

NASP Practice Update: Federal Public Policy & Legislative Platform



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Learner Objectives:

- Learners will learn the definition and purpose of a Legislative and Policy Platform.
- Learners will review the guiding principals of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) including the NASP Vision and Core Values.
- Learners will be able to identify:
 - NASP's current Strategic Goals identified within the current NASP Strategic Plan.
 - Factors that influence the NASP 2019-2021 Legislative and Policy Platform (Policy Platform).
 - The 6 Overarching Policy Goals identified in the Policy Platform.
 - Specific recommendations within the Policy Platform that have the potential to impact professional practice of School Psychology.
- Learners will be able to connect content with personal ethics and experiences and how the Policy Platform has direct implications for professional practice.

Political Science: Let's Review!

- The branch of government that makes our laws is called the:
Legislative branch, AKA the Congress.
- We are currently in the ???th Congress.
116th
- Convened in Washington, DC on January 3, 2019 and will end on January 3, 2021.



Political Science: Let's Review!

- 2 Chambers:
 - Senate Majority = Republican
 - House of Representatives Majority = Democratic
- This Congress is considered to be the most diverse ever elected, and the youngest in the past three cycles.



What is a Policy Platform?

- A broad policy framework for implementing an association's mission and to set the agenda for guiding the association in its policy and political leadership activities.
- Also guides the association's partnerships, research efforts, and working with the media and the public.
- Often used to build awareness about an organization's identity, values, and professional practice.
- May be used to appeal to the general public, for the ultimate purpose of garnering the public support and votes about complicated topics or issues.

NASP 2019-2021 Legislative & Policy Platform

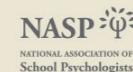


The NASP 2019-2021 Public Policy & Legislative Platform

- Represents overarching policy goals and recommendations that support the mission and vision of NASP
- Promotes the guiding principles articulated in *Ready to Learn, Empowered to Teach* (2015) and NASP's Position Statements



GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR
EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS AND SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS



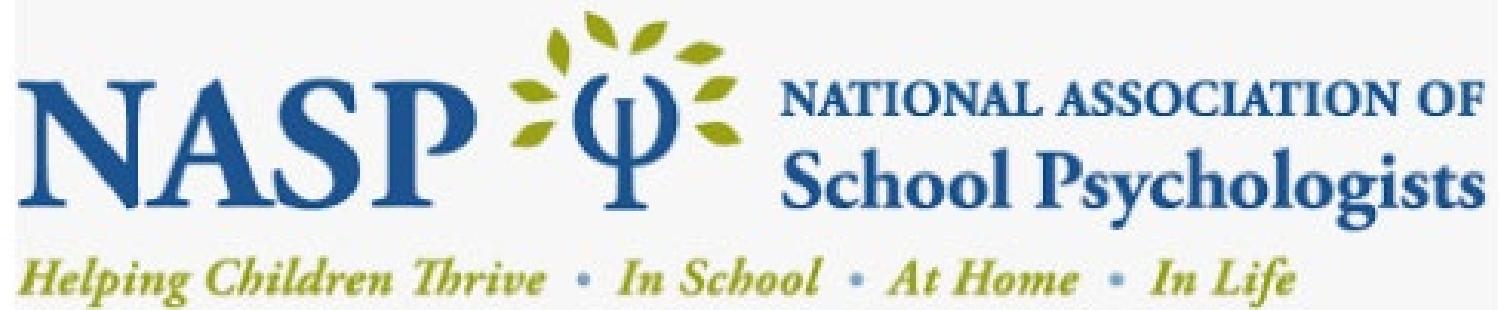
Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life

Ready to Learn, Empowered to Teach

“Indeed, providing a high-quality public education system is one of America’s greatest responsibilities and wisest investments in the nation’s future. NASP believes that education policies that address the whole child and are grounded in evidence-based practices will empower teachers to teach and ensure that every child is ready and able to learn.”

The NASP 2019-2021 Public Policy & Legislative Platform

- Outlines policy objectives designed to help advance the NASP Strategic Goals.
- Includes *specific* legislative and regulatory/subregulatory guidance goals for the 116th Congress as well as our goals for the implementation of two major federal education laws: the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
 - NASP works with Appropriations to ensure federal funding and investment of Title I, II, and IV (ESSA) and IDEA and other grants and programs related to our policy priorities



National Association of School Psychologists

Vision:

All children and youth access the learning, behavior, and mental health support needed to thrive in school, at home, and throughout life.



