



Mentoring the Pupil Services Initial Educator

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
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Mentoring the Pupil Services Initial Educator

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Introduction

This guide reflects the requirements for pupil services licensing found in the State of Wisconsin administrative rule PI 34 and includes recommended practices for mentoring pupil services professionals, including school counselors, nurses, psychologists, and social workers. PI 34 requires all initial educators – teachers, pupil services professionals, and administrators – to have a mentor who has been trained in the Wisconsin Standards appropriate to the license category. An initial educator is someone who has completed an approved program with institutional endorsement and is now entering the profession.

PI 34.01(34) defines mentor as “an educator who is trained to provide support and assistance to initial educators and who will have input into the confidential formative assessment of the initial educator and who is not considered as part of the formal employment evaluation process.” For the new pupil services professional, a mentor is a person who can provide this support and assistance. Mentoring is required by PI 34.17 2(c) which states that the “initial educator shall be provided with a qualified mentor by the employing school district.”

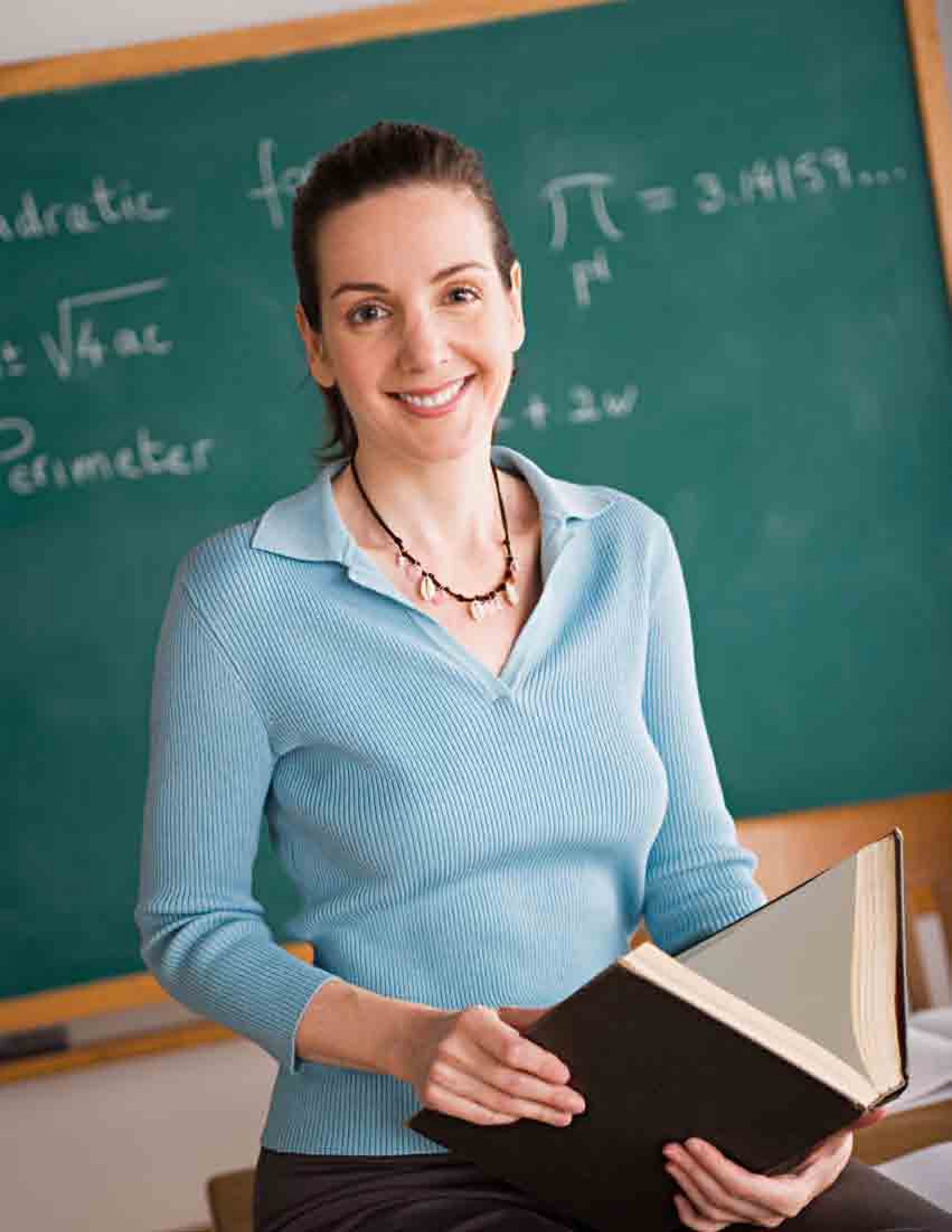
Most of the research about the benefits of mentor programs has been done with teachers. It is likely that similar benefits will be observed with new pupil services professionals. Mentoring promotes and smoothes the transition of an initial educator from pre-service to professional licensure. Research suggests that quality mentoring positively impacts recruitment, effectiveness of services to students, and retention of initial educators. The new pupil services professional becomes oriented to job responsibilities and expectations earlier, and experiences accelerated growth.

Even though pupil services staff are well prepared by strong professional training and experiences, new professionals face many challenges in launching their practices in the school setting. Initial experiences are critical and can either positively or negatively impact a pupil services professional’s career. This initial experience affects not only the new professional, but, even more importantly, the students themselves. The initial educator support system assists the pupil services professional to successfully support the learning of all students more rapidly as he/she makes the transition from beginner to competent professional.

I

*Let us put our minds
together and see what
life we can make for
our children.*

—Tatanka-Iyotanka
(Sitting Bull)



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The initial educator license is issued for a period of five (5) years and is a nonrenewable license, with rare exceptions. PI 34 makes three requirements of school districts to support the initial educator. The employing school district must provide initial educators with the following:

- ongoing orientation that is collaboratively developed and delivered by school boards, administrators, teachers, support staff, and parents;
- support seminars that reflect the standards in Subchapter II, and the mission and goals of the school district; and
- a qualified mentor. The mentoring period may be for less than five (5) years.

