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Principles of Leadership in School Psychology

Springer

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Theoretical Models of Leadership

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Perhaps there has never been a more important time in history for leaders of human and professional diversity to make good use of their talents. Political, environmental, socioeconomic, educational, civil, and human rights forums are in urgent need of ethical, effective direction. With regard to American education, US students lag in achievement compared with many of their international peers; out of 71 countries, they rank 24th in science and 38th in math (Desilver, 2017). Even more disturbing are the monumental disparities between White and minoritized students. Within American students, White students' achievements would put the USA at fifth place in science, while Black students rank at about 100 points less than their White peers (Shields, 2020). While the vast majority of educators commit themselves to the field because of a desire to improve outcomes for all students, we continue to document unacceptable disparities in achievement, disciplinary rates, dropouts, admission to higher education, and lifetime earnings between White and minority students (Shields, 2020). School psychologists are increasingly called to address a range of issues related to outcome-based education including empirically supported instruction and interventions, mental and behavioral support for students, special education reform, and external accountability. High functioning, effective schools are generally associated with the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms. However, research on school improvement, particularly within the aforementioned areas that require systems-level transformation, has indicated that the quality of leadership has a significant impact on school and student outcomes (Alvarado and Vargas, 2019). School leadership is widely recognized to be the cornerstone for school success. Yet among the already countless demands that school

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leaders face, these leaders require increasingly diverse forms of expertise to meet progressively more complex demands. In contemporary educational leadership practices, the model of the single-handed administrative leader, such as a superintendent serving as the point person for all district matters, or the school principal who is solely responsible for providing strategic direction in one component of the school system, is more commonly being replaced with decentered models that employ the skills of other school-based professionals to increase the capacity for effective leadership within the system.

In the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Principle and Legislative Language Recommendations for the Reauthorization of The Elementary & Secondary Education Act (ESEA) No Child Left Behind (NCLB) ESEA / NCLB, Gorin (2006) recognizes school psychologists as "integral players" in contemporary educational reform and school improvement. Additionally, in *School Psychology: A Blueprint for Training and Practice III* (Ysseldyke et al., 2006) which has been an influential guide to the training and practice orientation of school psychologists, leadership is highlighted as a critical "functional competency" of the profession:

> School psychologists need to provide leadership in identifying those instructional environments and cognitive, emotional, social, and behavioral factors that have a significant impact on school achievement and the development of personal competence. (p. 18)

> School psychologists should provide leadership in developing schools as safe, civil, caring, inviting places where there is a sense of community, the contributions of all persons, including teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, families, students, and related services personnel, are valued; and there are high expectations for excellence for all students. (p. 18)

> School psychologists are viewed as leaders for improvement and change. In this capacity, they need to share leadership and coordinating responsibilities with other agencies and help form linkages within the community. The move in many places to make schools less "independent" and more "collaborative" with parents, social and health agencies, corrections authorities, and local businesses is a major and long-term effort. School psychologists should be prepared to help lead and maintain the emerging collaborations. (p. 19)

> School psychologists should be knowledgeable about development in social, affective, and adaptive domains and be able to identify and apply sound principles of behavior change within these domains. They should provide leadership in creating instructional environments that reduce alienation and foster the expression of appropriate behavior as well as environments in which all members of the school community-both students and adults-treat one another with respect and dignity. (p. 20)

However, to articulate a cogent model of leadership for any given profession is a difficult task, partly because successful leadership is not simply an outcome of an individual persona. It is, instead, dependent on a complex relationship involving an extensive range of personal competencies and situational factors. Moreover, discipline-specific leadership effectiveness is dependent on the standards' alignment with the articulated goals of the given profession. Hence, a reverse view,

starting with desired outcomes, may allow for the development of the most coherent framework.

1 Desired Leadership Outcomes

Bennis (2007) and Shields (2020) identified six competencies of exemplary leaders, which are highly relevant to educational organizations as they are generalizable and principally can serve as target outcomes for collaborative leadership in school psychology:

1. These leaders have a keen focus on equity, inclusion, excellence, and social justice.

    (a) They exhibit moral courage.
    (b) They advance the mandate for meaningful change.
    (c) They create (or facilitate) a sense of mission.

2. They motivate others to join them in that mission.
3. They create an interpersonal environment where others can be successful.
4. They generate trust and optimism.
5. They develop other leaders.
6. They get results.

Specific to educational organizations, leadership skills can be pivotal in setting direction for school improvement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; Orr, 2006) through the following activities:

1. Setting goals and high expectations
2. Developing and supporting staff in skills necessary to respond productively
3. Creating school conditions that promote broad participation in strategies to achieve identified goals
4. Promoting social justice

Other common leadership charges that organically emanate from activities familiar to school psychologists include (a) contending with high levels of responsibility; (b) effectively negotiating interpersonal boundaries; (c) responding to diversity; and (d) confronting issues that have a great deal of breadth, complexity, and visibility (adapted from McCauley et al., 1999). Specifically, school psychologists often find themselves mediating cultural biases, being at the frontlines with crisis intervention, and influencing a variety of intervention and prevention programs aimed at curtailing youth risk. Often these roles place imperatives on the school psychologist to build alignment with and inspire commitment in diverse groups of people over whom the school psychologist has no direct authority (Augustyniak, 2014).

2 Global Models of Leadership

Most who have been employed in educational setting for several years or more can probably identify some of their own experiences (positive or negative) with formal school leadership or have even taken on leadership roles of their own in one form or another. But most often, those in informal leadership roles do not systematically consider how to cultivate their leadership qualities and skills to increase their professional contributions to our organization. Leadership is an expansive term that has many definitions. However, one could argue that, in the simplest terms, the role of a leader is to provide motivation for a specific vision while fostering the capabilities of others to make that vision a reality. However, having knowledge of various explicit leadership models is vital to this area of professional identity formation and can be of great guidance in formulating a vision of how specific leadership behaviors can be effectual in specific environments and situations. Though many school psychologists can probably describe a personal preference or intuitive feeling about what leadership proficiency would look like in their roles, honing in on a specific conceptual framework can seem like an exorbitant task.

Leadership theories are among the most highly analyzed in the social sciences, and the current research is overflowing with theoretical models of leadership approaches. In their examination of historical trends, Antonakis and Day (2018) propose nine major schools of thought in leadership research. Listed in from earliest to latest emergences since the beginning of the twentieth century, these include the Trait, Behavioral, Contingency, Contextual, Skeptics, Relational, New Leadership (Transformational), Information Processing, and Biological/Evolutionary schools. Three of these theories that were identified as having sustained highly active research productivity over the past two decades are particularly relevant to leadership development and practice in school psychology.

2.1 Trait Models

Since the early 1900s, scholars have had a resolute interest in the role of individual differences and personal attributes as the bases of leadership behavior. These include psychological traits such as cognitive abilities, self-beliefs, social capacities, emotional stability, personality types, motives, values, etc. and even physiological traits such as height, weight, appearance, and gender. The scientific study of trait models of leadership has recently seen a resurgence (Dinh et al., 2014). Examinations of global personality constructs such as the Big Five framework (i.e., Extraversion, Neuroticism, Openness to experience, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness; Norman, 1963), Universal Core Virtues (i.e., wisdom and knowledge, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence; Peterson & Seligman, 2004), WICS (Wisdom, Intelligence, and Creativity synthesized; Sternberg, 2007), and Emotional Intelligence (Goleman & Boyatzis, 2008; Goleman et al., 2004) have dominated the

contemporary literature in this domain. However, such macro-models have been criticized as too rudimentary to sufficiently represent the complex relations between traits and successful outcomes of leaders (Block, 1995; Foti & Hauenstein, 2007; Hough, 1992) and fail to account for the role of situational variance (Zaccaro, 2007). Moreover, these broad conceptualizations tend to rely on the heroic leadership stereotype (Yukl, 2006) and lead to a narrow perception of leadership development where individuals become preoccupied personal identity and constricted in their comprehension of compound influences on their leadership endeavors (O'Toole, 2001). Moreover, numerous studies have drawn attention to the "too much of a good thing" paradigm and provide empirical support of a curvilinear relationship between individual traits or dispositions and leadership outcomes. Research indicates that both bright (e.g., the Big Five) and dark (e.g., narcissism) traits can yield benefits and costs at the farther ends of the continuum and that moderate levels of such attributes often predicts the best outcomes (Judge & Long, 2012; Kaiser et al., 2015).

Present-day trait models of leadership have evolved substantively beyond the prototypical debate between the "great man theory" of "leaders are born, not made" and behavioral theories of "leaders are made, not born." Current trait models seek to both identify and contextualize personal attributes that distinguish leaders from non-leaders. In their influential text on personality psychology, Peterson and Seligman (2004) assert that trait models of leadership must recognize that individual differences are both general and enduring but also shaped by an individual's setting, developmental status, and experience. Extending the classic psychological paradigm of "trait versus state," Zaccaro et al. (2004) have proposed an empirically supported "Model of Leader Attributes and Leader Performance" that has been recognized among contemporary leadership scholars as a serviceable taxonomy across disciplines (Antonakis, 2004; Sternberg, 2005). The model expounds on the fundamental notions of trait versus state attributes by refining their relationship with mediating influence of environment. Traitlike attributes such as cognitive abilities, dispositions, and motives are categorized as "distal" attributes because they are relatively unaffected by environmental influences and exhibit strong cross-situational contributions to leader success. Though the following list is non-exhaustive, research has supported the following catalog of specific distal attributes (Bass, 1990; Zaccaro et al., 2004; Yukl, 2006). Cognitive capacity includes general intelligence, cognitive complexity, and creativity. Dispositional attributes are described as adaptability, ethical imperatives, extraversion, openness, and risk tolerance. Motives involve reverence of ethical standards and a tempered drive for achievement, power, and social acceptance. Statelike attributes, such as social capabilities, technical skills, professional expertise, and tacit knowledge, comparably, are framed as "proximal" attributes because they are more yielding to and shaped by environmental demands. Social capabilities include social and emotional intelligence, persuasion, conflict resolution, and negotiation skills. Problem-solving skills incorporate the ability to sufficiently gather, integrate, and interpret information and generation viable solutions. Zaccaro (2007) stresses that a cogent model of leader attributes does not consider traits in isolation but rather as a cohesive, relatively enduring pattern of personal characteristics. This constellation of attributes distinguishes leaders from

other high-performance individuals in the organization (i.e., promotes leader emergence) and produces cross-situational stability in leader performance (i.e., predicts leader effectiveness). Summatively, distal and proximal attributes contribute to the flexibility of the leader's behavioral response to the challenges presented by his or her environment. Because proximal attributes can be altered substantially by training and experience, they are the implicated targets for improving leadership outcomes.

2.2   Contextual Models

Rather than focusing primarily on leader traits, this approach considers the social-organizational context of leadership as a key factor. Identities of followers and leaders are ultimately impossible to disentangle and are inextricably connected to the specific contexts in which they develop (Collinson, 2006). In short, this model asserts that interactions between environmental support and leadership traits predict the potential for leadership emergence, selection, and outcomes. Ruvolo et al. (2004) presented some key characteristics of ideal leadership development cultures as follows: (1) These organizations actively promote a learning orientation through the pursuit and sharing of new knowledge; (2) there is a priority placed on measurement, assessment, and feedback of and for developing leaders; (3) an active commitment to grow, invest in, and retain leaders; (4) sensemaking (i.e., reflective learning) is viewed as critical to learned leadership behaviors and actively promoted; (5) leader developers are encouraged and rewarded for developing skills in others. Though the organizational context inevitably moderates leader and follower behaviors through social or tangible contingencies (Yukl, 2006), in dynamic, diverse, and complex systems such as schools, this relationship is likely intricate and nonlinear. Actions and interactions between organizational members can resonate on a dyadic or collectivist level and thus yield stable, predictable outcomes, more or less. Organizations that benefit from this contextual dynamic typically maintain a vibrant, cohesive mission and forward leadership development among their members marked by the following types of initiatives: (a) promoting the value of continuous learning; (b) encouraging members to take personal responsibility for their own career development and success despite system or organizational challenges; (c) providing resources to foster professional development; (d) supplying customized technological resources; and (e) delineating the link between member performance and organizational goals (Hunt, 2004; London & Mauer, 2004). Realizing success in leadership positions goes beyond personal traits and technical, discipline specific knowledge; it requires tacit knowledge of strategies to respond to complex situations, which is best achieved through developmental experiences and reflective practice. Individuals most likely to engage in this mindful type of learning are those who intrinsically value continuous personal growth, treat learning as a part of work, and evidence drive to excel beyond the norm (MacDonald et al., 2000; Pappas & Freidman, 2007; Sternberg, 1997). Concomitantly, organizations that
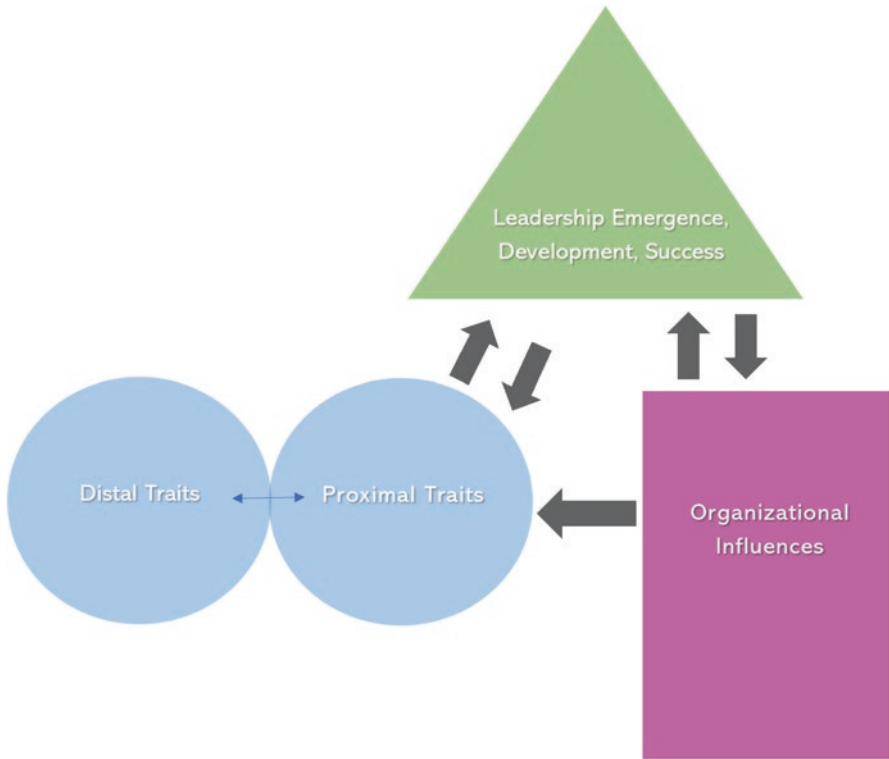
Fig. 1 Social-organizational context of leadership

promote continuous learning, provide mechanisms for understanding members' values, and fortify their capabilities stimulate the emergence of successful leadership (Maurer, 2002) (Fig. 1).