Core Purpose:

NASP empowers School Psychologists to promote the learning, behavior, and mental health of all children and youth.

National Association of School Psychologists

Core Values:

Integrity: NASP is committed to high standards, ethical principles, social justice, honesty, fairness, and treating others with dignity and respect.

Diversity: NASP honors individual, cultural, and other contextual differences in our own interactions and as they shape students' development.

A Focus on Children and Youth: NASP prioritizes the needs of children, youth, and families in all activities.

Advocacy: NASP promotes equitable schooling and positively influences outcomes, directly affecting the lives of children, youth, families, and the school communities we serve.

National Association of School Psychologists

Core Values, cont.:

- **Collaborative Relationships:** NASP partners with allied organizations, agencies, and others to develop and achieve shared goals.
- **Continuous Improvement:** NASP sets challenging objectives and evaluates the effectiveness of organizational processes and professional practices.
- **Visionary Leadership:** NASP approaches its work with optimism, energy, and professionalism, working pragmatically with "what is" while moving toward "what can be."

NASP Strategic Goals (Adopted 2017)

- **Workforce Shortages**

A high-quality and diverse School Psychology workforce is available to meet an increasing demand for school psychological services.

- **Leadership Development**

School psychologists possess the leadership skills to effect change at the local, state, and national levels.

- **NASP Practice Model**

School psychologists, state education agencies, and local education agencies implement the *NASP Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services*(NASP Practice Model).

NASP Strategic Goals (Adopted 2017)

- **Mental/Behavioral Health Providers**

All School Psychologists provide culturally competent and comprehensive mental and behavioral health (MBH) services.

- **Social Justice**

Ensure that all children and youth are valued and that their rights and opportunities are protected in schools and communities.

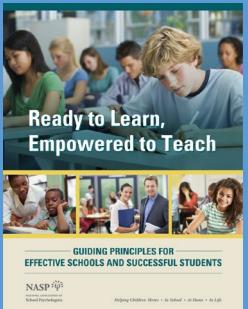
NASP At a Glance...

NASP is committed to ensuring that all students— whatever their race, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, gender (including identification and expression), sexual orientation, disability status, language proficiency or immigration status—are included in a high-quality public education.

Furthermore, NASP is dedicated to ensuring that all children have positive, safe, supportive environments that promote learning and are free of bullying, harassment, discrimination, and violence that promotes student learning and well-being. Critical to this effort is ensuring adequate and equitable access to School Psychologists and culturally competent, comprehensive school psychological services including: consultation and collaboration with families, teachers, and administrators to support student learning; development and delivery of interventions and support to support student's academic achievement, social-emotional learning, and mental and behavioral health; school-wide practices to promote a safe and supportive learning environment; and crisis prevention, intervention, and response.

NASP Vision,
Core Values, &
Ethics

NASP 2019-2021 Legislative & Policy Platform



Position
Statements

IDEA & ESSA



NASP
Strategic
Goals

Research/
Best Practice

Food for Thought...
Something to chew on...
Intellectual Nourishment...



Think about NASP's guiding principles, philosophies, and Strategic Goals and how they relate to your day-to-day practice.

Next, discuss 2-3 items that affect your professional practice that you would want NASP to address as part of their Policy Platform.

I. Remedy The Personnel Shortages in School Psychology



I. Remedy The Personnel Shortages in School Psychology

- Ensure Congress, the Department of Education (DOE), and other relevant agencies prioritize technical assistance and guidance to assist state and district efforts to recruit and retain School Psychologists.
 - This includes a long-term and sustained commitment to align staffing ratios with recommendations generated from national professional organizations.
- Expand Health Service Corps Loan Forgiveness grants and secure Congressional appropriations to allow for loan forgiveness of School Psychologists as granted under the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program.
- Expand the focus of the Higher Education Act to include efforts to recruit and retain a qualified and diverse workforce of School Psychologists.