All school districts were required to submit a plan to meet these initial educator requirements by August 31, 2004.

Mentorship, one of the three requirements that school districts must provide to support the new educator, is detailed in this document. A mentorship program offers many benefits to new pupil services professionals, to their mentors, and to their school districts.

Initial educators:

- Become oriented to job responsibilities and expectations early in the practice process;
- Experience accelerated professional growth by learning effective strategies for addressing a variety of diverse job tasks;
- Become competent pupil services professionals earlier in their careers;
- Learn important professional qualities from the modeling of their mentors;
- Feel successful and accepted early in the professional development process;
- Receive assistance from their mentors in working with others;
- Gain access to a vast network of expertise;
- Receive both personal and professional support; and
- Find their mentors to be trusted colleagues, role models, and sounding boards.

A mentorship program offers many benefits to new pupil services professionals, to their mentors, and to their school districts.

Mentors:

- Are active in supporting and improving the profession;
- Contribute to the success of others, and gain satisfaction in helping less experienced professionals;
- Reflect on their own practice, and articulate why and what the professional does while assisting their initial educators;
- Strengthen their enthusiasm and idealism for the profession;
- Focus on what is truly effective pupil services practice; and
- Learn new and innovative practices from their initial educators, learn from the mentoring process, and develop additional leadership skills.

School districts:

- Enhance their processes for leadership development;
- Provide an opportunity for accelerated development of new pupil services professionals, which results in more effective and timely integration of their skills into the schools;
- Create a mentoring culture in which everyone is a teacher and a learner;
- Gain from the growth of both the initial educators and their mentors;
- Provide effective support for the learning of students; and
- Comply with PI 34.

Mentoring the Pupil Services Initial Educator

License Qualifications for Pupil Services Mentors

PI 34 states that a “qualified mentor” of an initial educator must hold a pupil services license (PI 34.01(47)). By articulating different standards of practice for teachers, administrators, and pupil services professionals, fundamental differences are recognized for their respective knowledge, skills, and dispositions. That is, the work of teachers, administrators, and pupil services professionals is fundamentally different.

The success of the mentor-initial educator relationship is largely dependent upon the mentor’s understanding of pupil services delivery. Even this standard, however, does not recognize the unique differences in the training and preparation of the four pupil services professions. Initial pupil services educators should ideally be paired with a mentor from their own profession.

Requirements and Recommended Criteria for Mentors

A mentor must be trained to provide support and assistance. It is recommended that the mentor will:

- Volunteer for mentoring and be selected through a collaborative process;
- Have a minimum of three years experience in the district;
- Hold a Wisconsin Professional Educator License in one of the four pupil services categories (i.e., school counselor, school social worker, school psychologist, or school nurse) and (preferably) work in the same pupil services profession as the initial educator;
- Be knowledgeable about the pupil services standards (see Appendix), the specific pupil services content guidelines (see Appendix) and the Professional Development Plan (PDP) process;
- Have strong interpersonal skills;
- Possess credibility with peers and administrators;
- Demonstrate a commitment to professional growth;
- Have an excellent practice and working knowledge of the pupil services role in the school setting; and
- Complete mentor training.

II

The success of the mentor-initial educator relationship is largely dependent upon the mentor's understanding of pupil services delivery.

*A dream doesn't
become reality
through magic: it takes
sweat, determination
and hard work.*
– Colin Powell

Qualities of a Mentor

Successful mentors share many common characteristics or traits. Some of the more important factors include: the abilities to relate, communicate, educate, collaborate and model. Their focus is on the professional improvement of the new pupil services professional. The mentor uses a variety of interpersonal skills to nurture the relationship, establish trust, and reflect a positive and caring attitude. The ability to listen and communicate effectively with others is of critical importance. Mentors are committed to sharing their knowledge and expertise. They recognize the needs of others, and can discern when it is best to offer direct support or assistance, or when it is best to promote independence. Mentors are dedicated to the profession and reflect the highest level of integrity, competence, and responsibility.

Their conversations with, and observations of, the initial educator are kept in confidence. They come prepared to meetings with their initial educator, and follow through on their commitments. As collaborators, mentors are approachable, flexible, and supportive. The mentor must be able to provide insightful observations and constructive feedback, and share similar experiences with the initial educator in order to personalize and enrich the relationship. As a role model, the mentor motivates the initial educator to take risks, make decisions, take actions without the certainty of successful results, and to overcome difficulties in the journey toward professional and personal growth.

Roles and Responsibilities in a Mentoring Program

With the help of their mentors and their administrators, initial educators utilize their acquired knowledge, skills, and dispositions to develop effective styles of practice that they can use throughout their careers. Mentors provide support through listening and sharing, offering advice and ideas, allowing the initial educators to observe experienced colleagues, promoting self-reflection, and modeling professionalism. The mentor is a key person in the initial educator's success. Mentors' unique role outside of the Professional Development Review (PDP) Team allows them to provide collegial support in a confidential manner. School administrators ensure the effectiveness of the mentoring process by making it a genuine priority within the school's professional development program.

Mentors:

- Provide support, advice, and counsel to the initial pupil services professional to facilitate the understanding of responsibilities based upon the Wisconsin pupil services standards;
- Make observations of, and hold post-observation conferences, with the pupil services professional;
- Provide opportunities for the initial educator to learn by observing the mentor or other experienced pupil services professionals;

- Attend ongoing district supported mentor training;
- Respect state and federal laws regarding confidentiality, understanding the limits of confidentiality inherent to a mentor-initial educator relationship;
- Give input to the district steering committee to improve the district initial educator support or induction system;
- Work cooperatively with initial educators, administrators, staff and community;
- Communicate regularly and appropriately with the initial educator using a variety of methods; and
- Model and promote culturally sensitive practices.

