

505-3-.69 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 GaPSC Rule [505-3-.01, REQUIREMENTS AND STANDARDS FOR APPROVING EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROVIDERS AND EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS](#).

(2) Requirements.

- (a) The minimum preparation for a renewable professional certificate in school psychology is at the educational specialist's degree level. A non-renewable certificate may be issued in some circumstances as outlined in GaPSC Certification Rule [505-2-.146 SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY](#).
- (b) To receive approval, a GaPSC-approved educator preparation provider shall offer a preparation program described in program planning forms, catalogs, and syllabi designed to develop knowledge and practice competencies in each of the following domains based on the Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services (the NASP Practice Model) as outlined in The Professional Standards of the National Association of School Psychologists (2010, 2020):

1. Data-Based Decision Making.

- (i) The program shall prepare candidates who understand and utilize assessment methods for identifying strengths and needs; for developing effective interventions, services, and programs; and for measuring progress and outcomes within a multi-tiered system of supports;
- (ii) The program shall prepare candidates who use a problem-solving framework as the basis for all professional activities; and
- (iii) The program shall prepare candidates who systematically collect data from multiple sources as a foundation for decision making at the individual, group, and systems levels, and consider ecological factors (e.g., classroom, family, and community characteristics) as a context for assessment and intervention.

2. Consultation and Collaboration.

- (i) The program shall prepare candidates who understand varied models and strategies of consultation and collaboration applicable to individuals, families, groups, and systems, as well as methods to promote effective implementation of services. As part of a systematic and comprehensive process of effective decision making and problem solving that permeates all aspects of service delivery, school psychologists demonstrate skills to consult, collaborate, and communicate effectively with others.

3. Academic Interventions and Instructional Supports.

- (i) The program shall prepare candidates who understand the biological, cultural, and social influences on academic skills; human learning, cognitive, and developmental processes; and evidence-based curricula and instructional strategies; and
- (ii) The program shall prepare candidates who, in collaboration with others, use assessment and data collection methods to implement and evaluate services that support academic skill development in children.

4. Mental and Behavioral Health Services and Interventions.

- (i) The program shall prepare candidates who, understand the biological, cultural, developmental, and social influences on mental and behavioral health; behavioral and emotional impacts on learning; and evidence-based strategies to promote social-emotional functioning; and
- (ii) The program shall prepare candidates who, in collaboration with others, design, implement, and evaluate services that promote resilience and positive behavior, support socialization and adaptive skills, and enhance mental and behavioral health.

5. School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning.

- (i) The program shall prepare candidates who understand systems' structures, organization, and theory; general and special education programming; implementation science; and evidence-based school-wide practices that promote learning, positive behavior, and mental health; and
- (ii) The program shall prepare candidates who, in collaboration with others, develop and implement practices and strategies to create and maintain safe, effective, and supportive learning environments for students and school staff.

6. Services to Promote Safe and Supportive Schools.

- (i) The program shall prepare candidates who School psychologists understand principles and research related to social-emotional well-being, resilience, and risk factors in learning, mental and behavioral health, services in schools and communities to support multi-tiered prevention and health promotion, and evidence-based strategies for creating safe and supportive schools; and
- (ii) The program shall prepare candidates who, in collaboration with others, promote preventive and responsive services that enhance learning, mental and behavioral health, and psychological and physical safety and implement effective crisis prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery.

7. Family, School, and Community Collaboration.

- (i) The program shall prepare candidates who understand principles and research related to family systems, strengths, needs, and cultures; evidence-based strategies to support positive family influences on children's learning and mental health; and strategies to develop collaboration between families and schools; and
- (ii) The program shall prepare candidates who, in collaboration with others, design, implement, and evaluate services that respond to culture and context. They facilitate family and school partnerships and interactions with community agencies to enhance academic and social-behavioral outcomes for children.

8. Fair Practices for Different Student Populations.

- (i) The program shall prepare candidates who have knowledge of, and inherent respect for, individual differences, abilities, disabilities, and varied student characteristics and the effects they have on development and learning. They also understand principles and research related to differences in children, families, schools, and communities, including factors related to child development, religion, culture and cultural identity, race, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, and other variables;

- (ii) The program shall prepare candidates who implement evidence-based strategies to enhance services in both general and special education and to address potential influences related to student differences;
- (iii) The program shall prepare candidates who demonstrate skills to provide professional services that promote effective functioning for individuals, families, and schools with varied characteristics, cultures, and backgrounds through an ecological lens across multiple contexts;
- (iv) The program shall prepare candidates who recognize that fair practices for varied student populations, respect for differences in development and learning, and informed action for social justice are foundational to effective service delivery; and
- (v) The program shall prepare candidates who work to ensure that all children have the same access to general and special educational opportunities, and that each student receives what they need to benefit from these opportunities.

9. Research and Evidence-Based Practice.

- (i) The program shall prepare candidates who have knowledge of research design, statistics, measurement, and varied data collection and analysis techniques sufficient for understanding research, interpreting data, and evaluating programs in applied settings; and
- (ii) The program shall prepare candidates who evaluate and apply research as a foundation for service delivery and, in collaboration with others, use various techniques and technology resources for data collection, measurement, and analysis to support effective practices at the individual, group, and/or systems levels.

10. Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice.

- (i) The program shall prepare candidates who have knowledge of the history and foundations of school psychology; multiple service models and methods; ethical, legal, and professional standards; and other factors related to professional identity and effective practice as school psychologists; and
 - (ii) The program shall prepare candidates who provide services consistent with ethical, legal, and professional standards; engage in responsive ethical and professional decision making; collaborate with other professionals; and apply professional work characteristics needed for effective practice as school psychologists, including effective interpersonal skills, responsibility, adaptability, initiative, dependability, technological competence, advocacy skills, respect for human differences, and a commitment to social justice and fairness.
- (c) The program shall require completion of supervised practica and internship experiences in settings relevant to program objectives, (e.g., schools, clinics) and include appropriate performance-based evaluations by program faculty and supervisors to ensure that candidates are developing professional work characteristics and designated competencies consistent with the above standards. These experiences shall foster the development of competence in advocating for understanding of human differences and social justice.

1. At minimum, activities shall include opportunities to build professional competencies in:

- (i) data-based decision making;

- (ii) the design, implementation, and evaluation of services that support cognitive and academic skills; and
 - (iii) the design, implementation and evaluation of services that support socialization, behavioral and mental health, and emotional well-being.
- (d) The program shall require completion of a comprehensive and carefully evaluated internship that includes field-based supervision by qualified internship supervisors.
1. For specialist-level programs, the internship shall consist of a minimum of 1,200 clock hours, including a minimum of 600 hours in a school setting.
 2. For doctoral-level programs, the internship shall consist of a minimum of 1,500 clock hours, including a minimum of 600 hours in a school setting.

Authority: O.C.G.A. § 20-2-200.