2.3 New Leadership (Transformational) Models

More recently, comparisons between traditional task-focused managerial styles of leadership with a high priority on supervision and organization, commonly referred to as transactional leadership, and new leadership models that focus on potent relationships which are generally derivates of models termed charismatic or transformational leadership (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Transactional leadership is characterized by the exchange of something valued, whether tangible, economic, political, or emotional. The transactional model is likely to be highly effective in crisis situations, for short-term goals, or in projects that require linear and specific processes. Transformational leadership is characterized by core elements of being emotionally impactful, based on shared ideals, and evidencing high ethical and moral standards.

Transformational theories focus upon the union developed between leaders and followers. Transformational leaders motivate and inspire people by raising the consciousness of group members to recognize the importance and higher importance or value of the task. Transformational leaders are focused on the performance of group members but also want each individual to fulfill his or her potential (Lim & Ployhart, 2004). Bass (1999) asserted that the most effective leaders apply both transformational and transactional behaviors as the situation dictates. Bass' transformational–transactional leadership is coined the "full range" leadership theory. This model has been operationalized, measured, and validated by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Antonakis & House, 2014; Bass & Avolio, 2004). Though Bass stressed the importance of both skillsets, subsequent researchers treated transformational leadership as a more advanced application of leadership skills. For instance, Howell and Avolio (1993) state that effective leaders must often supplement transactional leadership with transformational leadership, suggesting inherent limitations in the former model. Moreover, Goodwin et al. (2000) maintain that leaders' capability for demonstrating transactional or transformational behaviors is largely dependent on the content and complexity of the cognitive schemata they possess in regard to the attributes of their followers and themselves and the manner in which they envision their leadership responsibility. With its focus on future ideals, transformational leadership was associated with more abstract, higher-order cognitive structures.

Transformational leadership theory has had a considerable impact on leadership as a scientific domain and has been the fulcrum in shifting the leadership paradigm where it is today. But what exactly do transformational leaders do to be successful? Antonakis (2018) suggests they characteristically engage in three main approaches. First, they direct attention and focus on key goals. This is often accomplished through the uses of stories, metaphors, rhetorical questions, and contrast to streamline complex issues. Second, they provide compelling justification of the vision and strategic goals at hand through evident moral conviction, showing an understanding of the sentiments and concerns of the group, and by confidence that the goals can be achieved. Third, they deliver the message in a dynamic, impactful manner.

In their qualitative analysis of NASP and state organization leadership, the work of Shriberg et al. (2010) stands as the earliest effort to articulate a specific model of leadership in school psychology. Shriberg et al. substantiates the profession's expectation of leadership among school psychologists and provides a fundamental launching point in defining its core features. In a study of leadership behaviors among practicing school psychologists, Augustyniak et al. (2016) proposed that transformational leadership models represent the paramount level of leader behaviors in the profession as defined by Shriberg et al. (2010). Consideration of transformational leader models suggests that successful leadership agendas in school psychology must empower practitioners to be self-determined in their inclinations to reflect on and invest in their organization and its members as they do in themselves. School psychology leaders must actively seek and synthesize feedback about their leadership efficacy. Furthermore, they must grasp the vital knowledge structures about leadership models, possess accurate schemas about the motivations and capacities

of themselves and their colleagues, and understand the organizational structure and climate of their school in order to be able to potentiate valued outcomes.

3 Traditional (Centralized) Leadership Versus Contemporary (Distributed) Leadership

Centralized models of leadership refer to organizational structures and processes in which activities involving planning and decision-making are ascribed to a specific leader, a few leaders, or a certain type of leader. Because centralized leadership models seem to have a characteristic or qualities of dictatorial or bureaucratic systems, some may assume they are innately negative. Yet, effective centralized leadership can offer specific advantages such as a distinct chain of command, clear line of communication, reduction of redundancies, and quick implementation of decisions. It is also predictable that there will be many circumstances in which the identified traditional school leaders may not be solely prepared or capable of addressing important concerns of the school community or other relevant stakeholders. The decentered models, also known as systems leadership and distributed leadership, emphasize capitalizing on the skills of individuals capable of advancing the goals of the system such as teachers, clinical and support staff, and even students themselves (Harris, 2004). According to Liu (2020) among the extant research, most studies of applications in educational settings have operationally defined distributed leadership as marked by shared decision-making, empowering the staff, and leadership development. Systems or distributed leadership models leverage leadership across organizational or systemic boundaries, with the intention of effecting systems change. More specifically, distributed leadership emphasizes how a group of leaders can successfully fulfill school leadership and management responsibilities and how the formal school leader (e.g., principal, superintendent) can strategically engage both formally designated leaders and informal position holders for best school outcomes. Systems leaders differ from administrative leaders in that they rarely have authority over the systems or networks of stakeholders they are working to influence. Their charge is to promote collective action toward common goals within their particular area of expertise.

Though there is divergence pertaining to a unified operational definition of distributed leadership, there appears to be agreement over the elements that distinguish it from ordinary delegation of responsibility. As opposed to delegation, distributed leadership practice is, in essence, a collaborative process. Systems leaders work through teams versus individuals, engender collective expertise, and generate reciprocal interdependence. Due to the nature of this dynamic, systems leaders' effective actions shape the collective quality of the system and, in succession, affect practice of other leaders (Harris, 2004; Ritchie & Woods, 2007). Due to the rapid rise in the adoption of distributed leadership practices in schools, efforts toward a cogent framework to grow the pipeline of new leaders and aid them

preparing for their leadership practice are vital (Hansen & Raza, 2005; Spillane et al., 2001; Timperley, 2005).

Alvardo and Vargas (2019) have identified three primary characteristics of effective systems leadership. First, these systems leaders approach their work with a decidedly collaborative mindset. They actively encourage the co-creation of procedures and structures that support a shared vison. They promote empowerment of the collective, rather than the individual as the unit of influence on joint work. They also ensure that individuals at multiple levels are incentivized, particularly through seeing the benefits of their involvement. They are results-oriented and help others maintain focus on the intended results. Second, these leaders evidence nuanced dispositions that help them navigate complex systems dynamics. They are copiously attentive to the issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. They also embrace opportunities for new learning with a tolerance for ambiguity, experimentation, and measured risk. Third, they possess and utilize excellent interpersonal skills such as effective communication, the ability to synthesize a unifying narrative, and capability to stimulate a shared trust among stakeholders.

One should bear in mind that possessing these refined characteristics are not a prerequisite to embracing new leadership roles; rather, they should be considered aspirational. Few leaders begin their roles with all of these dispositions, skills, or ways of thinking. Rather, strong leaders develop these qualities over time, through many years of experiences, mistakes, self-reflection, refinement, support, and improvement. So, how does one develop these crucial characteristics to effectively lead systems change? In examination of effective systems leadership development, Alvardo and Vargas (2019) found that six common themes emerged. First, these leaders build relationships over time, across initiatives, and across sectors. They appreciate that genuine connections come from spending actual time with their coworkers, not just from exchanging phone calls or emails. Robust relationships enable partners to establish trust and ease the process of sharing information, collaborative problem-solving and goal setting, and increasing accountability on action points. Second, effective leaders are patient, reflective, and adaptive, making changes for continuous improvement. They know that making progress in systems change takes time. Rather than rushing to provide fixed solutions, they take time to analyze situations with the goal of arriving at a detailed understanding of the issues to enable more tailored solutions. Moreover, they are willing to revise their goals when new information emerges. Third, they effectively communicate progress and build a collective narrative that reflects the how and why of their shared work and the outcomes that are being achieved. Ideally, this narrative includes underscoring incentives and payoffs for various stakeholders. Fourth, systems leaders understand and acknowledge the pressures that stakeholders experience. They understand that ultimately the needs of the organization must be met, but they seek areas of consensus among differing agendas so that the outcomes that are being strived for are results that all stakeholders care about. Fifth, they establish layered leadership through building trust, understanding, and buy-in with executive leaders. They appreciate that appointed administrators face different pressures on behalf of their organizations and that their support is necessary to make significant systems-level

changes. Sixth, these leaders plan for sustained systems change. They acknowledge that their initiatives are likely to confront new obstacles over time, such as changing personnel, shifts in funding, and the emergence of competing new agendas. They prepare for these hurdles so that their team will remain connected and productive beyond them.

4 Applied Leadership Models: Translations to School Psychology Training and Practice

Currently, with 3 years of graduate training, specialist-level school psychologists often have the most extensive training of anyone in their workplaces. School psychologists clearly have the potential to influence teachers, administrators, and other school staff through consultation, professional development, coaching, and ultimately leadership in school improvement. In fact, Poulou (2003) suggests that preservice school psychologists already view leadership roles as germane to their anticipated professional identity. Fortunately, there is no scarcity of evidence-based strategies available to school psychologists to facilitate improvement of the *school* experience of all children. For example, the potential offered by the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support paradigm is quite promising, but it is unclear whether school psychologists are assuming leadership roles in this work (Conoley et al., 2020). By way of illustration, a literature review by Theron (2015) detailed how the social ecologies in schools were used to increase child resilience but concluded that school psychologists were generally not directly involved in any of the work to lead and promote resilience-enhancing educator behaviors. Correspondingly, school psychologists no longer need to be dependent on construing models of evidence-based interventions and assessments crucial to leading positive systems change. The abundance of many tools, including road maps on how to implement systems change are currently readily available but raises the question about restricted involvement of school psychologists in these leadership endeavors. Undoubtedly, one of the most prominent factors is that few school psychology training programs offer coursework specifically on implementation science and systems change (Conoley et al., 2020). Though NASP has acknowledged the pressing need for leadership skills among school psychologists and loosely define a leadership agenda though both their current blueprint for training and practice (Ysseldyke et al., 2006) and the "Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services" (NASP, 2020a), a cogent model for the training and practice of these skillsets has not yet been explicated by the national organization.

Augustyniak (2014) articulated a preliminary conceptual framework to facilitate successful leadership among practicing school psychologists. Borrowing from Robinson et al. (2008) research on empirically supported instructional leadership practice, Augustyniak delineated five dimensions that could guide school psychologists in establishing a structure to support effective leadership practice

in familiar service delivery realms such as behavioral, mental health and crisis intervention services, home school initiatives, and prevention and responsiveness programming.

Dimension 1: Establishing Goals and Expectations The success of any team-based effort is often dependent on the leader of the team. Effective leaders know how to clarify goals, inspire a sense of purpose, motivate, and problem-solve around barriers. While this is definitely added pressure for those in current leadership roles, learning how to properly set reasonable and attainable goals for your team is crucial to achieving success. Goal setting allows your team to work toward something and inspires teamwork and innovation. School psychologists already have a great facility with the skill of goal establishment through their familiarity with academic and behavioral intervention planning (e.g., "SMART" goal acronym: specific, measurable, achievable, results-oriented, and time-bound). The lynchpin for success in this dimension, however, is not simply shared goal settings but placing a deliberate emphasis on communicating goals and expectations to stakeholders, informing them of the accomplishments toward those goals, and recognizing professional effort and innovation. School psychologists understand the power of such constructive communications and utilize it to advance shared goals.

Dimension 2: Resourcing Strategically The essential leadership activity in this domain is defined as taking a hand in personally securing and dedicating resources that are aligned with team goals. While school psychologists typically do not have the authorization to commit human or monetary resources, they are frequently active participants on various school improvement teams and can have an impactful voice in supporting fidelity to system goals. Moreover, school psychologists model mindful use of their own professional capital (i.e., time allocation, problem-solving efforts, etc.) that align with their expressed values and professional goals.

Dimension 3: Planning, Coordinating, and Evaluating Teaching and the Curriculum Leaders in higher performing schools have been distinguished by their personal involvement in planning, coordinating teaching, and evaluating teachers. Though school psychologists typically should refrain from involvement in formal evaluation of teachers, by virtue of their training and expertise, school psychologists are capable and highly qualified to effectively analyze and use data across multiple school-based assessment enterprises. Best-practice models of assessment, consultation, and behavioral and instructional consultation dictate that they avail themselves of opportunities to observe classroom dynamics and provide constructive feedback. School psychologists should engage in collegial dialogue on matters of student outcomes and relevant effective professional practices to foster human capacity.