The mentor must have ready knowledge of, and access to, quality resources (e.g., hard-copy and electronic resources, listservs and email groups, professional development opportunities, evidence-based interventions, consultants, and state and national professional organizations). The mentor should be familiar with the profession's ethical standards and scope of practice, and should ensure that the initial educator has a copy of these standards for reference.

The mentor prioritizes learning for the initial educator by considering these questions throughout the school year:

- What does the initial educator need to know now?
- What does the initial educator need to know soon?
- What does the initial educator need to know later?

The mentor and initial educator should meet before students begin the school year to establish expectations and ground rules, as well as to handle any “now” learning. Thereafter, the mentor and the initial educator should hold regular meetings (e.g., weekly) and be available at other times as needed. Reflection is an integral element of professional learning and the PDP process, and initial educators may benefit from opportunities to regularly reflect, either in writing or in dialogue, on these questions as prompts:

- What went well this week?
- What did I struggle with this week?
- Where do I see opportunities?
- Where do I see challenges?
- What additional resources do I need?

*We are not what we
know but what we are
willing to learn.*

– Mary Catherine Bateson

The most significant reflections may be included in the initial educator's annual PDP update. The regular meetings between the initial educator and mentor may include time for questions and a review of assignments/commitments from the previous meeting. It may be convenient and effective to use the five questions as a note-taking template.

The initial educator must desire to learn how to more effectively meet the needs of students, identify personal and professional needs, participate in training sessions, ask questions, observe and learn from the mentor and colleagues, and reflect and prepare a Professional Development Plan. In order to accomplish these goals, the initial educator should be:

- Receptive to learning from a more experienced professional;
- Honest, forthcoming, and willing to communicate with the mentor; and
- Committed to personal growth, continuous learning, and excellence in the profession.

Support from school administrators is important to the success of the mentoring program.

School administrators:

- Can be supportive of the mentoring process for initial educators in the district;
- Collaborate with outside organizations to strengthen mentoring;
- Provide professional development activities for all participants;
- Respect the confidential relationship between the mentor and the initial educator;
- Communicate the purposes and goals of mentoring to all staff members; and
- Support mentors by providing necessary resources such as time for mentoring, professional resources and materials, and encouragement.

Relationship Between the Mentor and the Initial Educator

The mentor-initial educator relationship is a collaborative and confidential partnership that provides learning activities created primarily for the benefit of the initial educator. A truly successful program provides learning opportunities for both the mentor and initial educator as reciprocal learning partners. Successful mentoring programs evolve through a series of phases.

- Relationship Building – Early in the mentorship, mentors emphasize building the relationship to establish a foundation of trust. Trust must be established and nurtured between the mentor and initial educator in order to support professional understanding, meaningful dialogue, non-judgmental acceptance, and relevant self-disclosure.
- Educational Emphasis – Later in the mentorship, the emphasis is on education. The educational phase includes information acquisition, knowledge development, evaluation and feedback, and collaborative exchange. Mentors help the initial educators develop appropriate goals, engage in problem-solving activities, and answer questions or concerns initial educators may articulate.
- Role Modeling and Vision Development – In the final stage, the mentor-initial educator relationship evolves to a more advanced level. Mentors function as role models who directly motivate initial educators to critically reflect on their goals, challenges, and career paths.

Mentors function as role models who directly motivate initial educators to critically reflect on their goals, challenges, and career paths.

Challenges Which Can Occur in the Mentoring Relationship

The mentor and initial educator are colleagues, but, at times the initial educator may be insecure, afraid of making mistakes, resistant to sharing weaknesses, and may defer to the mentor. Conversely, the initial educator may sometimes be uncooperative, overly confident, or have an inaccurate perception of reality. Neither of these types of relationships allows the full benefit of mentoring to be realized. Additionally, untrained mentors may struggle with their role in the relationship, and could fall into criticism, advice-giving, or rescuing the initial educator.

The most powerful motivators are survival and security, and a strong mentoring relationship will nurture these. Mentors demonstrate understanding and support through active listening and providing feedback. Both the mentor and the initial educator need to understand the limits to confidentiality inherent in their relationship. The initial educator's growth depends on individual problem solving within an atmosphere of support.

The mentor should foreshadow upcoming tasks and events with the initial educator. The mentor should avoid personal and professional biases against the initial educator.

The mentor is a resource to the initial educator and can provide advice and assistance in the development of the PDP.

Feedback from the mentor should be specific, objective, constructive, respectful, and direct. The purpose is to help the initial educator use the feedback to improve their professional practice. Temporary help in a crisis may provide appropriate guidance, but help on an ongoing basis may inhibit growth towards independent professional competence.

Role of the Mentor in Development of the Initial Educator's PDP

In addition to fulfilling the school district requirements, initial educators must design and complete a Professional Development Plan (PDP). A successfully completed PDP demonstrates the initial educator's development in two or more of the Wisconsin pupil services standards, verifiable professional growth, and the effect of that professional growth upon student learning. Upon successful completion of the PDP process, the initial educator may apply for a Professional Educator's license (See Wisconsin Quality Educator Initiative License Stages Chart in Appendix).

The mentor is a resource to the initial educator and can provide advice and assistance in the development of the PDP. The mentor can help the initial educator clarify thinking, articulate goals, and grow professionally, but mentors do not develop the initial educator's PDP.

PI 34 requires initial educators to formally document a prescribed set of self-reflections, plans, and growth activities in their PDPs. Initial educator's work on the elements of the PDP process is expected to extend over the full three- to five-year length of their initial license. In the PDP, initial educators:

- Reflect on their professional skills and areas for growth;
- Describe the context of their professional work situation;
- Develop a professional goal that is linked to their self-reflection, educational situation, and the seven pupil services standards (see Appendix B);
- Plan to assess and document their own professional growth and the effect of that growth on student learning;
- Develop specific objectives, growth activities, and PDP timelines;
- Plan how to collaborate with other knowledgeable and supportive professionals;
- Keep ongoing records of their reflections and progress toward meeting their goal; and
- Summarize specific evidence of their professional growth and its impact on student learning, after completing the other elements of the PDP.

