operation of schools with what they observe. In *PSYC 731 School-Based Consultation,* students must demonstrate proficiency in analyzing a school's culture and organizational structure to enhance systematic problem solving. Enhancing entry into a system and effectively managing resistance are also key learning outcomes of this course. During *Practicum I and II (PSYC 771 and 773),* lectures and activities address understanding school and teacher-level factors that contribute to effective schools.

Students are introduced to the concept of school psychologists as change agents in *PSYC 713 Role of the School Psychologist* and again in *PSYC 790 Ethical, Legal and Professional Issues in Psychology.* It is an expectation of their Practicum and Internship that students will demonstrate behaviors consistent with their prior learning regarding entry into systems, managing resistance, and serving as change agents within their schools.

Description of Way(s) Program Assesses Student/Trainee Progress on Objective:	Description of Way(s) Program Documents Student Attainment of Objective:
• Specific class assignments [e.g., a journal that integrates classroom learning with observations in a school setting (PSYC 713); reading/activity packet highlighting research on effective schools (PSYC 771)]	• Class assignments are graded according to rubrics that outline expectations for each assignment. Faculty considers scores above 90% to be evidence that skills in this domain have been attained.
• Comprehensive Examination	• One of four required essays is related to systems-level consultation. Students must pass this question, based on a scoring rubric, in order to pass the comprehensive examination.
• Field Supervisor Evaluations in School Psychology Practicum I	• Practicum I field supervisors rate students on a scale of 1 to 3 on the item, "Seeks to understand the culture and norms of schools." Ratings of 2 indicate that the student is able to use skill with assistance; ratings of 3 indicate that the student is able to use the skill independently. Faculty considers aggregated ratings over 2.8 to be evidence that skills in this domain have been attained.
• Intern Supervisor Evaluations	• Internship field supervisors rate the degree to which interns understand schools and other settings as systems, on a scale of 1 through 4. A rating of 3 indicates that the student "demonstrates competency at the intern level" and a rating of 4 indicates that the student "demonstrates competency at a beginning school psychologist level." Faculty considers aggregated ratings above 3.5 to indicate competency in this domain.
• Employer Surveys	• Employers of recent graduates provide ratings on a scale of 1–4 on whether or not the new employee understood schools and other settings as systems when they began employment. Ratings of 3 indicate that the new employee "demonstrated strong competence in this domain and required only minimal guidance/supervision" and ratings of 4 indicate that the employee "demonstrated strong competence in this domain and required no further supervision." Faculty considers aggregated ratings above 3 to indicate competency in this domain.

BLUEPRINT III TRAINING EXEMPLAR II

Domains of Competence That Relates to Program Objective: (check one or more)

- ✓ Interpersonal and Collaborative Skills
- ____ Diversity Awareness and Sensitive Service Delivery
- ____ Technological Applications
- ____ Professional, Legal, Ethical, and Social Responsibility
- ____ Data-Based Decision Making & Accountability
- ____ Systems-Based Service Delivery
- ____ Enhancing the Development of Cognitive and Academic Skills
- ____ Enhancing the Development of Wellness, Social Skills and Life Competencies

Program Objective:

Develop communication, collaboration, and consultation skills and the ability to engage positively in teamwork efforts.

Description of Way(s) Program Addresses Program Objective:

This objective is addressed through the following courses, practica, and internship experience:
   SPSY 768 Consultation
   SPSY 771 Principles and Practice of School Psychology
   SPSY 799 Behavioral Collaboration and Intervention
   CGPS 761 Counseling Theories and Social-Cultural Foundations
   SPSY 795 School Psychology Practicum I & II
   SPSY 894S Internship in School Psychology

Description of Way(s) Program Assesses Student/Trainee Progress on Objective:	Description of Way(s) Program Documents Student Attainment of Objective:
• Review of students' grades in coursework relevant to this objective; evaluation of students' professional dispositions, using the Professional Dispositions Assessment form completed by course instructors during each semester of year I.	• The program's policies on Student Retention and Graduation require that students maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or above and that they obtain a grade of B or better in SPSY 795 and SPSY 894S. The *Professional Dispositions Assessment* form utilizes a scale ranging from 1 (unacceptable) to 3 (target) for each of the five competency domains: Human diversity, communication skills, interpersonal relationship, personal/professional responsibility, and personal growth/adaptability. Student attainment is indicated by the maintenance of a GPA of 3.0 (a grade of B) or better on required coursework relevant to this objective as well as by ratings of 2 (acceptable) or above on all competency domains of the *Professional Dispositions Assessment.*

Description of Way(s) Program Assesses Student/Trainee Progress on Objective:	Description of Way(s) Program Documents Student Attainment of Objective:
• Evaluation of students' practicum performance, using the *School Psychology Practicum Student Evaluation* form completed by field-based supervisors at two points, December and May, during year II; evaluation of students' professional dispositions, using the *Professional Dispositions Assessment* form completed by field-based supervisors at two points, December and May, during year II.	• *The School Psychology Practicum Student Evaluation* form utilizes a 3-point scale, ranging from 1 (below average) to 3 (above average). Student attainment is indicated by ratings of 2 or above on both the *School Psychology Practicum Student Evaluation* (rating items pertinent to this objective) and the *Professional Dispositions Assessment.*
• Field-based supervisor evaluation of interns' performance, using the *Internship Evaluation Form-Site Supervisor's,* at two points, December and May, during the internship year.	• The *Internship Evaluation Form-Site Supervisor's* utilizes a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (unsatisfactory) to 5 (outstanding) and is comprised of two broad sections: Competencies/Skills and Professional Dispositions. Student attainment is indicated by ratings of 3 (acceptable) or above on the items relevant to this training objective in the Competencies/Skills section as well as by ratings of 3 or above on all items in the Professional Dispositions section.
• Faculty evaluation of students' performance documents included in the competency domains of their *Professional Product Portfolio* relevant to this training objective: (a) Development of Communication, Collaboration, Consultation, and Counseling Skills and (b) Reflective Practice.	• The rubric for portfolio evaluation utilizes a scale ranging from 1 (not acceptable) to 3 (exceptional) for each competency domain. Student attainment on this training objective is indicated by an average rating of 2 (acceptable) or above across the performance documents included in the domains relevant to this training objective.