I. Remedy The Personnel Shortages in School Psychology

- Encourage Congress and/or the DOE and relevant credentialing bodies to create pathways to grant credentialing reciprocity for School Psychologists across state lines, such as the NCSP certificate, to help remedy the shortages in rural and other underserved areas.
- Increase funding for Behavioral Health Workforce Grants, administered by HRSA, which provide financial support for School Psychologyinterns with a specific focus on those serving in rural or underserved communities.
- Amend federal data collections, such as the Common Core of Data and other relevant collections maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics, to collect and report data on the number of FTE ‘School Psychologists’ employed in states and districts across the country.

I. Remedy The Personnel Shortages in School Psychology

- Advance legislation that provides funds to help states increase access to fully certified and/or licensed School Psychologists, especially in high need and hard to staff districts.
- Work with the DOE to pilot a grant program to create university–district partnerships that help recruit and train school-employed mental health professionals and create a pipeline to high need districts.
- Restrict, minimize, or limit alternate or emergency credentialing that allows related professionals to supplant School Psychologists when providing school psychological services.

II. Ensure School & Community Environments Are Safe and Supportive For All Students



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- Oppose efforts that seek to systematically discriminate against children or youth on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identification, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability status, language proficiency, or immigration status.
- Advance legislation that extends existing antidiscrimination and harassment protections to explicitly include real or perceived gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation.
- Advance efforts to ensure that Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is interpreted to include protection of transgender and gender diverse youth.
- Maintain funding for SAMHSA to convene the National LGBTQI2-S Workgroup.
- Support a federal ban on conversion/reparative therapy for youth.

II. Ensure School & Community Environments Are Safe and Supportive For All Students

- Continue the existing efforts of the DOE and other relevant agencies to designate resources to help implement evidence-based, school-wide policies and practices that reduce bullying, harassment, violence, and discrimination for all students.
- Reject efforts to abolish Gun Free School Zones & support efforts to rigorously enforce existing gun laws.
- Advance legislation that requires a comprehensive background check for all gun purchases.
- Advance legislation to ban weapons that can cause mass destruction in a short period of time.

II. Ensure School & Community Environments Are Safe and Supportive For All Students

- Support legislation (e.g., Red Flag Laws) that seeks to prevent people who are of an immediate threat or danger to themselves or others from having access to firearms.
- Reject legislation that seeks to allow anyone other than a commissioned school resource officer (SRO) or other sworn law enforcement official to be armed on school grounds.
- Support efforts and investments to expand availability of scientific research about gun violence (including eliminating the Dickey Amendment).

II. Ensure School & Community Environments Are Safe and Supportive For All Students

- Support efforts to ensure a stable education for homeless youth and children in foster care.
- Support evidence-based efforts to prevent child abuse and human trafficking and provide trauma-informed and gender-responsive care to victims.
- Work with relevant federal agencies and national organizations to promote policy and best practices to support evidence-based threat assessment policy and practice; mental health evaluations and re-entry plans, and enhanced student access to mental health supports in schools and communities.

II. Ensure School & Community Environments Are Safe and Supportive For All Students

- Support funding for high-quality, evidence-based, and job-embedded professional development for educators, specialized instructional support personnel, and other relevant staff in areas including: antibullying, harassment, and discrimination efforts; evidence based threat assessment and management procedures; school-based violence prevention; and positive discipline strategies.
- Support efforts to prohibit the use of seclusion, chemical restraints, and mechanical restraints and to restrict the use of physical restraint.

III. Increase Access to Comprehensive School Mental and Behavioral Health Services



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- Advance legislation that increases access to comprehensive school and community mental health services and reduces disparities in mental health service delivery, especially among underserved populations.
- Promote efforts to implement Mental Health First Aid and other relevant professional development for educators to identify students with potential mental health concerns.
- Support efforts that require evidence-based, developmentally appropriate suicide prevention training for school staff and students.