Initial educators work directly with their PDP Review Team. Early in the license cycle, initial educators are required to obtain the Review Team's approval for their PDP goals. Near the end of the license cycle, initial educators are required to obtain the Review Team's verification that their final PDP documentation is consistent with the requirements of PI 34. For initial pupil services professionals, the PDP Review Team must consist of a pupil services professional, an administrator who is not the initial educator's supervisor, and an institution of higher education representative. Members of the Review Team must have successfully completed DPI-approved Review Team training and must be designated by DPI as eligible to fill one of the three specific Review Team roles.

Mentors are not permitted to serve as their initial educator's pupil services representative on the PDP Review Team. The mentor role and the Review Team role are considered to be separate and distinct, and must be filled by separate individuals. Mentors, however, can help initial educators navigate through the PDP process, benefit from PDP activities, and obtain their license.

Mentors can:

- Become familiar with the PI 34 requirements of the PDP;
- Help initial educators reflect on their professional strengths, areas of need, and relevant experiences;
- Provide specific feedback regarding initial educators' performance of professional duties;
- Help initial educators understand the PDP process and coach them regarding the completion of the elements of the PDP;
- Ask about initial educators' progress with their PDPs; and
- Serve as a professional resource for initial educators, providing some of the professional collaboration that must be documented in the PDP.

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

– Nelson Mandela



Pupil Services Standards and Mentoring

III

This section lists each of the Pupil Services Standards, sample expectations of the initial educator, and suggested mentor orientation activities for each pupil services standard. These guidelines are intended to assist the initial educator in strengthening understanding of the standards through their work with a mentor. Information and resources specific to each of the pupil services professions should be discussed and explained as part of the mentor training program.

STANDARD 1: The pupil services professional understands the teacher standards under Wis. Admin. Code sec. PI 34.02

Expectations for the initial educator:

- The pupil services professional can reference and understand the ten teacher standards.
- The pupil services professional can describe the roles and areas of competence of various professionals within the local educational agency, and how they assist teachers in meeting the ten standards.

Suggested mentor orientation activities:

- Mentors help identify how pupil services support the learning of students.
- Mentors assist initial educators in understanding the role of other staff members who assist teachers in meeting the ten standards.

Mentors help identify how pupil services support the learning of students.

STANDARD 2: The pupil services professional understands the complexities of learning, and knowledge of comprehensive, coordinated practice strategies that support pupil learning, health, safety, and development.

Expectations for the initial educator:

- The pupil services professional understands the various levels of student learning, starting at the concrete and moving into the abstract, including the impact of learning styles.
- The pupil services professional understands district requirements for achievement and graduation.
- The pupil services professional understands what district programs and services are mandated by federal, state, and/or local law and school district policy.
- The pupil services professional understands how modifications and accommodations support student learning and when they are appropriate.
- The pupil services professional assesses district, student, teacher, and parent needs which affect student learning; plans and implements strategic interventions; and evaluates outcomes.
- The pupil services professional is aware of culturally responsive practices to promote student learning and development.

Suggested mentor orientation activities:

- Mentors help understanding of the various steps and complexities of learning, both through the use of resources and staff contacts.
- Mentors provide the district requirements for achievement and graduation.
- Mentors review the programs and services that are available in the school district, including those mandated by law and policy, and the pupil services professional's role in implementation. They ensure initial educators know how to access this information.
- Mentors discuss how to implement accommodations and modifications necessary for student success.
- Mentors introduce teachers and specialists (regular, special education, at-risk, gifted) who are skilled in providing collaborative efforts which support a system of education and who are willing to share their expertise.
- Mentors consult with the initial educators regarding direct or indirect individual and group strategies through activities such as case consultation, observation with feedback, modeling, and/or group co-facilitation.

STANDARD 3: The pupil services professional has the ability to use research, research methods, and knowledge about issues and trends to improve practice in schools and classrooms.

Expectations for the initial educator:

- The pupil services professional is familiar with his/her professional organizations and the research literature each provides for student academic success.
- The pupil services professional is familiar with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, the local CESA (Cooperative Educational Service Agency) and other local organizations and agencies, including schools of higher education which provide information and services relating to the needs of the educational community.
- The pupil services professional is familiar with sources of information relating to the needs of students, families, teachers, administrators, and themselves, including practice literature, the internet and other technologies.
- The pupil services professional understands statistical information and, using both individual and group data, can make decisions affecting both students and practices.
- The pupil services professional is aware of trends affecting district operation, in terms of enrollment projections, legal mandates, and student needs.
- The pupil services professional is able to assess outcomes of professional practice at all levels of impact – student, classroom, school, district, family, and community.

Suggested mentor orientation activities:

- Mentors encourage initial educators to join relevant professional organizations to access research literature and other supports from their respective fields.
- Mentors share information about the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction services, consultants, and resources supporting work in their respective fields.
- Mentors discuss institutions of higher education which offer support in the initial educator's implementation of services.

Mentors encourage initial educators to join relevant professional organizations to access research literature and other supports from their respective fields.

Mentors orient initial educators to general and local academic and behavioral applications of Response to Intervention (RtI).

- Mentors familiarize the initial educator with agencies and programs serving as resources for integration of services and for intervention ideas.
- Mentors suggest continuing education opportunities, such as workshops, and may accompany the initial educator to these events.
- Mentors orient initial educators to general and local academic and behavioral applications of Response to Intervention (RtI).
- Mentors educate about district technology, and accessing of research and data to support knowledge and pupil services practice.
- Mentors outline meaningful demographic data affecting the local educational agency.
- Mentors assist in outcome evaluation of interventions.



STANDARD 4: The pupil services professional understands and represents professional ethics and social behaviors appropriate for school and community.

Expectations for the initial educator:

- The pupil services professional knows and practices the ethical standards of his/her profession.
- The pupil services professional is aware of community and cultural differences as they pertain to socially accepted behaviors.
- The pupil services professional is aware of and engages in culturally responsive practices.
- The pupil services professional exhibits competence in working with individuals and groups without discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability.

