

505-3-.50 SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST PROGRAM

(1) Purpose. This rule states field-specific content standards for approving programs that prepare individuals to serve as school psychologists in grades P-12 and supplements requirements in Rule 505-3-.01, Requirements and Standards for Approving Professional Education Units and Educator Preparation Programs.

(2) Requirements.

(a) Initial preparation for entry-level certification is at the master's level. This certificate is nonrenewable and must be upgraded to the educational specialist's degree level in school psychology within the validity period of the initial certificate.

(b) To receive approval, an institution shall offer an advanced preparation program described in program planning forms, catalogs, and syllabi addressing the following standards:

1. Domains of School Psychology Training and Practice

(i) Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability. The program shall prepare candidates who have knowledge of varied models and methods of assessment that yield information useful in identifying strengths and needs, in understanding problems, and in measuring progress and accomplishments. School psychologists use such models and methods as part of a systematic process to collect data and other information, translate assessment results into empirically based decisions about service delivery, and evaluate the outcomes of services. Data-based decision-making permeates every aspect of professional practice.

(ii) Consultation and Collaboration. The program shall prepare candidates who have knowledge of behavioral, mental health, collaborative, and/or other consultation models and methods and of their application to particular situations. School psychologists collaborate effectively with others in planning and decision-making processes at the individual, group, and system levels.

(iii) Effective Instruction and Development of Cognitive/Academic Skills. The program shall prepare candidates who have knowledge of human learning processes, techniques to assess these processes, and direct and indirect services applicable to the development of cognitive and academic skills. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, develop appropriate cognitive and academic goals for students with different abilities, disabilities, strengths, and needs; implement interventions to achieve those goals, and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions. Such interventions include, but are not limited to, instructional interventions and consultation.

(iv) Socialization and Development of Life Skills. The program shall prepare candidates who have knowledge of human developmental processes, techniques to assess these processes, and direct and indirect services applicable to the development of behavioral, affective, adaptive, and social skills. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, develop appropriate behavioral, affective, adaptive, and social goals for students of varying abilities, disabilities, strengths, and needs, implement interventions to achieve those goals; and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions. Such interventions include, but are not limited to, consultation, behavioral assessment/intervention, and counseling.

(v) Student Diversity in Development and Learning. The program shall prepare candidates who have knowledge of individual differences, abilities, and disabilities and of the potential influence of biological, social, ethnic, experiential, socioeconomic, gender-related, and linguistic factors in

development and learning. School psychologists demonstrate the sensitivity and skills needed to work with individuals of diverse characteristics and to implement strategies selected and/or adapted based on individual characteristics, strengths, and needs.

(vi) School and Systems Organization, Policy Development, and Climate. The program shall prepare candidates who have knowledge of general education, special education, and other educational and related services. They understand schools and other settings as systems. School psychologists work with individuals and groups to facilitate policies and practices that create and maintain safe, supportive, and effective learning environments for children and others.

(vii) Prevention, Crisis Intervention, and Mental Health. The program shall prepare candidates who have knowledge of human development and psychopathology and of associated biological, cultural, and social influences on human behavior. School psychologists provide or contribute to prevention and intervention programs that promote the mental health and physical well being of students.

(viii) Home/School/Community Collaboration. The program shall prepare candidates who have knowledge of family systems, including family strengths and influences on student development, learning, and behavior, and of methods to involve families in education and service delivery. School psychologists work effectively with families, educators, and others in the community to promote and provide comprehensive services to children and families.

(ix) Research and Program Evaluation. The program shall prepare candidates who have knowledge of research, statistics, and evaluation methods. School psychologists evaluate research, translate research into practice, and understand research design and statistics in sufficient depth to plan and conduct investigations and program evaluations for improvement of services.

(x) School Psychology Practice and Development. The program shall prepare candidates who have knowledge of the history and foundations of their profession; of various service models and methods; of public policy development applicable to services to children and families; and of ethical, professional and legal standards. School psychologists practice in ways that are consistent with applicable standards, are involved in their profession, and have the knowledge and skills needed to acquire career-long professional development.

(xi) Information Technology. The program shall prepare candidates who have knowledge of information sources and technology relevant to their work. School psychologists access, evaluate, and utilize information sources and technology in ways that safeguard or enhance the quality of services.

(c) The program shall require substantial experience in laboratory, practicum, and internship experience at both the master's and specialist's level.

1. Practicum/internship may be completed in a school or child clinical setting providing a full range of psychological services. A minimum of fifty percent shall be in a school setting.

2. Master's degree level preparation shall require a minimum of 500 cumulative clock hours of supervised practicum/internship.

3. Specialist degree preparation shall require a minimum of 1000 cumulative clock hours of supervised practicum/internship.

Authority O.C.G.A. § 20-2-200