III. Increase Access to Comprehensive School Mental and Behavioral Health Services

- Advance efforts to increase funding to support evidence-based, trauma-informed practices in schools.
- Support investments to help schools implement evidence-based universal screening for mental and behavioral health concerns.
- Direct the DOE, Health and Human Services (HHS), and other relevant federal agencies to provide incentives, guidance, and technical assistance for school districts to prioritize a MTSS framework that includes both academic and mental and behavioral health services.
 - This guidance should emphasize the importance of access to school-employed mental health professionals (e.g., School Psychologists, school social workers, school counselors) who can provide a comprehensive range of services within the school context, ranging from direct individual-level services to systems-level prevention and intervention services.

III. Increase Access to Comprehensive School Mental and Behavioral Health Services

- Ensure federal grants intended to improve school mental health service delivery, including the Full Service Community Schools program.
- Advance school community mental health partnerships that:
 - Supplement, not supplant, existing school-based services;
 - Clearly articulate the roles of school-employed and community-employed mental health professionals; and
 - Foster coordination and collaboration between school and community mental health professionals.

III. Increase Access to Comprehensive School Mental and Behavioral Health Services

- Demonstrate, through guidance from DOE and other relevant agencies, how various funding streams can be used to provide ongoing, high-quality professional development related to effective delivery of high-quality comprehensive mental health services.
- Ensure School Psychologists are properly recognized as qualified providers of mental and behavioral health in statute, regulation, and credentialing policy.
- Protect the existing structure of Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program to ensure that low income children have access to comprehensive healthcare that includes mental and behavioral health.

III. Increase Access to Comprehensive School Mental and Behavioral Health Services

- Direct the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services to update the Administrative Claiming Technical Assistance Guide, published in 1995, to reflect language in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act that School Psychologists are qualified providers of mental and behavioral health services.
- Direct the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services to issue guidance and technical assistance on how states can leverage the reversal of the Free Care rule to expand access to mental and behavioral health services in schools.
- Elevate the role of School Psychologists as mental and behavioral health providers in relevant materials published by the DOE, relevant agencies, federally funded technical assistance centers, and publications by national organizations.

IV. Ensure All Students Have Equitable Access to Comprehensive Learning Supports Provided Within an Integrated Service Delivery System (e.g., MTSS).



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- Promote efforts that provide funding and technical assistance to help schools and districts establish and maintain a positive school climate.
- Support efforts to expand access to high-quality early childhood education opportunities.
- Maintain existing statutory and regulatory language in current education legislation that allows federal funds to be used to implement MTSS and other tiered systems of support.

IV. Ensure All Students Have Equitable Access to Comprehensive Learning Supports Provided Within an Integrated Service Delivery System (e.g., MTSS).

- Direct the DOE to release guidance for schools and districts about how to utilize School Psychologists and other specialized instructional support personnel to help support the needs of all students, improve school climate, and improve school and student success.
- Promote efforts to improve intra-agency collaboration that facilitates systemic collaboration at the state and local levels.
- Advance efforts that facilitate the education of the whole child.

IV. Ensure All Students Have Equitable Access to Comprehensive Learning Supports Provided Within an Integrated Service Delivery System (e.g., MTSS).

- Promote legislation/regulation that improves access to a comprehensive, rigorous, high-quality, and well-rounded curriculum that includes evidence-based literacy and mathematics instruction.
- Ensure that School Psychologists and other specialized instructional support personnel are explicitly mentioned in legislation and other specific grant programs intended to address literacy, social-emotional learning, school climate, and other factors that promote student learning.

IV. Ensure All Students Have Equitable Access to Comprehensive Learning Supports Provided Within an Integrated Service Delivery System (e.g., MTSS).

- Increase funding for the Technical Assistance Center for Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports and the National Center for Systemic Improvement.
- Advance efforts to create an Office of Specialized Instructional Support Personnel within the Department of Education to facilitate coordinated and integrated service delivery for all students in schools and local education agencies.

V. Promote Evidence-Based Comprehensive School Safety and Crisis Response Efforts



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- Support federal legislation, regulation, and other policy that promote the use of effective, positive school discipline that:
 - (a) functions in concert with efforts to address school safety and climate;
 - (b) is not overly punitive (e.g., zero tolerance);
 - (c) is clear, consistent, and equitable;
 - (d) teaches and reinforces positive behaviors;
 - (e) is not discriminatory nor results in the disproportionate use of exclusionary discipline with certain populations; and
 - (f) does not contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline.