Suggested mentor orientation activities:

- Mentors share information about professional codes of ethics of the pupil services professions.
- Mentors help initial educators apply the professional ethical standards.
- Mentors provide consultation on ethical dilemmas presented in practice.
- Mentors share district and community-based information and media resources, such as local newspapers, district publications, etc.
- Mentors share resources particular to cultural and diversity issues, and help the initial educator apply this knowledge to practice.

Mentors provide consultation on ethical dilemmas presented in practice.

Mentors discuss strategies to create necessary changes to improve services.

STANDARD 5: The pupil services professional understands the organization, development, management, and content of collaborative and mutually supportive pupil services programs within educational settings.

Expectations for the initial educator:

- The pupil services professional understands his/her role on the pupil services team, and how it differs and supports the roles of others to provide integrated, comprehensive, and collaborative pupil services and programs.
- The pupil services professional complies with documentation requirements of his/her profession and school district.

Suggested mentor orientation activities:

- Mentors help initial educators discover how the pupil services team operates in assigned buildings, including supports for and barriers to collaboration.
- Mentors discuss strategies to create necessary changes to improve services.
- Mentors help initial educators learn the documentation requirements of the initial educators' position in terms of student records, forms, data, and other processes.

STANDARD 6: The pupil services professional is able to address, comprehensively, the wide range of social, emotional, behavioral, and physical issues and circumstances, which may limit pupils' abilities to achieve positive learning outcomes through development, implementation, and evaluation of system-wide interventions and strategies.

Expectations for the initial educator:

- The pupil services professional has knowledge of the numerous barriers that impede academic success for all students. These barriers include, but are not limited to, mental and physical health issues, trauma, poverty, prejudice, discrimination, violence, and chaotic environments in pupils' lives.
- The pupil services professional believes that all children can learn and be successful in school once these barriers are overcome.

- The pupil services professional advocates vigorously for equal access to educational opportunities by all students, and advocates for services and programs to deal with barriers to accessing and using these opportunities.
- The pupil services professional understands his/her local school district's formal and informal organizational systems and culture, both district-wide, and within individual schools.
- The pupil services professional understands the relationship between school-community relations and K-12 education.
- The pupil services professional is aware of district and community boards, committees, and other organizations which influence district operation.
- The pupil services professional is familiar with a variety of programs and models outside of the district for system-wide intervention, in order to select and implement appropriate programming.

Suggested mentor orientation activities:

- Mentors assist the initial educator to look comprehensively at student needs across time to determine the specific barriers in the district which may limit student success.
- Mentors connect the initial educator with veteran professionals in the district who have a history of advocating for equal educational opportunity access for all students.
- Mentors help the initial educator understand the formal and informal organization and culture of his/her assigned schools, district, and/or employing agency.
- Mentors clarify the school and district goals for the year.
- Mentors help analyze how services can help teachers and parents overcome barriers that affect learning.
- Mentors share a list of school-based and district committees, including parent groups, which affect school and district operation, and encourages initial educator membership on at least one of these.
- Mentors discuss current school-community relations.
- Mentors shares exemplary programs and models for system-wide student services.
- Mentors share the names of the strategic individuals, agencies, and community boards and officials involved in change activities, which affect pupil learning, health, safety, and development in their districts and encourage participation with at least one of these.

Mentors help analyze how services can help teachers and parents overcome barriers that affect learning.

Mentors assist in determining how initial educators will seek feedback from supervisors, associates, and those receiving services.

STANDARD 7: The pupil services professional interacts successfully with pupils, parents, professional educators, employers, and community support systems, such as juvenile justice, public health, human services, and adult education.

Expectations for the initial educator:

- The pupil services professional displays rapport and empathy in working with others.
- The pupil services professional demonstrates effective communication and collaboration skills with individuals and community organizations.
- The pupil services professional demonstrates effective organizational and time management skills to facilitate successful completion of interventions and projects undertaken.
- The pupil services professional develops a system of feedback from supervisors, peers, and those receiving services in determining satisfaction/effectiveness of services.
- The pupil services professional develops contacts and a working relationship with outside agencies and services to mobilize resources for the school community.
- The pupil services professional understands how community systems interact with schools and each other in ways that affect how schools work with children and families.
- The pupil services professional works with administrators, boards, committees, faculties, parent groups, and city/county officials and agencies to shape educational policy and procedures.

Suggested mentor orientation activities:

- Mentors facilitate analyses of self presentation, including personal and professional communication skills.
- Mentors assist in the analysis of the effectiveness of systems for organization and time management.
- Mentors assist in determining how initial educators will seek feedback from supervisors, associates, and from those receiving services.
- Mentors assist in determining how initial educators plan to work with outside agencies and services to obtain needed resources for those in the school community.
- Mentors assist in understanding how community systems interact with each other and the schools to affect how schools work with children and families.

Frequently Asked Questions about Mentoring Pupil Services Professionals

IV

What does PI 34 say with regard to mentors for initial educators in pupil services license areas?

PI 34.17 (2)(c) states: “The initial educator shall be provided with a qualified mentor by the employing school district. The mentoring period may be for less than 5 years.” The Handbook for Designing and Implementing a District-Level Initial Educator Support System offers several suggestions for matching teacher mentors and initial educators, including similar subject and grade level job assignments, and/or close proximity of the mentor and initial educator to facilitate frequent contact (AFT, 1998; Scott, 2000).

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.

– Margaret Mead

How does the mentor function in relationship to the initial educator’s PDP Review Team?

PI 34.17 (3)(b) states: “For pupil services educators, the team shall include a pupil services professional in the same license category who is not the mentor, and who is selected by peers, an administrator designated by the district administrator subject to approval by the school board, and an Institute of Higher Education (IHE) representative.” According to this definition, the pupil services mentor is not a member of the team. This is to enable the development of a positive, trusting relationship in which knowledge and expertise are shared within an atmosphere of confidential sharing and positive risk taking. An effective mentorship is built upon these characteristics.