Dimension 4: Promoting and Participating in Teacher Learning and Development This leadership dimension is illustrative of the importance of promoting and participating in continuous improvement learning as a leader, learner, or

both. This dimension is inextricably aligned with the National Association of School Psychologists Principles for Professional Ethics (NASP, 2020b) Standard II.1.3:

> School psychologists engage in continuing professional development. They remain current regarding developments in research, training, and professional practices that benefit children, families, and schools.

School psychologists also recognize that professional skill development beyond that of the novice practitioner requires planful and deliberate agenda and professional supervision.

While continued professional development is a directive for all school psychologists, leadership can be evidenced in this domain when the school psychologist actively invests in the learning of colleagues and invigorates their own commitment to continuous learning.

Dimension 5: Ensuring an Orderly and Supportive Environment In this domain, effective leadership is illustrated by those with an overt emphasis on and success in establishing a safe and supportive environment for all students and stakeholders. Advocacy for social justice is arguably the core of both NASP ethical and practice standards. A practice orientation for social justice is enriched to a leadership orientation when school psychologists actively collaborate with others in monitoring and responding to the broader school culture. Such collaboration might focus on indicators of fairness, equity, compassion, and dignity within the policies, social norms, and behaviors in the organization.

Because effective leaders have continuous learning needs, the advancement of a school psychologist's leadership style and skills is best perceived as a developmental process, beginning at the entry into the profession and perpetual throughout one's career. Though most school psychologists are likely to possess a number of vital traits and foundational skills to these ends, they cannot work to develop themselves in isolation. Education, training, applied experiences, and mentorship programs are vital to improving leadership education, training, and practices in school psychology. Various stakeholders such as training programs, practitioners, and the institutions in which they work should be provided with the compelling reasons "why" school psychologists should be viewed, valued, and sourced as leaders. Stakeholders, who are availed of the current research findings, set aside time for self-reflection and self-evaluation and/or evaluate their groups, associations, or organizations which can expand and revise ways to advance best-practice leadership within the profession.

Table 1 presents potential synergy between the school psychologist and the environments in which s(he) trains and works in the development of successful leaders in the field.

Table 1 Framework for stakeholder contributions to leadership development of school psychologists

Key theoretical frameworks	Practitioner skills, traits, and dispositions	Training program features	Relevant contextual variables in practice settings
Global theory: Trait models	Distal attributes (e.g., cognitive abilities, dispositions, motives, values) Successful leaders (SLs) strive for continuous growth (expansiveness) Proximal attributes (e.g., social capabilities, technical skills, professional expertise) SLs possess both technical and tacit knowledge of strategies to manage complex situations	Training programs (TPs) duly consider relevant leadership traits in both recruitment and curricular endeavors TPs culture vigorously facilitates and models continuous development (faculty, students, and practitioners) TPs provide students requisite knowledge of leadership models. TPs assist students in identifying and cultivating personal attributes that predict leadership success TPs purposefully provide developmental experiences and opportunities for reflective practice to enhance proximal attributes, tacit knowledge, and self-knowledge	Professional settings (PSs) clearly and consistently articulate a mission toward continuous improvement and leadership development among the various disciplines within their oversight PSs are both present and future oriented in their goals PSs actively support innovative and best-practices practice PSs observe an active commitment to recruit and identify leaders in school psychology (SP)
Global theory: Contextual models	SLs' behaviors are predicted by the interaction of expert knowledge structures and situational perceptions Positive and accurate beliefs of self, others, and their organizations are viewed as predictor of SL behavior	TPs build student skills and confidence with information literacy and encourage innovative practice TPs provide students requisite knowledge of leadership models TPs actively promote student self-awareness of current and anticipated strengths and weaknesses relevant to emerging professional objectives TP provides requisite knowledge of leadership models TP explicitly promotes feedback-seeking and initiative taking behaviors TP requires students to engage in mindful analysis of interactions self-schema, organizational structures, and behavioral responses to challenging situations	PSs build in routine practices of constructive feedback and encourage self-reflection among personnel PSs cultivate, grow, invest in, and retain SP leaders PSs reward for leaders for their efforts to attain goals and develop their skills PSs provide resources to foster professional development, engender leader success and goal attainment (e.g., economic, human, time, and customizable technologies and trainings)

	SLs	TPs	PSs
Global theory: Transformational models	SLs form goal-oriented connections with others with a heavy emphasis on shared values SL behavior is cultivated through empowerment, visioning, and ethics SL behavior targets growth in motivational and capacity of stakeholders	TPs promote student commitment to developing potential in self and colleagues TPs create opportunity for students to actively consider emotional, motivational, and professional needs of others in their organizations In addition to traditional collaborative problem solving, TPs teach collaborative strategic planning with emphasis on establishing shared goals and high expectations, developing and supporting staff, and modifying organizational conditions to promote progress toward goals	PSs provide mechanisms for understanding members' values and fortify their capabilities PSs reward for leaders for their efforts to develop potential and skills in others.
Applied models: Distributed school leadership	SLs evidence effective communication skills to advance shared goals SLs strategically allocate their professional resources in alignment with goals SLs are highly involved in evaluation, consultation, and strategy development across multiple assessment enterprises SLs are actively engaged in initiatives to develop the human capacity of their organizations SLs actively collaborate with others to ensure a supportive and fair organizational climate	TPs cultivate an enthusiasm for building leadership capacity among their students TPs allocate sufficient curricular resources to provide a strong foundation in conceptual models of leadership development TPs clearly define for students basic discipline-specific leadership competencies and sensitize them to opportunities to develop and exercise applied skills TPs avail students of active learning to enhance applied leader skills within and beyond traditional modalities of school psychology service delivery TPs use multiple best-practice approaches to evaluate their success in developing leadership potential among their students	PSs emphasize capitalizing on the skills of individuals from diverse professions to advance organizational goals PSs are attentive to issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. They infuse this into leadership selection, development, and goal orientations PSs leverage leadership across organizational discipline with the intention of effecting systems change PSs are informed about the extensive, broad-based training and unique skills of SPs and seek to purpose this in innovative, flexible ways to advance organization goals PSs provide pragmatic support to leadership development in all professional disciplines through mentorship and field supervision policies and processes PSs promote empowerment of the collective and encourage teaming efforts and camaraderie

Adapted from Augustyniak (2014)

5 Conclusions

Concordant with the directives set forth by NASP, the intent of distributed leadership enterprises, and the theoretical frameworks asserted by the extant literature of transformative leadership in schools, school psychologists are called to view leadership roles as germane to their anticipated professional identity. However, any detailed study of the guiding research base will lead to the conclusion that there is no concrete roadmap or series of steps one can employ to define an individualized leadership agenda. At the same time, there are most certainly guiding principles, tenets, and fundamental agendas for the training and practice of leadership skills in school psychology. In fact, anyone who has a genuine passion for meaningful and equitable change has the potential to be a transformative leader. Presently there are many credible, impactful guides to the cultivation of leadership success. In her best-selling book, Hedges (2012) highlights presence as the essence of what everyone needs to lead effectively. Although the word "presence" is rather amorphous, Hedges demystifies the construct through a three-step model. The first element is being "Intentional." Effective leaders are clear on the values they wish to convey and self-aware on how congruently and consistently they align their beliefs and behaviors with those values. The second component is having a keen awareness of the "Individual"; successful leaders invest in relationship building and connecting with other in ways that fosters trust. The third factor is "Inspirational." These leaders exhibit mindful, refined communication techniques that motivate others through powerful, positive language, empathy, understanding, and motivation. Together, these improve the experience of their presence with others. Indeed, school psychologists may be at an advantage right out of the gate. Consider the prevalent theories of contemporary psychology such as the humanistic, cognitive behavioral, and positive psychology approaches, with emotional intelligence, flow theory, motivational interviewing, etc.; these can serve as fundamental to the aims of an authentic, effective leader. School psychologists can capitalize on the foundations of their basic curricular training in consultation, collaboration, counseling, and neuropsychology as the groundwork for the type of presence that propagates leader success. The following chapters in this book are intended to serve as tool in envisioning your unique potential in various areas of school psychology practice and inspire leadership determination in you as you confront and tackle worthy challenges in the field.

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School Psychology Leadership in Academic Intervention

Lisa Kilanowski

The dynamic nature of the practice of school psychology has long reflected changes in the school milieu, mirroring student educational needs and related imperatives stemming from societal movements, nationwide trends in student achievement, and legislation. Indeed, over the course of a mere 20 years, the discipline of school psychology has evolved from a profession dedicated almost exclusively to the assessment of children for the purpose of identifying disabilities to one positioned to both proactively and reactively address a myriad of student and familial concerns spanning social-emotional, behavioral, and academic fronts. At times, given ever broadening school psychology domains of practice and corresponding graduate-level training course sequences, it appears as though the potential roles of a school psychologist know no bounds. School psychologists, with their robust training in assessment, intervention, and counseling, matched with their corresponding knowledge of disabling conditions, are well positioned to serve in leadership capacities related to the provision of systemic and individual intervention. This chapter, in particular, seeks to illuminate the ways in which the preparation of school psychologists uniquely positions them to lead initiatives related to academic intervention planning for students with and without disabilities.

1 Pioneers of the RtI and MTSS Initiatives

The reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) in 2004 brought to the forefront a latent and somewhat pocketed movement in education defined by attention to evidence-based instructional practices, use of student

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achievement data to drive intervention, and an overall emphasis on increasing school-wide student achievement via intervention and consultation (Tilly, n.d.). This movement, ultimately coined Response to Intervention (RtI), was successfully included in the reauthorization of IDEA in 2004, highlighting the importance of proactive academic intervention as a means of limiting the overidentification of students who had not benefitted from core instruction as learning disabled. Comprised of cutting-edge practices from a wide array of disciplines, including behavioral consultation, special education, and school psychology, Response to Intervention, now encompassed under the umbrella of Multitiered Systems of Support, seeks to improve global achievement outcomes and attainment of general education standards for students with and without disabilities (Griffiths et al., 2007). Unlike reactionary approaches associated with historical trends of identifying students with disabilities, academic Response to Intervention remains a proactive approach to buttressing curricular deficits and learning gaps evidenced by children in an effort to limit the misidentification of students as learning disabled, while increasing academic outcomes of all children regardless of disability status. While Response to Intervention, theoretically, is comprised of contributions from a variety of education-related disciplines, the field of school psychology was and remains at the forefront of RtI research, development, and implementation, with many prolific school psychologists and academics providing Congressional IDEA reauthorization testimony and contributing to organizational position papers (e.g., Batsche et al., 2005) propelling its integration into special education law. To date, the role of school psychologists as leaders in the Response to Intervention movement is further evidenced by our disciplines' extensive literary contributions as related to RtI over the past 30 years. A cursory review of contributions in school psychology specific journals and other publication outlets since 2001 provides robust evidence of the degree to which MTSS-oriented journal articles appear in school psychology publications relative to other education disciplines. In regard to academic intervention-oriented contributions in particular, it is worthy to note that peer-reviewed journals in psychology, as opposed to teacher education, yield a far greater number of articles presenting evidence-based reading assessment and intervention practices, including contemporary investigations of the predictors and characteristics of learning disabilities (Kilpatrick, 2015). While it may appear counterintuitive to some in the larger field of education that school psychologists, and not educators, publish a vast amount of research related to academic intervention, further consideration of the contemporary ideology of modern-day school psychology, stemming from historical practice trends, intersecting with societal education needs, and converging with NASP training standards, provides robust insight into the emergence of school psychologists as specialists in academic intervention design, implementation, and progress monitoring.

2 School Psychologists as Leaders in Academic Response to Intervention Implementation: A Rationale

Reflection on the fabric of Response to Intervention, with interwoven elements of learning disability prevention and intervention, best practices in educational assessment, curricular knowledge, data-based decision-making practices, and consultation, is essential to understanding the importance of school psychologists as leaders in the implementation of academic interventions on a system-wide and individual level. The role most traditionally associated with the practice of school psychology, that of learning disability identification, subsumes knowledge of contemporary research surrounding cognitive, academic, environmental, and familial hallmarks and predictors of learning challenges, from which appropriate evidence-based interventions may be distilled. Indeed, the earliest reference to what has come to be known as Response to Intervention stemmed from the work of psychologists Heller et al. (1982), who postulated that misidentification or overidentification of learning disabilities could be mitigated by the implementation of academic interventions, accompanied by repeated progress monitoring, to document "response to instruction, prior to referral for special education services" (p. 62). Integral to the postulation of Heller et al. was that single point in time evaluation of learning disabilities using more traditionally supported approaches (IQ/achievement discrepancy analysis) yields false positives, while determining growth in response to instruction may more accurately identify those with substantial and persistent educational needs. School psychologists, by training, are armed with knowledge of the characteristics of learning challenges and disabilities, including data-driven assessment practices and knowledge of the diverse array of factors that impact educational achievement. Taken together, such knowledge predisposes them to ecological and intraindividual understanding of the nature of academic needs for intervention planning purposes. It is this understanding, combined with an awareness of the historical shortcomings of the ability/achievement discrepancy model vis-a-vis classification outcomes and student growth, that led to the advancement of several position papers (e.g., NASP, NASDSE, NICHD) calling for reevaluation of the discrepancy model of learning disability identification and implementation of a three-tiered preventative service model (Preston et al., 2015). Though clearly the NASP is comprised of school psychologists, it is important to note that many of the principal authors of the NASDSE paper (e.g., Batsche et al., 2005) all began their careers as school psychologists, and dedicated substantial segments of their careers training school psychologists, contributing to the professional literature, and informing organizational policy as related to academic intervention and consultation.