V. Promote Evidence-Based Comprehensive School Safety and Crisis Response Efforts

- Reject efforts that seek to increase zero tolerance policies and the use of exclusionary discipline (e.g., suspensions and expulsions).
- Support policies that prohibit school resource officers (SROs) and other school-based law enforcement from having any role in student discipline.
- Allow for blended, flexible use of funding streams in education and mental health services at the federal, state, and local levels to support effective school safety.

V. Promote Evidence-Based Comprehensive School Safety and Crisis Response Efforts

- Promote comprehensive school safety efforts that emphasize both physical and psychological safety.
- Reject efforts to overly harden schools or require physical security measures that do not increase actual or perceived safety.
- Support efforts that promote a comprehensive, whole-school approach to effective school safety through integration of school climate, effective discipline, social-emotional learning, positive behavior, mental health, and academics through MTSS and a problem-solving model.

V. Promote Evidence-Based Comprehensive School Safety and Crisis Response Efforts

- Ensure school mental health services, including social-emotional learning, mental wellness, resilience, and positive connections between students and adults, are an essential component of any comprehensive school safety effort.
- Support investments in training, planning, and professional development to encompass ongoing prevention and early intervention efforts as well as response and recovery plans in the event the unpreventable occurs.
- Maintain funding for the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments and for Project SERV, which helps school districts recover after a crisis event.

VI. Improve Outcomes for Students With Disabilities



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- Ensure Congress fulfills their promise to provide 40% of the additional costs needed to meet federal mandates required by IDEA.
- Ensure Congress and the Department of Education hold states and districts accountable for ensuring all students are held to high standards as articulated in ESSA and IDEA.
- Maintain the disaggregated data reporting requirement mandated within NCLB and continued in ESSA, which ensures schools are meeting the academic, emotional, and behavioral needs of all student subgroups.

VI. Improve Outcomes for Students With Disabilities

- Maintain data collection efforts to identify and intervene with schools that are disproportionately using exclusionary discipline practices with students with disabilities.
- Support initiatives that seek to engage parents and community members to develop meaningful, ambitious, and comparable indicators to measure the progress of students with disabilities.
- Include instances of seclusion and restraint in federal discipline data collection and reports.
- Support efforts to ensure that students with disabilities are educated within the least restrictive environment as is appropriate for their specific needs.

VI. Improve Outcomes for Students With Disabilities

- Recognizing the continuum of necessary supports for those students with the most severe disabilities to those with more frequent and everyday needs (e.g., ADHD), seek to secure federal funding that matches the level of student need specifically for research-based intervention.
- Ensure that any legislation/regulation intended to improve student outcomes promotes the use of evidence-based methods for the early identification of students with disabilities, including response to intervention within a multitiered system of support, while discouraging or not allowing methods that may produce biased or inaccurate results (e.g., ability– achievement discrepancy method of identifying students with a learning disability).
- Support increased investment in early intervention and prevention programming that will reduce the number of students identified with disabilities, thus saving later resources and optimizing student outcomes.

Intellectual Nourishment... Revisited



1. Do you think NASP's Policy Platform is in alignment with the organization's guiding principles, philosophies, Ethics, and Strategic Goals?
2. Do you think NASP's Policy Platform is appropriate for addressing priorities within the profession of School Psychology?
3. Did the Policy Platform address the issues that would most affect your professional practice?
4. Are there any parts of the Policy Platform that are in opposition to or are inappropriate, given the organization's guiding principles, philosophies, Ethics, and Strategic Goals?
5. Are there any parts of the Policy Platform that are in opposition with your personal values or ethics or that you find personally inappropriate?



Questions & Discussion



References:

- National Association of School Psychologists. (2019). Federal Public Policy and Legislative Platform for the 116th Congress (2019–2021) [Policy platform]. Bethesda, MD: Author.
- National Association of School Psychologists. (2010). Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services. Bethesda, MD: Author.
- National Association of School Psychologists. (2015). Ready to learn, empowered to teach: Guiding principles for effective schools and successful students. [Policy brief]. Bethesda, MD: Author.
- NASP's Strategic Plan, adopted by the Leadership Assembly on September 16, 2017, is available at
<https://www.nasponline.org/x41409.xml>