How are mentors selected?

This is a decision to be made between the school board and local teachers’ union, if the initial educator is a represented employee. However, PI 34 states that anyone serving as a mentor must be trained. It is recommended that mentors volunteer and be selected through a collaborative school district process. Research indicates that this represents best practice. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the school district to provide mentors.

Must mentors be approved by the local school board?

This is a decision to be made by the local school district.

In smaller districts, who should serve as a pupil services mentor? In other words, can a pupil services professional from a neighboring school district serve as a mentor to an initial educator?

A small district may need more than one mentor to address the mentoring responsibilities (see “Recommended Criteria for a Mentor”). While this person could feasibly be from a neighboring district or Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA), this may or may not be practical. Only someone from within the local district can provide information about local policy and practice issues.

If the law states that a mentor must have a current Professional Educator license, do pupil services educators who are licensed under PI 3 qualify?

Yes, if a pupil services educator holds a current license in his/her professional area, and has volunteered and been trained as an educator mentor, he/she qualifies to serve as a mentor. All educators licensed under the previous law, PI 3, (that is, all educators licensed in Wisconsin prior to July 1, 2004) were transferred into the current law, PI 34, at the Professional Educator level.

Who is considered a pupil services professional under PI 34?

Anyone who holds a current DPI license in the areas of school counselor, school social worker, school psychologist, or school nurse is considered a pupil services professional.

Why are only these four categories mentioned? What about other licensed school staff who provide support services to students?

Licensed school staff members who provide support services to students (e.g., occupational therapists, physical therapists, audiologists, etc.) are defined by PI 34.34 as “additional licenses,” which do not require completion of an approved program or institutional endorsement from a college or university for issuance. There are 18 categories that fit this description and are not considered pupil services within the law.

How does the DPI licensure requirement for mentors impact school nurses, many of whom are not licensed by DPI?

Only those school nurses who hold current DPI licensure as a school nurse, have volunteered, and have been trained as mentors, qualify to serve as mentors.

PI 34.01 (34) states: “Mentor means an educator... who will have input into the ‘confidential formative assessment’...of the initial educator....” What does this mean?

An initial educator’s mentor provides guidance, feedback, and coaching throughout the mentoring period. He/she is not a member of the Initial Educator’s PDP Review Team and, therefore, can provide confidential, constructive feedback and assistance to the initial educator regarding his/her development as a professional within the respective pupil services discipline. The mentor, however, is not part of the formal evaluation process of the employee.

What does PI 34 say in regard to mentor comments being included in the Professional Development Plan?

PI 34.17 (4)(b) states: “Successful completion of the Professional Development Plan (PDP) shall be documented. The documentation may include, but is not limited to...supervisor and mentor comments of classroom performance....” This means that the mentor’s comments regarding the initial educator’s classroom performance may be included as documentation at the initial educator’s discretion. Care must be exercised, however, to include only documentation that does not violate the “confidential formative assessment” described in Question 10 above.

How should challenges within the mentor-initial educator relationship be addressed?

In instances where the mentoring relationship is not working, the mentor and initial educator need to attempt resolution of any issues related to the relationship by communicating openly and honestly. In cases where these issues cannot be resolved, it is recommended that the mentor and initial educator approach the school administrator who approved the match and discuss options for resolving the issue.

*The pathway to
educational excellence
lies within each school.*

– Terrance Deal

Can the mentor consult other professionals to help with issues of misconduct that may be encountered in the process of mentoring?

Pupil services mentors may wish to notify the initial educator of the steps that would be taken should the mentor observe inappropriate or unlawful behavior on the part of the initial educator. Ethical standards for the pupil services professions provide guidance in this area.

Are mentors held accountable for the provision of mentoring?

Individual school districts, as a part of providing training for mentors, may wish to include a format for documentation of regular contacts made for the provision of mentoring.

Where can I find more information about mentoring initial educators?

More information about mentoring initial educators is available at <http://tepd.dpi.wi.gov/resources/initial-educators>



Appendices



PI 34.02 Teacher Standards

To receive a license to teach in Wisconsin, an applicant shall complete an approved program and demonstrate proficient performance in the knowledge, skills and dispositions under all of the following standards:

1. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the disciplines he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for pupils.
2. The teacher understands how children with broad ranges of ability learn and provides instruction that supports their intellectual, social, and personal development.
3. The teacher understands how pupils differ in their approaches to learning and the barriers that impede learning and can adapt instruction to meet the diverse needs of pupils, including those with disabilities and exceptionalities.
4. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies, including the use of technology to encourage children's development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.
5. The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
6. The teacher uses effective verbal and nonverbal communication techniques as well as instructional media and technology to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
7. The teacher organizes and plans systematic instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, pupils, the community, and curriculum goals.
8. The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the pupil.
9. The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effect of his or her choices and actions on pupils, parents, professionals in the learning community and others and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.
10. The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support pupil learning and well being and who acts with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner.

*Nothing was ever
achieved without
enthusiasm.*

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

PI 34.04 Pupil Services Standards

To receive a license in a pupil services category under s. PI 34.31, an applicant shall complete an approved program and demonstrate proficient performance in the knowledge, skills and dispositions under all of the following standards:

1. The pupil services professional understands the teacher standards under s. PI 34.02.
2. The pupil services professional understands the complexities of learning and knowledge of comprehensive, coordinated practice strategies that support pupil learning, health, safety and development.
3. The pupil services professional has the ability to use research, research methods and knowledge about issues and trends to improve practice in schools and classrooms.
4. The pupil services professional understands and represents professional ethics and social behaviors appropriate for school and community.
5. The pupil services professional understands the organization, development, management and content of collaborative and mutually supportive pupil services programs within educational settings.
6. The pupil services professional is able to address comprehensively the wide range of social, emotional, behavioral and physical issues and circumstances which may limit pupils' abilities to achieve positive learning outcomes through development, implementation and evaluation of system-wide interventions and strategies.
7. The pupil services professional interacts successfully with pupils, parents, professional educators, employers, and community support systems such as juvenile justice, public health, human services and adult education.