3 School Psychologists as Leaders in Implementing Best Practice Academic Intervention and Consultation Models

School psychologists are uniquely positioned to serve as leaders in the capacity of academic intervention developers, implementers, and evaluators on a systems and individual scale. This fact is further buttressed by increased reference to this role in the evolution of the NASP Professional Standards from 2000 through the most recent edition, published in 2020. As the contributions of school psychologists to research and policy related to the design, implementation, and evaluation of academic intervention models has grown, so too has the explicitness of reference to such work in the NASP Professional Standards, with contributions to academic intervention and consultation articulated more fully in each edition revision.

In accordance with the NASP 2020 Professional Standards, the role of the school psychologist in regard to the conceptualization, implementation, and evaluation of interventions has clearly moved from a focus on individual students or students who are at-risk to one encompassing all students and systems as whole. Keystone language and conceptual differences between the NASP 2000 Professional Standards (pre-IDEA 2004) and the NASP 2020 Professional Standards with direct links to leadership in academic intervention planning are noted, including the following:

– Reference to school psychologists as "change agents" who "advocate for change at the individual student, classroom, building, district, state, and national level" (NASP, 2020, p. 4)
– Repeated identification of school psychologists as purveyors of knowledge related to the curriculum in general, with a specific emphasis on understanding and disseminating research surrounding curricular efficacy (NASP, 2020, p. 5)
– Multiple references across NASP domains to the role of the school psychologist in designing, implementing, and evaluating evidence-based academic interventions
– Multiple references to the role of the school psychologist in assisting "all students" in their attainment of academic standards (NASP, 2020)
– Imperatives for school psychologists to "create and maintain multitiered systems to support each students' attainment of academic, social-emotional, and behavioral goals (NASP, 2020, p. 7)

Furthermore, school psychologists' leadership and involvement in various elements of academic intervention is referenced across several domains of the NASP 2020 Professional Standards, including Domain 1, Data-Based Decision-Making; Domain 2, Consultation and Collaboration; Domain 3, Academic Interventions and Instructional Supports; Domain 5, School-Wide Practices that Promote Learning; and Domain 9, Research and Evidence-Based Practices (NASP, 2020). The framework for the involvement of the school psychologist as leaders presented below integrates contemporary best practices as asserted in the literature over the past 20 years vis-a-vis the NASP 2020 professional standards. A more expansive discussion of school psychologists as leaders in implementing MTSS initiatives is later

presented in chapter "School Psychology Leadership in Multitiered Systems of Support" and should be considered alongside of the following:

3.1 Data-Driven Needs Assessments

School psychologists possess multiple skillsets positioning them to conduct data-driven assessments of school and district needs as related to academic intervention (Castillo & Curtis, 2014). Evaluations of extant data sources surrounding student achievement, including state testing results, existing benchmark assessment results, and special education referral trends, are a few examples of data sources that should be quantitatively reviewed in an effort to target district needs when developing school-wide intervention protocols. Data-driven needs assessments should serve as the foundation upon which school-wide academic intervention protocols are developed. NASP professional standards and skillsets related to this critical element of academic intervention planning efforts include the following:

- Domain 1, Data-Based Decision-Making
- School psychologists 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 multitiered system of supports. School psychologists use a problem-solving framework as the basis for all professional activities. School psychologists systematically collect data from multiple sources as a foundation 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:

  – *School psychologists collect and analyze data from multiple sources (e.g., parents/guardians, teachers, students) and levels (i.e., individual, group, system) to understand students' needs and to select and implement evidence-based instructional and mental and behavioral health interventions and supports.*
  – *School psychologists incorporate various techniques for collection, measurement, and analysis of data; accountability; and the use of technological resources in the evaluation of services at the individual, group, and/or systems levels.*
  – *School psychologists support the use of systematic, reliable, and valid data collection procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of and/or need for modification of school-based interventions and programs* (NASP, 2020, p. 3).

The work of a school psychologist does not exclusively surround evaluation of performance data linked to individual students. In their practice, school psychologists are well positioned to observe data-driven trends in a variety of domains, including special education classification trends, general student achievement trends in reading, math, and writing, and other population-based trends within a building

or across a district. Leading the charge in the evaluation of multiple sources of data to identify areas of need within a building or district is one example of the means by which school psychologists can and should serve as leaders for change. Likewise, assisting others in the evaluation of data collection instruments and methods, including the integrity of a variety of commonly used assessment tools, encompassing validity, reliability, and content, is a powerful means by which school psychologists can lead efforts in fortifying systemic data-based decision-making. While much of the early work of a school psychologist may have centered around data assessment practices as linked to individual students, applications of leadership in school psychology extend this process to the systems level.

3.2 Development of School-Wide and Individual Academic Intervention Models

School psychologists use data derived from academic needs assessments to develop systemic and individual frameworks for the provision of academic interventions in accordance with evidence-based practices, national, and local guidance (Stoiber, 2014). Practitioner knowledge of evidence-based academic interventions, including their ability to evaluate the integrity of commercially available whole group intervention packages, as well as "standalone" instructional strategies, serves as the basis for intervention design efforts on a district (systems) and individual student (problem-solving) level. School psychologists' understanding of the various approaches to developing academic intervention models (e.g., standard protocol, problem-solving, and related permutations) as associated with their respective strengths, limitations, and outcomes is essential to this work, alongside of their understanding of the need to monitor implementation fidelity. The specialized knowledge that school psychologists possess in terms of understanding academic needs, identifying appropriate evidence-based resources, and implementation science defines their role as leaders in systemic and individual academic intervention planning. Domain 3 of the NASP 2020 Professional Standards of Practice denotes the involvement of school psychologist as related to the development of academic intervention models as follows:

- Domain 3, Academic Interventions and Instructional Supports
- School psychologists understand the biological, cultural, and social influences on academic skills; human learning, cognitive, and developmental processes; and evidence-based curricula and instructional strategies. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, use assessment and data collection methods to implement and evaluate services that support academic skill development in children. Examples of direct and indirect services that support the development of cognitive and academic skills include the following:

  – *School psychologists use assessment data to inform evidence-based instructional strategies that are intended to improve student performance.*

- *School psychologists promote interventions and accommodations to help students enhance their capacity to be self-regulated learners, fostering their ability to set learning goals, design a learning process to achieve those goals, and assess outcomes to determine whether the goals were achieved.*
- *School psychologists, in collaboration with other school personnel, promote the attainment of academic standards and benchmarks by all children and youth.*
- *School psychologists collaborate with others to ensure that students who are not meeting benchmarks or standards receive continual progress monitoring for improvements in academic skills; they then recommend changes to instruction based on student responsiveness to interventions.*
- *School psychologists apply current, empirically based research on learning and cognition to the development of effective instructional strategies to promote student learning at the individual, group, and systems levels.*
- *School psychologists work with other school personnel to develop, implement, and evaluate effective interventions to improve learning engagement and academic outcomes.*
- *School psychologists incorporate all available information in developing instructional strategies to meet the individual learning needs of children and youth.*
- *School psychologists use culturally responsive and developmentally appropriate assessment techniques to identify and diagnose disabilities that affect development and learning. School psychologists use assessment data to select and implement evidence-based interventions that address identified learning and developmental needs.*
- *School psychologists share information about research in curriculum and instruction with educators, parents/guardians, and the community to promote improvement in instruction and student achievement.*
- *School psychologists facilitate the design and delivery of evidence-based curriculum and instructional strategies that promote academic achievement in literacy, mathematics, and other content areas, through techniques such as teacher-directed instruction, peer tutoring, and interventions for self-regulation, planning/organization, and management of academic demands.*
- *School psychologists seek to maximize intervention acceptability and fidelity during the development, implementation, and evaluation of instructional interventions* (NASP, 2020, p. 5).

Domain 9 of the NASP 2020 Professional Standards also addressed contributions to the development of school-wide and individual intervention approaches as follows:

- Domain 9, Research and Evidence-Based Practice
- School psychologists 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. As scientist practitioners, school psychologists 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. Examples of professional practices associated with research and evidence-based practice include the following:

– *School psychologists evaluate, interpret, and synthesize a cumulative body of research findings and apply these as a foundation for effective service delivery.*
– *School psychologists advocate for the use of evidence-based educational practices in instruction, social-emotional learning, and positive behavioral supports at the individual, group, school, and district levels.*
– *School psychologists apply knowledge of evidence-based interventions and programs in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the fidelity and effectiveness of school-based intervention plans.*
– *School psychologists provide assistance for analyzing, interpreting, and using empirical foundations to support effective school practices.*
– *School psychologists evaluate, select, and interpret evidence-based strategies that lead to meaningful school improvement through enhanced school climate, academic achievement, and sense of safety.*
– *School psychologists communicate their knowledge about statistics and measurement principles to inform practices and decision-making.*
– *School psychologists understand principles of implementation science and program evaluation and apply these in a variety of settings to support other school leaders in developing, implementing, and monitoring programs that improve outcomes for all children and youth* (NASP, 2020, p. 9).

Orientation as a leader as related to the development of academic intervention models involves the critical first step of "speaking up" and identifying ineffective or deleterious educational practices undermining the needs of children. While this may be an intimidating notion for novice school psychologists, preparation in leadership theory and professional consultation may instill confidence among practitioners so that they may gracefully negotiate such challenges using data and research as the driving force. School psychologists, with robust training in research and evaluating the integrity of educational practices, are ideally suited to lead initiatives related to the design and implementation of intervention for *groups* of students, not merely individual students. They are knowledgeable in practices associated with implementation science and fidelity monitoring and possess consultative skills enabling them to educate others in the implementation of large-scale initiatives.

3.3 Implementation of Universal Screening and Progress Monitoring Systems to Evaluate Response to Intervention and Impact on Student Learning

School psychologists' knowledge of the psychometric properties of assessments is central to their role in identifying measures to be used for the purposes of benchmarking and progress monitoring of academic skills. In the school setting, school psychologists are assessment experts with advanced training in the differences between commonly found school-based assessments, many of which lack specificity and sensitivity for the purposes of determining present levels of functioning and growth in response to intervention. Likewise, school psychologists possess a high level of training in determining best practices in analyzing academic growth and progress as part of the course of intervention delivery (Hixon et al., 2014). Given the wealth of available benchmarking and progress monitoring offerings available to school districts, school psychologists should regularly assist district staff in understanding the differences between psychometrically sound benchmark measures, particularly between progress monitoring measures that are sensitive to small increments of growth and those that are subjective and qualitative measures of student achievement. By virtue of their training in assessment and intervention, school psychologists are situated to serve in leadership capacities in data teaming and problem-solving efforts to identify rates of improvement and make decisions regarding changes in the nature and intensity of academic interventions. Again, this role is one which allows for contributions on a systemic level in terms of overall district academic intervention planning design via MTSS, as well as individual contributions in terms of analyzing growth of individual students. Assisting in the design of universal data teaming procedures and protocols for buildings and the district at large serves as a potent means of applying leadership tenets in the practice of school psychology (Kovaleski & Pederson, 2014). NASP represents school psychologists' contributions in the domain of benchmarking and progress monitoring as follows:

- Domain 1, Data-Based Decision-Making (expanded definition presented above)

  - *School psychologists incorporate various techniques for collection, measurement, and analysis of data; accountability; and the use of technological resources in the evaluation of services at the individual, group, and/or systems levels.*
  - *School psychologists use data to monitor academic, social, emotional, and behavioral progress; to measure student response; to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions; and to determine when to modify or change an intervention.*
  - *School psychologists provide support for classroom teachers, school staff, and other stakeholders in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting universal screening and progress monitoring data to inform decision-making about the instructional, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of students.*

– *School psychologists assist with the design and implementation of assessment procedures to determine the degree to which recommended interventions have been implemented, and they consider treatment fidelity data in all decisions that are based on intervention response and progress.*
– *School psychologists support the use of systematic, reliable, and valid data collection procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of and/or need for modification of school-based interventions and programs.*
– *School psychologists use information and technology resources to enhance data collection and decision-making* (NASP, 2020, p. 3).

3.4 Program Evaluation

In all renditions of the NASP Professional Standards since their inception, program evaluation has been conceptualized as a key role of the school psychologist. Given advanced training in statistics, research methods, and analysis of student growth, contributions that school psychologist can make from an evaluative perspective are immense and arguably better defined than those of other school professionals. Though many in the school environment may have historically viewed school psychologists as evaluators of individual students, the training imparted by graduate programs in school psychology affords them knowledge of research design methodologies, means of analyzing group performance data, and quantitative methods, positioning them to pioneer large-scale evaluations of academic intervention efficacy at the building and district level (Castillo, 2014). Given their knowledge base, which deviates substantially from other disciplines engaged in school operations, practitioners should seek to lead program evaluation efforts at the building and district level as related to the implementation of academic intervention programming, providing continuous feedback to administration and teachers so that model elements may be adjusted as needed to foster student growth. When combined with practitioner knowledge of evidence-based intervention approaches, school psychologists exemplify leadership potential in the design and evaluation of large-scale academic intervention models.

• Domain 9: Research and Evidence-Based Practice (expanded citation presented above)

– *School psychologists understand principles of implementation science and program evaluation and apply these in a variety of settings to support other school leaders in developing, implementing, and monitoring programs that improve outcomes for all children and youth (*NASP, 2020, p. 5).