MAKING IT HAPPEN

You must be the change you wish to see in the world.
— Gandhi

In *Blueprint II,* the concluding section was titled, *What if all of this happens?* It was argued that it would not all happen. Yet, school psychology has moved far in the past decade, and as a field we have taken increasing responsibility and become better advocates for our own future. It has been said, "You can and should shape your own future because, if you don't, someone else surely will" (Barker, 1985, p. 11). Now, in *Blueprint III,* the question should be phrased, "How do we ensure school psychology continues to move forward?" According to Webster's dictionary, a "blueprint" is defined as "a program of action." The intention of each *Blueprint* publication, including this one, has been to provide school psychologists with a vision for developing such a program of action as a profession and as individual professionals.

Since *Blueprint II* was published, a new century has dawned. The recommendations for training and practice in *Blueprint III* have evolved from multiple sources, reflecting current issues in our society, especially the context of schools and schooling today. These include new laws and new priorities, some of which have emerged from our own advocacy. Changes in the larger world around us have, and will continue to influence us to reexamine our practices and assumptions. *Blueprint III* integrates evolutionary developments within school psychology research, training, and practice into an expanded vision for the field. We have increasingly employed a systems perspective rather than the traditional, narrower psychometric lens, and this shift is reflected in the domains described in *Blueprint III.*

Although changes in the practice of school psychology are apparent, much remains the same as ten years ago. School psychologists, both trainers and practitioners, struggle with change. As one school psychologist declared, "There is a battle going on and it is inside my head." Some of the discord within our own ranks is a reaction to the distress and uncertainty of change. In contemplating the snail pace of change in education, Sarason (1993) noted that "being imprisoned in tradition, being resistant to and fearful of anything other than superficial change and window dressing, puzzled by the failure of past efforts, allergic to fads and fashions, disenchanted with quick fixes—such attitudes and reactions are not those of villains" (p. 13).

As *Blueprint II* concluded, so must *Blueprint III*: There is more to accomplish and great opportunity to do so. That has not changed. Each *Blueprint* has challenged us to continue constructing a future for school psychology that enhances our services to children and youth, their parents/caregivers, and the school and community professionals with whom we work side by side. *Blueprint III* provides a contemporary view of the outcomes of our work, the delivery system through which these objectives are best achieved, and the foundational and functional Domains of Competence we perceive as central to school psychology. We anticipate that the *Blueprint III* model will promote considerable dialogue and contribute to the continuing evolution of our discipline, as well as inform our individual and systems partners in their complementary work.

Footnote

Practice exemplars were provided by Christy Stewart and Carrie F. De La Cruz (Northern Suburban Special Education District), and by Rivka Olley (Baltimore County Public Schools). Training exemplars were provided by Susan Bartels (Towson University) and Hee-sook Choi (University of South Dakota)

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	Domain	Description
Functional Competencies	**Enhancing the Development of Wellness, Social Skills, and Life Competencies**	School psychologists should be the leading mental health experts in schools who are knowledgeable about development in social, affective, and adaptive domains and are able to identify and apply sound principles of behavior change within these domains in order to help design and implement prevention and intervention programs to promote wellness and resiliency.
	Enhancing the Development of Cognitive and Academic Skills	School psychologists help schools develop challenging but achievable cognitive and academic goals for all students, taking into account the need to adjust expectations for individual students, or to implement alternative ways to monitor or assess individual student progress toward goal or standards accomplishment.
	Systems-Based Service Delivery	School psychologists should provide leadership in developing schools as safe, caring, and inviting places in which there is a sense of community, in which contributions of all persons are valued, in which there are high expectations of excellence for all students, and where home-school-agency partnerships are valued.
	Data-Based Decision Making & Accountability	School psychologists should be good problem solvers who collect information that aids in understanding problems, making decisions about appropriate interventions, assessing educational outcomes, and making accountability decisions.
Foundational Competencies	**Professional, Legal, Ethical, and Social Responsibility**	School psychologists should be prepared to practice in ways that meet all appropriate ethical, professional, and legal standards in order to enhance the quality of services and protect the rights of all parties, and should maintain certification or licensure while attending continuing education functions as necessary and required.
	Technological Applications	School psychologists should be able to apply technology to improve outcomes and to support all other domains.
	Diversity Awareness and Sensitive Service Delivery	School psychologists must be able to recognize when issues of diversity affect the manner and nature of interactions with other people and organizations and must have the ability to modify or adapt their practices in response to those being served.
	Interpersonal and Collaborative Skills	School psychologists should demonstrate strong interpersonal skills, the ability to work effectively and collaboratively with people and agencies, and characteristics such as the ability to listen, adapt, tolerate ambiguity, and be patient in difficult situations.