Licensure Program Guidelines for Wisconsin Institutions of Higher Education and Alternative Programs

SCHOOL COUNSELOR (54)

A School Counselor will demonstrate:

1. An understanding of the psychological, theoretical and sociological foundations of human development, learning, and behavior.
2. An understanding of skills required to develop, organize, administer, evaluate, and promote a comprehensive developmental school-counseling program based on the Wisconsin Developmental Guidance Model in collaboration with educators, families and community resources.
3. The skills required to work effectively with school teams to promote a safe and healthy school climate, including prevention and intervention strategies such as conflict resolution, peer mediation and crisis management.
4. An understanding of the role that diversity, inclusion, gender and equity have on students' academic achievement, personal/social and career development.
5. Individual and group counseling skills, which facilitate students', personal/social, academic, and career development throughout their PK-12 school experience.
6. An understanding of PK-16 career development theories, practices and programs, including the ability to facilitate student skill development.
7. Knowledge of developmental approaches to assist all students and parents at points of educational transition such as, home to elementary school, elementary to middle to high school and high school to postsecondary options.
8. An understanding of relevant state and federal laws, institutional rules, regulations and standards along with the national and ethical standards of the American School Counselor Association.
9. The ability to utilize research, student data and institutional assessments to improve school counseling programs and recommend systematic changes that will improve the learning environment for all students.
10. An understanding of current and emerging technology in education and school counseling to assist students, families, and educators in making informed academic, career, and personal/social choices.
11. An understanding of how to acquire ongoing professional development and reflection in helping to continually evaluate school-counseling services.
12. Acquired skills in understanding the role, function and responsibilities of a school counselor by acquiring a minimum of 600 hours of supervised practicum as a school counselor in a school setting at the appropriate level(s).

SCHOOL NURSE (75)

The School Nurse will demonstrate knowledge of and skill in:

1. The organizational processes of public education, including the organizational culture, values, structure, and politics of schools.
2. Describing the roles and areas of competence of various professionals within the local educational agency, including the teacher standards under PI 34.
3. Defining the purpose, role, professional standards and laws affecting school nurse practice in the public schools.
4. Participating in the development of a school nursing practice within an education system that is consistent with principles of a family-centered approach, community health practice theory, comprehensive school health, and child growth and development.
5. Following the American Nurses Association Standards of Clinical Nursing Practice and the National Association of School Nurses Standards of Professional School Nursing Practice in the application of the nursing process to systematically collect relevant data and other information; identify problem areas and needs; make or facilitate empirically based decisions about service delivery; and evaluate the outcome of service delivery within an educational setting.
6. Making assessments, planning strategies of care, and implementing and evaluating care in ways that promote the academic success of a child with a chronic condition, illness or disability.
7. Utilizing research to develop health policies and procedures to improve health services, programs, and client outcomes, and recommending systematic change that will support pupil learning, health, safety, and development.
8. Developing and implementing health policies and procedures in collaboration with school administrators, the school medical advisor, public health officials and the Department of Public Instruction.
9. Collaborating with the student, family, school staff, community, and other providers in the formulation of overall goals, objectives, timelines, care plans, and decisions related to the delivery of services.
10. The relevant federal and state laws, administrative codes and institutional rules and regulations, including practice which is guided by the Wisconsin Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses and Rules of Conduct, and the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics with interpretive Statements for School Nurses.
11. Articulating the organization, content, roles, and management of collaborative pupil services programs in an educational setting, and being able to define the pupil services model as a comprehensive, multifaceted, and integrated approach for addressing barriers to learning and promoting healthy development.

12. The cultural factors in race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status and how culture affects individual, family, group, organization and community behavior, academic achievement, and health status.
13. How the larger environment influences the child's health and development and the family's activities in relation to the child's health to make assessments, plan strategies, and implement and evaluate approaches to care of the child that are in accord with the family's economic and social situation and available resources.
14. Using effective written, verbal, and nonverbal communication skills to work effectively with individuals and groups with different abilities, disabilities, orientations, strengths and weaknesses.

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST (61, 62)

By the end of a Preparation Program leading to Licensure in School Psychology, a student will demonstrate proficiency in:

Foundational Skills

Domain 1: Communication, Collaboration, and Leadership Skills

- Content knowledge and interpersonal skills necessary to effectively communicate, collaborate, and lead.
- Communicate in a supportive, problem-solving fashion using active listening, flexibility, and effective facilitation.
- Use empirically supported consultation methodologies to improve learning at the individual, group, and systems levels.
- Work effectively as change agents, offering leadership and professional development to staff, schools, districts, and systems.
- Understand the organization, development, management and content of collaborative and mutually supportive pupil services programs in schools.

Domain 2: Competence in All Aspects of Diversity

- Recognize when, where, and how issues of diversity are manifest.
- Address diversity in service delivery.
- Recognize occasions when issues of diversity affect the manner and nature of interactions with other people and organizations and work to address those issues as necessary.

*If you have knowledge,
let others light their
candles in it.*
– Margaret Fuller

Domain 3: Technological Competence

- Use technology and databases in evidence based practice, decision-making, program evaluation, assessment, and progress monitoring.
- Help students, parents, and teachers know how and where to access relevant technologies, as well as how to enhance learning with appropriate technologies.

Domain 4: Legal/Ethical Practice, Public Policy, and Professional Development

- Understand and meet all relevant ethical, professional, and legal standards to ensure high quality services and protect the rights of all parties.
- Have a knowledge base of the history and foundations of their profession and engaging in ongoing professional development.
- Support policy development that creates safe and effective learning environments.
- Understand regular and special education legal requirements at both the state and federal level, and ensure compliance with these requirements.
- Have knowledge about relevant research, and directly and indirectly apply research to practices in schools.