From a leadership perspective, the systems-level emphasis of NASP Domain 5, School Wide Practices to Promote Learning, encapsulates the leadership involvement of the school psychologist, given its emphasis on a systems-level scope of practice, organizational culture, and school-wide initiatives. In order to fully engage

in the efforts explicitly referenced in Domain 5, school psychologists must possess and apply not only consultative skills, but tacit leadership skills and knowledge of the ways to guide systemic initiatives.

- Domain 5: School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning
- School psychologists 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. School psychologists, 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. Professional and leadership practices associated with school-wide promotion of learning include the following:

  – *School psychologists, in collaboration with others, incorporate evidence-based strategies in the design, implementation, and evaluation of policies and practices in areas such as discipline, grading, instructional support, staff training, school improvement activities, program evaluation, and home-school partnerships.*
  – *School psychologists provide professional development, training, and ongoing coaching on a range of topics that help staff and parents/guardians to better understand the developmental needs of children and youth in schools and that promote the use of effective instructional strategies, positive classroom management practices, and the cultivation of supportive working relationships.*
  – *School psychologists use their knowledge of organizational development and systems theory to assist in promoting both a respectful, supportive atmosphere for decision-making and collaboration and a commitment to quality instruction and services.*
  – *School psychologists help staff members, students, and parents/guardians to resolve conflicts peacefully and respectfully.*
  – *School psychologists are actively involved in the development and measurement of school improvement plans that affect the programs and services available to children, youth, and families. School psychologists assist in conducting needs assessments to help select school-wide programs based on the needs of the learning community.*
  – *School psychologists incorporate evidence-based strategies when developing and implementing intervention programs to facilitate the successful transition of students from one environment to another (e.g., program to program, school to school, grade to grade, and school to higher education and/or work).*
  – *School psychologists work with others to develop and maintain positive school climates and learning environments that support resilience and academic growth, promote high rates of academic engagement and attendance, and reduce negative influences on learning and behavior.*
  – *School psychologists participate in designing and implementing universal screening procedures to identify the need for additional academic or*

*behavioral support services, as well as progress monitoring systems to pro-
mote successful learning and well-being.*

– *School psychologists work collaboratively with other school personnel to cre-
ate and maintain a multitiered system of services to support each student's
attainment of academic, social-emotional, and behavioral goals.*
– *School psychologists analyze systems-level problems and identify factors that
influence learning and behavior. They help other school leaders evaluate out-
comes of classroom, building, and system initiatives, and they support shared
decision-making practices designed to promote teacher leadership, include
student voice, and meet general public accountability responsibilities (p. 6–7).*

4   Leadership Theory

Leadership theory as related to the practice of school psychology remains undevel-
oped, despite consistent reference to the importance of leadership in the NASP
Blueprint for Training and Practice, NASP conference strands, and numerous other
initiatives in the field of school psychology (Augustyniak, 2014). Given such, inte-
gration of established themes in educational and global leadership theory, combined
with research findings related to the identification of leadership approaches most
associated with the work of school psychologists (e.g., transformational leader-
ship), serve as the basis upon which school psychologists should seek to serve as
leaders in the implementation of academic interventions in the schools (Augustyniak
et al., 2016). As asserted throughout the body of this chapter, perhaps the most
important contribution that school psychologists can make as related to academic
intervention planning in schools is that of knowledge. While the dynamic compo-
nents of the development of academic intervention models are rooted in a wide
array of disciplines, ranging from applied behavior analysis, special education, con-
sultation, and school psychology, school psychology as a practice is the one disci-
pline in which all elements of academic intervening systems consistently coalesce
as a discrete skillset inherent to our work as professionals. While elements of MTSS
and academic intervention planning are present in teacher preparation programs,
universal standards for the acquisition of knowledge related to all elements of aca-
demic intervention planning, including needs assessment, academic intervention
development, data collection, progress monitoring systems, and program evaluation
efforts, as an integrated set of skills, are only evident in the graduate training stan-
dards of school psychologists. Given such, as potential purveyors of knowledge,
school psychologists are situated to enact the change they wish to see in school
environments by first availing themselves in an instructional capacity, whereby they
are positioned to lead by disseminating knowledge. In accordance with principles of
transformational leadership, creating change first requires that stakeholders per-
ceive a need for change (Bass, 1985). School psychologists can leverage their
knowledge of the unique elements of MTSS as related to academic intervention
services to appeal to colleagues and those in positions of authority, identifying the

need for change via targeted needs assessments and other data-driven methodologies. As school psychologists are responsible for "inspiring commitment" among a diverse group of professionals whose "roles and objectives" may significantly differ from their own (Augustyniak, 2014, p. 23), using their knowledge of academic intervention service planning, by first conducting needs assessments as the impetus for school reform efforts, aligns with tenets of transformational leadership, specifying that leaders inspire change and goal-directed behavior by meeting a challenge (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). As there is perhaps no greater challenge facing many school systems than variability in student achievement on an individual and systems level, school psychologists have the ability to use this shared challenge in development of a common goal.

With the identification of a shared goal, school psychologists may advance the need for modifications to existing intervention structures and make available their aforementioned expertise across the essential domains of academic intervention planning. As de facto experts in intervention design, monitoring, and evaluation, school psychologists serve an invaluable role in designing district-wide academic intervention models, assisting others in understanding evidence-based intervention practices, providing instruction in evidence-based approaches to documenting student growth, and evaluating both the fidelity of the model and global model outcomes. By asserting their knowledge across such domains, conducting needs assessments, and establishing a common goal, practitioners may then develop model elements with school-based stakeholders via shared strategic planning employing elements of distributed leadership. In accordance with distributed leadership theory (Ritchie & Woods, 2007), an academic intervention steering committee, comprised of education stakeholders across representative disciplines, may be developed to conceptualize district or building plan elements across keystone domains (e.g., evidence-based interventions, progress monitoring, and so on). With the guidance of the school psychologist, shared decision-making and distributed responsibility for the implementation of strategic planning elements may then occur. In cultivating a vision that is appealing to constituents (inspirational motivation), mentoring and supporting teachers and other providers (individualized consideration), and providing knowledge, instruction, and insight into various elements of academic intervention model development, while also eliciting feedback from stakeholders (intellectual stimulation), school psychologists embody each of the critical elements of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Augustyniak et al., 2016). Throughout this process, the school psychologist should be attuned to the importance of utilizing their knowledge base, as well as their understanding of the "capacity of others," including the structure of the organization and school climate, the latter of which are asserted to be critical factors related to leadership roles of school psychologists, often coming without formal designation as a school leader via administrative status (Augustyniak, 2014, p. 21).

Inherent to the ability of school psychologists to lead any initiative, academic intervention in orientation or otherwise are soft skills associated with the ability to assert oneself as a leader. Knowledge of the capacity of ones' constituents, the ability to effectively consult, read, and interpret verbal and nonverbal cues, and

understand organizational phenomena, are skills that oftentimes may not easily be instructed but may be selected for or reinforced through enhanced instruction in consultation. At the conclusion of this volume, proposed approaches to increasing the pool of school psychology graduate candidates prepared to engage in leadership roles are discussed and are presented alongside of recommendations for more expansive instruction in consultation. Apart from innate abilities germane to leadership of school initiatives, explicit instruction in leadership models infused into school psychology graduate training programs, as also discussed in the concluding chapter, is essential. Given the ever-increasing scope of responsibility placed upon school psychologists, as well as the degree to which school psychologists, can, should, and already function as leaders of school-based initiatives, ensuring that practitioners are equipped to successfully navigate organizational charges for the betterment of children is of paramount importance.

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School Psychology Leadership in Multitiered Systems of Support

Gary Schaffer

The reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) in 2004 and passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act in 2015 have increasingly led to a paradigm shift in both education and school psychology practice (Fan et al., 2016). This paradigm shift has slowly allowed for school psychologists to expand beyond the confines of their traditional roles of assessor and tester and assume expanded leadership roles at the school and district levels (National Association of School Psychologists, 2016; Eagle et al., 2015). Despite school psychologists increasingly assuming such leadership roles, many in the field continue to engage in the "traditionalistic" isolated practices of conducting psychoeducational evaluations and writing reports. Historically, over 50% of school psychologist's work has been consumed by heavy psychoeducational assessment caseloads (Brown et al., 2006; Stoiber & Vanderwood, 2008). However, as more schools shift away from reactionary models of providing academic, behavioral, and social-emotional services, there is an increased need to utilize school psychologists' unique training in preventative practices to lead efforts under the framework of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS).

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support is an umbrella term used to describe the framework that "houses" and integrates intervention services delivery models, such as Response to Intervention (RtI) and School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) (Schaffer, 2017). Intervention service delivery models under MTSS seek to remediate maladaptive learning, behavioral, or social-emotional deficits before they lead to disability placement, office discipline referrals, or significant social-emotion concerns. MTSS and intervention service delivery models are highly

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influenced by the public health model. Under the public health model, a three-tier pyramid was adopted to help address the health of the general population and prevent widespread illness through universal, targeted, and intensive supports (Averill & Rinaldi, 2011; Wexler, 2017). Within MTSS, school psychologists' unique training in preventative and responsive services and data-based decision-making are being emphasized as integral components to educational reform. Consequently, school psychologists are increasingly being called on to lead empirically supported instruction and intervention efforts that facilitate school improvement.

In order for school psychologists to fully exploit their areas of expertise under an MTSS framework, schools need to adopt distributed leadership practices. Through distributed leadership, a "shared power" approach is utilized to capitalize on the diverse expertise of varied educational professionals and to foster cooperative practices to meet the more complex demands of school accountability (Augustyniak, 2014; Augustyniak et al., 2016). Distributed leadership sharply contrasts with the historical views held by school systems in which leadership is a centralized and specialized role designated for school administrators, such as the superintendent or principal. Through utilizing distributed leadership, school psychologists can facilitate best practices in education reform under MTSS and strengthen capacities of systems to meet the needs of all learners. Six areas in which school psychologists can organize and lead efforts in developing a cogent MTSS framework include identifying needs in adopting preventative and responsive services, informing data-based decision-making, completing program evaluations, conducting school-based research, advancing intervention integrity efforts, and promoting comprehensive mental and behavioral health services.

1 Identification of School and District Needs

Before proper implementation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support can begin, evaluation of educators' beliefs and attitudes should be assessed as a prerequisite to systems-level change within school districts. Educators are more likely to deviate from faulty past practices and adopt new initiatives, like MTSS, if they are informed and feel validated in why a change in practice is needed. In order to promote change in practice and obtain insight into the apprehensions, misperceptions, and knowledge of MTSS, a needs assessment should be conducted. A needs assessment is a systemic process to identify and prioritize the needs or "gaps" between current and desired conditions (Morrison & Harms, 2018).

School psychologists' unique training and understanding of MTSS, data collection, and research design makes them ideal candidates in leading and developing needs assessments at the school and district levels. The first step in developing a needs assessment entails the identification of key stakeholders with specialized areas of expertise and influence that align with the district and school's priorities and goals (Skalski et al., 2015). During this step, the school psychologist may review the school or district improvement plan and subsequently work with

administrators in forming a small needs assessment team of teachers, paraprofessionals, and counselors to assist in developing a comprehension needs assessment. A school or district improvement plan outlines changes the school or district needs to make in order to improve teaching and ultimately lead to increased student achievement (Bernhardt, 2015).

After identifying key stakeholders, the second step in developing a needs assessment entails the identification of goals, objectives, and parameters of the needs assessment. With many schools and districts adopting MTSS into their improvement plans, needs assessment teams may want to formulate and set goals, objectives, and parameters around MTSS and evaluate what staff want to accomplish through MTSS. In this regard, should a needs assessment be developed for a broad initiative like MTSS, the needs assessment team may want to limit the components the needs assessment addresses. Through their knowledge of MTSS and intervention service delivery models, such as RtI, school psychologists may greatly help guide the team in focusing the needs assessment on critical components of preventative practice like commonly held misperceptions that hinder systemic change or resources needed to implement MTSS.

After identifying goals, objectives, and parameters of the needs assessment, questions may be formulated in regard to areas perceived strength, areas of perceived weakness, and availability of time and resources to properly implement MTSS. For example, a question may ask school staff to indicate their knowledge of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support on a scale of one to five, with one indicating little knowledge of MTSS and five indicating great knowledge of MTSS. Another question might ask staff to identify the greatest obstacle they see to implementing MTSS and list common barriers to implementation such as lack of educator support, lack of school resources, insufficient training, lack of personnel, lack of funding, and time constraints. Through completing a needs assessment, school psychologists can work with team members to prioritize areas of concern held by school staff, identify areas that may impede on systemic change, formulate timeframes for the implementation of service delivery models, and better align initiatives with school and district improvement plans.

The fourth step of a needs assessment entails the collection and analysis of existing data. Data that may prove useful in indicating whether the district or school is on target for meeting improvement plan objectives and readiness for adoption of MTSS can be found in the following areas: demographics (enrollment, attendance, retention, ethnicity, gender), school climate (discipline referrals, classroom management, perceived safety), student learning and achievement (grades, universal screening measures, formative assessments, state testing), family and community engagement (attendance from families and the community in school functions and decisions, existing community partnerships), and staff quality and retention (staff attendance, staff turnover rate, professional development) (Skalski et al., 2015). Through analysis of such data, school psychologists can present to administrators and key stakeholders data trends over time, identify at-risk populations, note needed areas of professional development, and indicate whether the district and school are currently meeting or exceeding goals outlined in the school improvement plan. For

instance, perhaps the school's goal was to have 30% of parents attend a school forum on bullying but data from the event revealed only 10% attendance.

The final step to completing a needs assessment entails utilizing results from the needs assessment and existing data to engage in resource mapping. Resource mapping consists of evaluating personnel, programs, and services that are available to students and identifying how such resources are currently being used and whether such resources can be integrated and utilized more efficiently and effectively (Skalski et al., 2015). Critical to resource mapping is the optimization and enhancement of available programs and interventions made available to students.

One of the most significant areas of resource mapping includes improving the overall infrastructure of service delivery to children through identifying areas of service overlap and discrepancies in service delivery. In this regard, in analyzing the results of a needs assessment and engaging in resource mapping, a school psychologist may uncover that a school initiative for developing a strong MTSS framework includes providing intensive levels of social-emotional support to at-risk youth. However, it may be noted that the school currently lacks a full-time mental and behavioral health professional to provide such services due to time constraints. Consequently, the school psychologist may work with the administrator in adjusting existing school-based mental health professional's schedules to provide consistent intensive social-emotional supports to at-risk youth. Overall through completing a needs assessment and resource mapping, school psychologists work collaboratively with educators to identify areas of need, overcome complacency with faulty past practices, and build appropriate infrastructure to meet district and school initiatives. Results from a needs assessment will assist in establishing "buy-in" from educators by placing their needs into a prioritized order to guide decisions about how to proceed in implementing major reform efforts under an MTSS framework (Altschuld and Watkins, 2014).

2 Data-Based Decision-Making

Over the past two decades, there has been an increased emphasis on educators to both interpret and utilize data to inform their instructional and classroom practices to best help students succeed. Although the utilization of data to inform instruction appears to be a theoretically sound practice that most educators would welcome for the benefit of their students, teachers and administrators are often overwhelmed by the piles of data they receive and struggle in understanding how to use such data to improve instructional and classroom practices (Huguet et al., 2014; Skalski & Romero, 2011). Consequently, educators often modify their instruction off of gut feelings leading to tireless ineffective modifications (Prenger & Schildkamp, 2018). As demands for teacher accountability increase and data is increasingly being used to obtain financial support from policymakers, both teachers and administrators have learned to be wary, defensive, or dismissive over the collection and interpretation of data (Skalski & Romero, 2011; Huguet et al., 2014). Similarly, because the

field of school psychology utilizes data to inform its practice in recommending evidence-based interventions to teachers and administrators, the profession has inherently, at times, been linked to the same wary, defensive, and dismissive feelings that data has received. Nevertheless, under MTSS, interpretation and utilization of data is significantly important in evaluating and refining instructional practices and determining the effectiveness of interventions being provided to students.

Data-based decision-making refers to the ongoing process of collecting and analyzing data from multiple sources to alter and improve instructional and behavioral practices to best benefit learners (Prenger & Schildkamp, 2018). School psychologists' extensive knowledge in data collection and analysis can greatly assist educators in making effective data-based decisions that benefit students across the academic, social, emotional, and behavioral domains. With districts increasingly emphasizing best practices under a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support framework, one way in which school psychologists can assist teachers and administrators is through the collection and interpretation of universal screening and progress monitoring data.

Universal screening is the systemic brief assessment of the school population to identify children who may be at-risk for significant academic, social, emotional, or behavioral deficits (Fuchs, 2017). Typically, universal screening takes place in the fall, winter, and spring of each school year and is viewed as the first step in identifying children who may not be responding to core instruction and behavioral intervention efforts. Progress monitoring entails the repeated assessment of skills and strategies learned to determine whether a child is responding to the interventions and services provided (Fuchs, 2017; Shapiro, 2013).

In the relation to universal screening and progress monitoring, school psychologists can lead schools in efforts to properly collect and interpret data in accordance with best evidence-based practices. In the area of data collection, school psychologists may recommend that a school collect additional progress monitoring data over a longer period of time to determine whether a child is adequately responding to the interventions being provided. Such a recommendation would align with recent recommendations that schools collect at least 12–14 data points before determining whether an intervention is effective (Christ et al., 2013). This is in stark contrast to the past practice of schools collecting only six to eight data points per intervention, which is likely to result in invalid and unreliable educational decision-making.

Similarly, after reviewing the scholarly literature, the school psychologist may recommend that a school using the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment-Mini (DESSA-Mini) need only to screen students one time per year as opposed to three times per year due to the measures limited utility in guiding decision-making beyond a fall administration (Kilpatrick et al., 2018). This recommendation could save a school considerable time and resources. Additionally, schools who are aware that they may only have to universally screen for social-emotional competence one time per year as opposed to three times per year may be much more likely to adopt the practice of screening for social-emotional concerns. Therefore, in the collection of universal screening and progress monitoring data, school psychologists can play a vital role in guiding educators toward best practices.

Another way school psychologists can greatly assist educators in interpreting universal screening and progress monitoring data is through the use of cut points. A cut point is a score on a universal screener or progress monitoring measure used to determine whether a student is at-risk for poor academic and behavioral outcomes (Schaffer, 2017). Through the use of cut points, educators can determine whether a child who is at-risk is in need of more intense supports to remediate their area(s) of concern (Schaffer, 2017).

School psychologists can guide educators in the adoption of cut points to ensure that students who are at-risk are not over- or under-identified. For instance, if schools adopt too stringent of a cut point, nearly all students may be identified at-risk and in need of more intense levels of intervention (National Center on Response to Intervention, 2013). As a consequence of adopting too stringent of cut scores, students may be incorrectly identified at-risk, and available resources for truly at-risk children would be depleted. Additionally, the costs associated with sustaining resources for children who have been over-identified for being at-risk would be high and detrimental to the school's budget. On the contrary, if schools adopt too lenient of cut points, fewer students would be identified at-risk and students with significant learning and behavioral challenges may go unidentified (National Center on Response to Intervention, 2013). If truly at-risk students do not receive increased support early on, their learning and behavioral deficits may never be remediated and their potential to benefit most from their education is significantly reduced. Therefore, the use of proper cut point scores is critical in adequately sustaining proper supports for children who present with learning and behavioral challenges, allocating such supports in an efficient and effective manner, and potentially saving schools money by avoiding the overuse or misuse of costly resources.

School psychologists can best lead and assist districts in implementing and understanding the importance of data-based decision-making and cut points through their training in statistics and research methods. Although many screening assessments include cut points to identify whether a student is at-risk, school psychologists' understanding of percentile ranks, standard scores, and standard deviations can greatly assist them in simplifying and explaining such terms to teachers and administrators. Additionally, school psychologists can interpret and summarize data in user-friendly formats, such as graphs or charts. Consequently, teachers and administrators may find data less intimidating and become more willing to adjust their instructional methodologies to better benefit learners.

For example, in meeting with the child study team over a student, the school psychologist may assist the team in understanding the meaning behind a student scoring in the tenth percentile on an oral reading fluency universal screener. Therefore, the school psychologist may explain to the team that only 10% of children scored lower than the student who scored in the tenth percentile and that the student is in need of more intensive supports in reading fluency due to falling below the cut point score. Additionally, the school psychologist may work with the child study team and teacher to supplement instruction with quick and easy interventions to improve reading fluency such as paired reading or repeated reading. Should the child continue to not make adequate progress despite receiving intensive supports,

the school psychologist can lead efforts in determining whether the school has another intervention available to assist the child or if the child should receive a referral for special education eligibility consideration.

Through the use of cut points and analysis of progress monitoring data, school psychologists can lead child study and data-based decision teams in determining whether a student is making adequate progress or is in need of more intensive supports. Therefore, school psychologists play a critical role in assisting educators to move children from less intensive generalized supports at the Tier 1 level to more individualized and intensive supports at the Tier 2 and Tier 3 levels under an MTSS framework. By using cut points, universal screening, and progress monitoring data, school psychologists can lead educators in ensuring that resources are allocated appropriately and student movement between tiers is seamless.

On a much broader level, school psychologists' understanding of data can be used to help educators evaluate the effectiveness of their school-based interventions or programs. Universal screening data, progress monitoring data, and state test scores may reveal weaknesses in core instruction and interventions programs. For instance, through analyzing fourth-grade school-wide universal screening data in reading, the school psychologist might notice that 40% of students are being referred to Tier II support. Such a high percentage of students being referred to Tier II is significantly beyond the 10–15% recommendation to receive such supports. This is likely to result the depletion of resources available to students in need and suggests a systemic breakdown of Tier I instruction.

Consequently, the school psychologist may lead efforts in assisting administrators and teachers in evaluating the breakdown of Tier I instruction. In evaluating the breakdown of Tier I instruction, the school psychologist may look into whether the core program is being implemented with fidelity, whether teachers have been effectively trained at delivering such instruction, if enough resources are readily available to meet the school's needs, or whether the Tier I program has a strong evidence base for meeting student needs. Overall, school psychologists' understanding of data collection and data interpretation can greatly assist educators in understanding how to use data to inform the selection and implementation of interventions, move students between tiers under MTSS, and improve instructional methodologies.

3 Program Evaluation

From interventions to programs, the Every Student Succeeds Act is the first federal education law to outline and define the term "evidence-based," suggesting a strong emphasis on using empirically supported practices to best support learners. ESSA's endorsement of using evidence-based interventions and programs goes as far to distinguish between "strong," "moderate," and "promising" evidence. More specifically under Sect. 8002 (21) (A), ESSA defines the term "evidence-based" stating:

> The term "evidence-based," when used with respect to a State, local educational agency, or school activity, means an activity, strategy, or intervention that— (i) demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on— (I) strong evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented experimental study; (II) moderate evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study; or (III) promising evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias. (p. 393)

With ESSA highlighting the use of evidence-based interventions and programs under an MTSS framework, there currently exists a large void for school psychologists to fill in regard to the role of program evaluator. Program evaluation entails the systemic evaluation of whether a program or intervention that has been introduced directly led to a significant improvement in the performance of students (Godber, 2008; Shaw, 2016). Therefore, the job of a program evaluator is to look into whether the introduction of a program affected the performance of students and determine if the program resulted in students performing significantly better than before the program was introduced.

Program evaluation falls directly in line with school psychology training and practice as the field has stressed the critical consumption and distribution of research for well over four decades (Keith, 1988; National Association of School Psychologists, 2010; Shaw, 2016). More specifically, school psychologists possess knowledge in the areas of core research methods, statistical analysis, survey design, evaluation management, database use, and data collection and analysis (Godber, 2008). Each of these areas greatly lends themselves to school psychologists playing a vital role in the evaluation of interventions and programs. However, school psychologists' exploitation of these skills in applied settings, such as school districts or agencies, has largely been underutilized and unrecognized. Nevertheless, mounting pressure from policymakers, ever-growing scrutiny by taxpayers, and the desire for educators to know whether proposed interventions will benefit learners has led to a renewed interest in the evaluation of programs.

One way in which school psychologists can lead efforts in program evaluation is through completing an analysis of whether a proposed program contains a strong evidence base. Although many school districts may not have access to research databases like EBSCOhost, obtaining access to scholarly peer-reviewed journals and databases has never been easier for school psychologists. Search engines like Google Scholar, Microsoft Academic, Science.gov, and PubMed provide great resources for school psychologists to conduct research and evaluate whether a proposed academic or behavioral health program shows strong evidence to benefit children and educators. Additionally, websites such as Evidence Based Network, What Works Clearinghouse, Best Evidence Encyclopedia, Reading Rockets, and Blueprints for Health Youth Development can provide school psychologists great insight about the strength of evidence supporting a proposed program and whether such a program should be adopted by the district. Finally, for school psychologist who are members of the National Association of School Psychologists, the organization provides access to several scholarly journals and a newsletter in the form of *School Psychology Review*, *School Psychology Forum*, and *Communiqué*. Through

their knowledge of research methods and statistical analysis, school psychologists can utilize each of the aforementioned resources to inform administrators whether a proposed program is worth obtaining.

Aside assisting school administrators in making decisions on whether a proposed program shows a strong evidence base, school psychologists can assist them in making cost-effective decisions. With for-profit companies utilizing a dizzying array of marketing terms like "evidence-based" and "clinically proven" to entice school districts to purchase programs, it is becoming increasingly difficult to decipher which programs are truly worth their weight in gold. Such programs may cost districts hundreds of thousands of dollars. For example, at the Tier 1 level, it is estimated that it costs a district $130,600 to implement *Open Court Reading* across four elementary schools for kindergarten through third grade (Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development, n.d.; McGraw-Hill Education, 2018). This estimate is based off of the program being used with 640 students and 32 teachers. Of course for larger districts, the cost is likely to increase. For districts facing budget cuts and deficits, it is imperative that financially responsible decisions be made without compromising programs that are effective in helping students succeed.

School psychologists can not only help districts in selecting programs that have a strong evidence base, but they can play a vital role in guiding them in making cost-effective decisions when evaluating and comparing programs. For instance, after completing an analysis on core reading programs, the school psychologist may determine that two programs show strong evidence for being effective but note that one of the programs costs significantly more money. Consequently, the school psychologist may recommend the less expensive reading program with a strong evidence base saving the district considerable money. Overall, school psychologists can assist the district in making well-informed decisions that could possibly save them time, money, and resources if the program shows little evidence base for helping children learn and grow. Additionally, the school psychologist can assist the district in making a financially responsible decision in selecting a program that shows strong evidence but is less expensive than other comparable programs. School psychologists training in research methods allows them to conduct more in-depth and sound research in leading efforts to evaluate whether programs are evidence-based and cost-friendly to districts.

4   School-Based Research

Although it is imperative that school psychologists expand their role into evaluating whether programs are evidence-based and cost-friendly to districts, it is equally imperative that they lead, conduct, and publish school-based research on such programs. Therefore, school psychologists today need not only to simply consume research as program evaluators but must advance knowledge of whether interventions and programs are effective through publishing and presenting on them. Such

research is critical in substantially adding to the evidence based of whether programs and interventions are effective in helping children.