Processes

Domain 5: Assessment, Decision-Making, and Accountability

- Define and use a wide variety of effective assessment and evaluation methods at the individual, group, and system levels.
- Gather, analyze, and utilize data that aid in understanding strengths and needs, in choosing interventions, and in assessing outcomes as part of a decision-making process.
- Understand and use research, research methods, statistical analyses, and program evaluation techniques.
- Understand the implications and analysis of large-scale assessments, and use those data to help schools meet accountability requirements.
- Collect, analyze, and report data to stakeholders relating to the effectiveness of psychological services.

Domain 6: Relationships Among and Between Systems

- Understand the influence of home, community, and school systems on student success, and develop evidence-based prevention and intervention programs consistent with this understanding.
- Promote safe and nurturing school environments, with positive climates and high expectations for all students.
- Perform needs assessment to identify service requirements.

Outcomes

Domain 7: Effective Instruction and Development of Cognitive and Academic Skills

- Use and support others in the use of evidence-based prevention and intervention programming to develop competencies.
- Apply cognitive psychology and learning theory to improve instruction.
- Help to develop cognitive and academic goals for all students, adjust expectations for individual students, implement alternative methods, and monitor progress.
- Assist State and Local Education Agency personnel who design state and local accountability systems.

Domain 8: Wellness, Mental Health and Development of Life Competencies

- Use knowledge about human development to design and implement prevention and intervention programs to promote wellness.
- Help schools develop behavioral, affective, and adaptive goals for all students.
- Prepare for and responding to a wide variety of crisis situations.
- Working as skilled mental health practitioners in the schools, performing accurate assessment of mental health disorders, implementing empirically-based interventions with individuals and groups, and closely monitoring outcomes.

*Life is like playing
a violin in public
and learning the
instrument as one
goes along.*

– Samuel Butler

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER (50)

The School Social Worker will demonstrate knowledge of and skill in:

1. Social welfare and educational policy, including:

- History of education, social work, and human services systems.
- Role of policy at local, state, and national levels in education and school social work practice.
- Process of policy formation and implementation and its impact on student and family systems, schools, organizations, and communities.
- Use of policy practice to analyze, influence, and advocate.
- State and federal laws related to school social work practice, such as education, child welfare, mental health, and juvenile justice.

2. Social work values and ethics, including:

- Mission of public education.
- Mission of school social work to ensure student learning, educational equity, and social justice for every student by reducing or eliminating the social, economic, and environmental barriers.
- Demonstration and promotion of the values of the profession as delineated in the NASW Code of Ethics.
- Professional school social work and pupil services standards.
- Ability to use an ethical decision-making model to guide practice.
- Ability to practice as an autonomous social worker in keeping with the values and ethics of the profession.

3. Social and economic justice and populations at risk,* including:

- Understanding risk/resiliency factors for populations at risk.*
- Understanding the dynamics of risk factors for school failure and the strategies to address them.
- Understanding how group membership and various forms of oppression affect access to resources and educational opportunities.
- Strategies to combat discrimination, oppression, institutional racism and economic deprivation.
- Advocacy for non-discriminatory social and economic systems.
- Identification of inequities in access to school and community programs and services for children, youth and families.

4. Systematic assessment of individuals, families, schools, and community and their interactions, including:

- Students' physical, cognitive, social and emotional development and family history.
- Students' learning, behavior and attitudes in different settings, including formal assessment of adaptive skills, functional behavior, and responses to interventions.
- Patterns of achievement and adjustment at critical points in students' growth and development.
- Comprehensive assessment of students suspected of having disabilities related to IEPs and 504 plans.
- Assessment and screening for barriers to learning such as substance abuse, mental illness and trauma.
- Formal and informal policies of the school and other institutional factors that may affect students' behavior and learning.
- Existence, accessibility, and utilization of community resources for students and families.

5. Effective prevention and intervention with individuals, families, schools, and communities, including:

- Utilization of a strength-based approach to enhance students' capacities, with special emphasis on students in populations at risk.*
- Design and implementation of practice strategies with persons from diverse backgrounds.
- Partnership with families and others to resolve challenges in the home, school, and community.
- Counseling.
- Crisis intervention and other mental health services.
- Casework and case management.
- Group work.
- Classroom instruction.
- Consultation.
- Mediation and conflict resolution.
- Advocacy.
- Development of positive behavioral intervention strategies.

*How wonderful it is
that nobody need wait
a single moment before
starting to improve the
world.*

– Anne Frank

- Development of written plans of service for students, such as IEPs, BIPs, and 504 plans.
- Coordination of student transitions to/from community-based services and schools.
- Curriculum development.
- Program development and management.
- Provision of professional development and community education.
- Collaboration as leaders or members of interdisciplinary teams and community partnerships.
- Community organization, including mobilization of school and community resources.

6. Human behavior and social environment, including:

- Biological, psychological, and sociological variables affecting development, learning and educational achievement.
- Application of theoretical frameworks to understand the interaction among individuals and between individuals and social systems (families, groups, organizations and communities).

7. Diversity, including:

- Cultural factors in race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and social class and how culture affects individual, family, group, organizational and community behavior.
- Understanding of and affirmation and respect for people from diverse backgrounds and recognition of diversity within and between groups.
- Development of trust, open communication, mutual respect and on-going collaboration with members of diverse populations.
- Ability to take cultural and other diversity factors into account in assessments and interventions.

8. Research, including:

- Qualitative and quantitative methodologies
- Use of practice literature and empirically-based knowledge in the areas of children, youth, families and schools to:
 - provide high-quality school social work services and educational interventions,
 - evaluate programs and services,
 - evaluate one's own practice,
 - initiate change, and
 - improve practice, policy, and programs.

*Populations at risk include, but are not limited to, children with disabilities, school age parents, homeless youth and families, students affected by mental health and AOD issues, GLBTQ students, abused and neglected students, students living in poverty, children of color, adjudicated and incarcerated youth, gifted and talented students, English-language learners, students whose families are in crisis, and other marginalized groups of students

*Plan to be better
tomorrow than today,
but don't plan to be
finished.*

— Carol Ann Tomlinson