Through conducting a brief scan on What Works Clearinghouse, any educator can see that many of the programs and interventions utilized in education are lacking a substantial evidence base. For example, for the popular Tier 1 core literacy program *Success for All*, only 9 out of the 49 eligible studies reviewed met What Works Clearinghouse standards of excellence (What Works Clearinghouse, 2017). The evidence base for programs outside of reading are even further lacking a sound research base. A review of the *Everyday Mathematics* program revealed that only 1 study out of 34 met What Works Clearinghouse's standards of excellence (What Works Clearinghouse, 2015). Clearly, there is a significant void in sound research for the interventions and programs being used in education. Consequently, school psychologists moving away from their traditionalistic clerical and testing duties and onto more valuable areas that exploit their training, such as in research, are sorely needed to benefit children and educators. Additionally, as mentioned, such research is stressed in the Every Student Succeeds Act and under an MTSS framework.

Despite the ongoing call by school psychologists to break from their traditional roles and substantial legislative support to utilize evidence-based interventions and programs, school administrators may be wary school psychologists conducting and publishing research. Obviously, the term "research" may evoke feelings and concerns for educators in regard to student confidentiality, possibility for unintended harm to students, and images of "experiments" being conducted in a lab. However, school administrators and educators can take comfort in knowing that such research does not necessarily have to be "experimental" or invasive but rather simply involve the evaluation and reporting of already existing data.

One way in which school psychologists can both lead efforts in evaluating the effectiveness of a program and publishing on their findings is through completing a data-based study. A data-based study involves the analysis of routine data that has already been collected to answer new research questions or to further inform ongoing research questions (Doolan, 2017). Data-based studies have played a large role in informing medical-based practices for decades (Doolan, 2017). However, utilization of such studies to further inform the educational field of the effectiveness of an intervention or program has largely been underwhelming. Still, as can be seen from central databases like What Works Clearinghouse, there is a considerable need for independent data-based studies evaluating the effectiveness of interventions and programs to inform educational practice. Additionally, to some extent, such analysis of existing data is already likely occurring within school districts across the nation to determine whether proposed interventions and programs are meeting student needs.

Data-based studies provide a relatively easy and cost-effective way for school psychologists to both evaluate the effectiveness of supports being provided and publish on them. Such studies can be completed relatively quickly since they utilize existing data and involve the routine evaluation of such data. School psychologists' training in data collection, data analysis, and research methods makes them ideal practitioners to conduct data-based studies to facilitate a public health approach in

schools and simultaneously add to the scholarly literature. Additionally, districts and schools collect copious amounts of routine data that often go underutilized but could prove very beneficial in evaluating the effectiveness of an intervention or program. Some examples of routine data districts and schools collect include universal screening and progress monitoring data, attendance data, computer adaptive testing data, office discipline referrals, and state test scores.

In evaluating whether an intervention or program is successful in meeting the needs of students, the school psychologist should evaluate the effects or influence one variable has on another (Doolan, 2017; Godber, 2008; Keith, 1988). For example, the school psychologist may assess whether the introduction of new behavior program at the Tier 1 level, such as the Good Behavior Game, has led to a decrease in office discipline referrals for second grade students. To evaluate whether the program is effective at reducing office discipline referrals, the school psychologist may first collect and evaluate 10 months of existing office discipline referral data before the Good Behavior Game was introduced. Subsequently, the school psychologist may compare the first 10 months of data before the Good Behavior Game was introduced to 10 months of office discipline referral data after the program was introduced.

To further draw a conclusion on whether interventions or programs, such as the Good Behavior Game, have directly led or largely contributed to positive and intended effects, the school psychologist should consider confounding variables in the evaluation of a program. Confounding variables are variables that the researcher fails to eliminate, take into consideration, or control that may have an influence on study results or the accurate evaluation of a program's effectiveness (Doolan, 2017; Godber, 2008; Keith, 1988). In analyzing the effectiveness of the Good Behavior Game, confounding variables may include the school introducing a ticket reward system to reward good behavior or ensuring that all second grade teachers post their classroom rules in clear and simple terms. Each of these interventions may play a role in reducing office discipline referrals.

In order to overcome confounding variables, school psychologists must be creative and knowledgeable in research methods. One way school psychologists can lead efforts in overcoming confounding variables is through comparing student outcomes in response to the presence or absence of an intervention. For example, two school psychologists from neighboring elementary schools may work together to compare and analyze data in determining whether an intervention or program is effective. In one of the elementary schools, the Good Behavior Game may be utilized in addition to a ticket reward system. In the neighboring elementary school, the Good Behavior Game may not be being utilized, but a ticket reward system may be put into place. The school psychologists can collect, analyze, and compare data across the two elementary schools to determine whether the Good Behavior Game has had a significant impact at reducing office discipline referrals in one school over the other despite both having a ticket reward system being put into place. Of course, when completing such a study, school psychologists should attempt to compare two schools and grades that are similar in size and composition in an attempt to further control and eliminate confounding variables.

One final way school psychologists can control and account for confounding variables is through statistical analysis. Utilization of multivariate models, such as linear regression or analysis of covariance, may greatly control for a large number of confounding variables and provide clarification on whether an intervention or program is effective (Coolican, 2014; Doolan, 2017). School psychologists who may need assistance in controlling for confounding variables through statistical analysis may want to enlist the assistance of a math teacher who is proficient in the domain. By enlisting the help of a math teacher, a unique collaboration can be formed that can greatly assist in the evaluation of whether a program is truly effective. Additionally, school psychologists seeking to complete a data-based study and in need of assistance with statistical analysis may attempt to seek out a university professor or statistician. After completing a data-based study, school psychologists can report to administrators on their findings, seek to publish results in a scholarly journal, or present the results at a state or national conference. Completion of data-based studies will greatly add to the scholarly literature and is in line with ESSA's call for use of evidence-based interventions. Moreover, many components of data-based studies are already incorporated into the everyday duties of school psychologists in regard to data collection, data analysis, and program evaluation. Failure of school psychologists to publish on their findings greatly limits the ongoing validity, reliability, and evidence base of interventions and programs utilized with students.

5   Facilitating and Advancing Intervention Integrity

One of the most significant and overlooked roles school psychologists play in ensuring the success of students is through the effective facilitation and evaluation of intervention integrity. Research has consistently shown that high levels of fidelity are associated with improved student and teacher outcomes (Benner et al., 2011; Flower et al., 2013; McKenna & Parenti, 2017). Fidelity can be defined as the degree to which interventions and programs are implemented as intended (McKenna & Parenti, 2017; Sanetti et al., 2013). Without supports being executed according to standardized procedures, it is difficult to determine whether or not poor student outcomes are attributed to an effective intervention being implemented poorly or are the result of the intervention itself being ineffective (Sanetti et al., 2013).

Additionally, if interventions and programs fail to be employed with fidelity, students may be unnecessarily referred to receive more intensive interventions or to special education (McKenna & Parenti, 2017). Over-referral to more intensive supports or to special education is likely to lead to a poor allocation of school resources, educator time, and a collapse of tiered intervention supports and services under MTSS. Factors that may contribute to interventions and programs being implemented poorly include inadequate access to materials, lack of desire to implement the intervention or program, insufficient teacher skill or training, and complexity of carrying out the intervention or program (McKenna & Parenti, 2017). Overall, failure of teachers to adhere to the core components of an intervention or program can

negatively impact the reliability of school and district outcomes, program evaluation data, and student access to high-quality supports under MTSS.

School psychologists' training in the facilitation and evaluation of intervention integrity makes them ideal leaders in ensuring that supports are delivered as intended. In fact, the National Association of School Psychologists' Practice Model (2010) identifies one of the roles of school psychologists is to "address intervention acceptability and fidelity during development, implementation, and evaluation of instructional service" (p. 5). Arguably, one of the best ways school psychologists can ensure that interventions and programs are employed accordingly is through collaborating with educators to ensure "buy-in." If educators do not believe in the interventions or programs they are implementing, they are less likely to be motivated to execute supports with fidelity. As discussed earlier, one of the best ways school psychologists can consult, collaborate, and assist educators is through conducting a needs assessment. In the case of conducting a needs assessment over the use of an intervention or program, school psychologists can provide educators an opportunity to identify barriers to implementation and subsequently find solutions and resources to overcome such barriers.

Another way school psychologists can establish staff "buy-in" is through completing a treatment monitoring interview. A treatment monitoring interview allows educators a chance to reflect on their practices when implementing an intervention or program and seeks to obtain their perspective on whether the intervention or program is producing a desired change in the student's performance (Wilkinson, 2007). In completing a treatment monitoring interview, school psychologists may want to ask questions such as "How successful have you been in implementing the intervention?" or "Do you believe the intervention is too difficult and complex to implement successfully?" Lastly, school psychologists may want to ask if the intervention or program needs to be or has been altered in some way to be effective (Wilkinson, 2007). Through completing needs assessments and treatment monitoring interviews, school psychologists can lead efforts in obtaining insights from staff and increase the likelihood supports are implemented with fidelity.

Aside from staff "buy-in" being critical in educators adhering to the core components of an intervention, school psychologists can further promote fidelity through working with educators to operationally define the support. If educators are unclear about the steps and processes involved in intervention implementation, it is less likely that they will carry it out with fidelity. Therefore, school psychologists can work with educators to create fidelity checklists to ensure that the core components of an intervention are followed. By working with educators to develop a fidelity checklist, teacher's anxiety and stress associated with being observed using the measure may be reduced, and they may feel a sense of ownership over the assessment (McKenna & Parenti, 2017).

In developing a fidelity checklist, school psychologists should lead efforts in identifying what the intervention or program should look like by familiarizing themselves with the support (McKenna & Parenti, 2017). School psychologists can familiarize themselves with an intervention through reading program manuals, researching the intervention online, or viewing videos on the support. Additionally,

school psychologists can further familiarize themselves with the intervention or program by observing an expert implementing the support and writing down core instructional activities as they are taught (McKenna & Parenti, 2017). Subsequently, school psychologists can determine if there are components of the intervention or program that should be implemented in a specific order or sequence (McKenna & Parenti, 2017). Finally, school psychologists may want to determine how long a component of an intervention or program should be implemented in order to assist educators in managing their time accordingly. Once school psychologists have determined the essential components and timeframes in implementing an intervention, a fidelity checklist can be developed and trialed. Completion of a fidelity checklist outlines specific procedures for educators to follow and assists them in adhering to critical instructional components within an intervention or program.

Finally, school psychologists can assist in ensuring that interventions and programs are delivered with fidelity through completing observations and providing feedback to teachers. To alleviate teacher concerns over being observed, school psychologists may want to inform them that they are completing the observation to improve school services for the students rather than evaluating their teaching practices (McKenna & Parenti, 2017). Additionally, school psychologists should reassure teachers that they are there to support them and address any concerns or questions they may have in regard to implementing an intervention or program. School psychologists may also want to train teachers in completing observations using the fidelity checklist on fellow instructors to lessen concerns regarding fidelity assessments and assist in maintaining intervention integrity (McKenna & Parenti, 2017). Through facilitating and advancing teacher's adherence to the core components of an intervention or program, school psychologists can ensure that quality supports are being delivered with integrity to students under MTSS.

6 Comprehensive Mental and Behavioral Health Services

Emphasis on the importance of providing comprehensive mental and behavioral health services in schools began to take shape in the 1930s with the publication of Gertrude Hildreth's book *Psychological Service for School Problems* (Plotts & Lasser, 2013). However, it was not until the 1954 Thayer Conference in West Point, New York, that the role of the school psychologist as a mental health provider was outlined (National Association of School Psychologist, 2015; Plotts & Lasser, 2013). Today, despite consistent calls for increased access to mental and behavioral health services for children, the profession of school psychology has largely been underutilized in providing such services. However, the Every Student Succeeds Act and MTSS provide a significant opportunity for school psychologists to provide mental and behavioral health services by recognizing the profession as mental health service providers (National Association of School Psychologists, 2016). With one out of five children in the United States suffering from a diagnosable

mental health condition, a substantial increase in children's mental health services is needed (National Association of Mental Health, 2017).

Unlike other mental health providers, the profession of school psychology is well attuned to ensuring that mental health and behavioral health services are infused into everyday learning and instruction. School psychologists possess knowledge of the biological, developmental, cultural, social, and academic influences on student behavior and mental health (National Association of School Psychologists, 2010). They are one of the few mental and behavioral health providers that are specifically trained to work with children, while other mental health professions receive more general and overarching training that is not child specific. Additionally, with many school psychologists being located in the schools, they can provide students immediate assistance and intervention throughout the school day. Consequently, school psychologists are one of the few mental health providers that can directly work with students in the contexts that they are having the most difficulty in as opposed to providing mental and behavioral health supports inside a clinic or office setting outside the school day. Through providing mental and behavioral health services throughout the school day, school psychologists can assist students in generalizing skills learned in a counseling session into their everyday routine. For example, a school psychologist may be working with a student having difficulty appropriately expressing their wants and needs. Upon observing the child in the classroom setting, the school psychologist can note specific instances where the child could have addressed his or her teacher in a more appropriate manner. Subsequently, the school psychologist can role play with the student on how to more appropriately address his or her teachers or come up with better strategies to appropriately express their wants and needs using specific real-life examples.

In working with a different child, the school psychologist may be of great assistance by being a readily available mental and behavioral health provider should a crisis arise. Often, children with behavioral difficulties have a history of working extensively with the school psychologist. Therefore, if the child begins to endanger others through becoming verbally or physically aggressive, the school psychologist may be called on to lead efforts in calming the student down by reviewing self-soothing strategies that have been utilized in counseling sessions, such as deep breathing.

Up until this point, a discussion has occurred over how school psychologists can lead mental and behavioral health efforts for children who are having extreme difficulties managing their feelings and emotions. However, the field of school psychology has specific and extensive training in leading efforts to promote mental wellness and prevent the development of longstanding mental and behavioral health disorders in children. More specifically, under MTSS, school psychologists play a critical role in outlining and facilitating preventative practices through social-emotional RtI. Social-emotional RtI is a three-tiered intervention service delivery model in which increasing levels of social-emotional supports are provided to children to promote mental wellness and prevent significant mental and behavioral health concerns from arising (Schaffer, 2017). Intervention service delivery models, such as social-emotional RtI, provide educators an outline to follow when

administering interventions and use data to determine the intensity of support the student receives (Gresham, 2005; Shapiro, 2013; Shinn & Walker, 2010; Wexler, 2017). For children who do not respond to initial intervention efforts, they advance to the next tier to receive more intensive interventions (Bohanon et al., 2016; Gresham, 2005). Throughout each tier of social-emotional RtI, school psychologists play a vital role in leading and directing efforts to promote social-emotional well-being in children.

Tier 1 of social-emotional RtI focuses on enhancing mental wellness in all students and provides an overview for educators on how mental illness directly impacts academic achievement (Schaffer, 2017). Central to promoting social-emotional wellness in the schools is the training of school staff on the warning signs of mental health concerns and the importance of maintaining a healthy structured school environment. At the Tier 1 level, school psychologists may conduct several in-service trainings for educators focused on how children may display mental health concerns, how to promote mental wellness in the classroom, and how to maintain a healthy and structured school environment. Additionally, at this tier, school psychologists can offer ongoing consultation to teachers to facilitate social-emotional learning in their classroom curriculum (National Association of School Psychologists, 2015). For example, the school psychologist may assist the teacher in coming up with quick mental wellness exercises children can engage in upon entering the classroom in the morning, such as muscle tension and relaxation or guided imagery. Finally, at the Tier 1 level, school psychologists may lead system-wide efforts to address school-wide issues related to bullying, stress reduction, pro-social life skills, and character values (Joyce-Beaulieu & Sulkowski, 2015). For instance, after reviewing the literature, the school psychologist may encourage the school to adopt programs such as the Good Behavior Game and Second Step to reduce common risk factors students face in developing social, emotional, and behavioral concerns.

Tier 2 of social-emotional RtI is designed for students who do not respond to Tier 1 school-wide mental and behavioral health programs and may be at-risk for developing long-standing mental and behavioral health concerns. At Tier 2, increasing emphasis is placed on targeted interventions and programs to assist students in building social skills, self-esteem, conflict resolution, and identifying factors that maintain negative emotional states (Joyce-Beaulieu & Sulkowski, 2015). At this tier, school psychologists may identify and lead group counseling and skill-building sessions using programs like The Incredible Years or FRIENDS to increase feeling recognition and manage defiant behaviors.

Finally, Tier 3 services are designed for students with the most pervasive and severe social emotional concerns and who did not respond to previously attempted interventions at Tier 1 and 2 levels (Joyce-Beaulieu & Sulkowski, 2015). Consequently, these children require more formalized, individualized, and extensive therapeutic approaches to address their areas of difficulty (Joyce-Beaulieu & Sulkowski, 2015). These students may take part in both group and individual

counseling, such as cognitive-behavioral or dialectal-behavioral therapy sessions, to assist in overcoming their social-emotional concerns (Livanis et al., 2012).

A critical role of the school psychologist at Tier 3 level of social-emotional MTSS is the facilitation of collaboration between school and community mental and behavioral health providers (National Association of School Psychologists, 2015). At this tier, school psychologists should act as a vital liaison between the school and community helping to assist in the orchestration of wraparound services both inside and outside of the school. Development of counseling treatment plans and/or FBA/BIPs may need to be developed to address the student's specific social-emotional concerns. At this Tier, school psychologists may provide the student with person-centered treatment in the form of individualized cognitive behavior therapy or utilize programs such as Coping with Depression for Adolescents to address personal areas of concern the child may be dealing with. Additionally, at this tier, the school psychologist should lead efforts in analyzing progress monitoring data to determine whether the student continues to not respond to the supports being provided and whether a referral to special education is needed. Through providing students tiered supports through social-emotional RtI, school psychologists are able to offer them comprehensive mental and behavioral health services that may prevent longstanding mental health concerns from arising.

7   Conclusion

The endorsement of MTSS under the Every Students Succeeds Act has provided the profession of school psychology the greatest opportunity to fully utilize their skills as mental and behavioral health practitioners. In order for school psychologists to exploit their training, school districts need to adopt distributed leadership practices that capitalize on school psychologist expertise in the areas of preventative practice, data-based decision-making, program evaluation, and mental wellness. School psychologists' unique training in each of the aforementioned areas makes them a veritable Swiss Army Knife whose versatility, flexibility, and adaptability in combining educational and psychological practices are paramount to building a strong MTSS infrastructure. In the MTSS era, the profession of school psychology has the best opportunity to move beyond their traditionalistic and dated roles of "tester" and "special education gatekeeper." Through moving beyond these antiquated roles, school psychologists now can finally embrace their future as leaders and change agents by providing systemic support that enhances instructional practices, supports administrative efforts, and promotes academic and behavioral success of all learners.

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School Psychology Leadership in Behavioral and Mental Health Intervention and Consultation

Kristine Augustyniak

School psychologists are distinctively advantaged to serve as leaders in the implementation of prevention and intervention services for youth exhibiting mental and behavioral health concerns for several reasons. First, school psychologists are positioned in a natural ecological system where children spend considerable time. This allows for valid contextual assessment and progress monitoring and easy access for service delivery. Moreover, school psychologists are trained as advocates for coordinated, comprehensive, and culturally responsive school-based services. Their expertise in program delivery and resource allocation principles within a multitiered system can facilitate system-based policies and procedures to attend to the mental and behavioral health needs of all students. Given the substantial scope of training related to mental health evidenced in school psychology training programs, further integration of leadership theory with extant content related to mental health service delivery is a necessary next step in the advancement of school-based mental health services.

In a recent white paper, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP, 2015) succinctly endorses:

> School psychologists who maintain competencies consistent with NASP standards are qualified providers of child and adolescent mental and behavioral health services. (p. 2)

NASP asserts that school psychologists are distinctively advantaged to facilitate prevention and intervention services for youth exhibiting mental and behavioral health concerns for several reasons. First, school psychologists are positioned in a natural ecological system where children spend considerable time. This allows for

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L. Kilanowski, K. Augustyniak (eds.), *Principles of Leadership in School Psychology*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-84063-1_4

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valid contextual assessment and progress monitoring and easy access for service delivery. Moreover, school psychologists are trained as advocates for coordinated, comprehensive, and culturally responsive school-based services. Their expertise in program delivery and resource allocation principles within a multitiered system can facilitate system-based policies and procedures to attend to the mental and behavioral health needs of all students.

1 Prevalence and High-Need Mental Disorders

Reported prevalence estimates for mental health disorders are customarily reported as lifetime (the number of cases at any time in the lifetime of respondents, irrespective of whether the disorder is current), 12-month (the number of cases in the population during the past year), and point prevalence (the number of cases during a designated time period such as the time of the survey, within 3 months, within 6 months, etc.). The most common estimates of prevalence in children are either point or 1 year, because of the lack of reliability of lifetime estimates. In their meta-review from community surveys across the world, Merikangas et al. (2009) utilized median prevalence point rates and key prevalence point rates to estimate the magnitude of specific mental disorders in children and adolescents. Their findings echoed the results from the more recent CDC US study (Centers for Disease Control, 2013) finding that approximately one fourth of youth experience a mental disorder during the past year and about one third across their lifetimes. Moreover, about one out of every ten youths was estimated to meet the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) criteria for a Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED), defined as the presence of a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder that resulted in functional impairment which substantially interferes with or limits the child's role or functioning in family, school, or community activities (SAMHSA, 1993).

Perhaps the highest prevalence of mental health disorders among US youth is the rates of anxiety disorders. Merikangas et al. (2009) found the median prevalence rate of all anxiety disorders was 8% with an extremely wide range of estimates (e.g., 2–24%). Anxiety disorders are so commonly comorbid with all of the other major classes of disorders, including mood disorders, disruptive behaviors, eating disorders, and substance use disorders, that there is emerging theory that anxiety disorders may be part of the developmental sequence in which anxiety is expressed early in life followed by other mental health disorders as children age. Hence, suggesting anxiety disorders may be a particularly compelling group of disorders to target for treatment in schools. Reviews of previous studies show a median prevalence estimate of major depressive disorder (MDD) to be 4.0% with a range from 0.2% to 17% for major depression. Prevalence estimates of persistent depressive disorder (a.k.a. dysthymia) among adolescents and young adults were found to be typically

lower than those of major depression. In contrast, prevalence estimates of sub-threshold depressive disorders and syndromes, including minor depression and unspecified depression (aka, other specified depressive disorder and unspecified depressive disorder), are generally higher than those of major depression across all age groups. Few community surveys included assessment of mania or hypomania, in part because of the widely held belief that these conditions are too rare in children. Current or 12-month prevalence rates of mania, hypomania, and bipolar disorder in population-based studies of youth range from 0% to 0.9% in children age 14–18. Lifetime prevalence rates for bipolar disorder among youth range from 0% to 2.1%, and the lifetime prevalence rate for hypomania ranges between 0% and 0.4%. Although the point prevalence rates of ADHD have varied from 1.7% to 17.8%, the median prevalence of ADHD in this meta-review was 3%. The median 12-month prevalence rate of disruptive behavior disorders (i.e., conduct disorder [CD] or oppositional defiant disorder [ODD]) is 6%, with a range from 5% to 14%. Community studies of youth have shown a high degree of association between all disruptive behavior disorders with mood and anxiety disorders.

There is also substantial evidence that mental disorders generally identified in school-age children are quite prevalent in preschool children (Wichstrom et al., 2012). At least 8–10% of children younger than 5 years experience clinically significant and impairing mental health problems, which include emotional, behavioral, and social relationship problems There is also a high degree of comorbidity in young children with mental disorders; of those with one disorder, approximately 25% have a second disorder. The proportion of children with comorbidity increases about 1.6 times for each additional year from age 2 (18.2%) to 5 (49.7%) (Egger & Angold, 2006).

Efficacious identification and treatment of preschool, childhood, and adolescent psychopathology requires a developmentally sensitive approach that includes understanding of and ability to assess for both normative and atypical development, ability to synthesize biological, interpersonal, and other contextual risk factors, determination of the magnitude and consequences of present mental disorders, and the ability to deliver empirically supported treatments within collaborative contexts. Indisputably, these skills are inherent to sound school psychology practice.

2   Consequences

Because many mental health conditions onset before the age of 20, the mental and behavioral health of students is a necessary, appropriate, and critical focus of public education for individuals from birth to age 21. An extensive body of research supports an organic link between mental and behavioral wellness to educational outcomes. Students with mental health or behavioral difficulties who are left untreated or insufficiently treated are more likely to experience overall lower achievement,

more absenteeism, higher engagement in risky behaviors, disciplinary incidents, and substance abuse, poorer high school graduation rates, and a higher likelihood negative perception of school climate (Center for Health and Healthcare in Schools, 2014).

Moreover, because childhood mental and behavioral health problems tend to be stable and predictive of detrimental outcomes throughout individuals' developmental trajectory into adulthood. A prime illustration is that the lifetime prevalence rate for any mental disorder in adults (46.4%) is strikingly consistent with that in adolescents (46.3%) (Kessler et al., 2005; Merikangas et al., 2011). Regrettably, suicide has remained steady as the third leading cause of death in individuals ages 12–19 (Miniño, 2010). Detrimental outcomes are also predictable related to interpersonal relationships, employment, family income, physical health, continuing education, and enmeshment in the criminal justice, public assistance, disability systems. For example, alcohol use disorders and depression are the leading contributors to disability status in the United States (Murray et al., 2013). Because early intervention and prevention can be effective in improving these pathological progressions, schools are an opportune venue to improve health trajectories and prevent disability later in life; however, the barriers to mental health treatment in youth must be addressed.

3   Contextual Factors and Contemporary Practice

School psychologists must be cognizant that the provision of mental and behavioral health services is often affected by schools' organizational characteristics (e.g., administrative prioritization, approval and support, division of roles with other school-based mental health professionals, the need for additional professional development of staff to ensure competent practice, etc.). While it is ultimately an administrative responsibility of school districts to ensure that key organizational principles, such as distributed leadership, are in place so that school-employed professionals with specialized expertise can deliver comprehensive and integrated services to students, it is also the ethical responsibility of school psychologists and other mental health professionals to advocate for appropriate access to and the delivery of these vital services.

Along with being conversant of the position statements of their own professional organizations, (i.e., NASP), school psychologists should be versed in legislation that guide mental and behavioral health services in the context of education and healthcare reform. Congress has recently authorized and approved appropriations for various federal programs including the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA; 2010) and the Medicaid School Supportive Health Program emphasizing the value of school-based mental health services in overall student learning and development. The ACA specifically recognizes school psychologists as qualified providers of child and adolescent mental and behavioral health services and authorizes several grant programs to increase school-based mental health services.

Unfortunately, the ACA left absent any clear definition of *school-based* services leading to competing viewpoints whether these services should be in-house (i.e., funding to expand the number and roles of school-based employees) or outside-in (i.e., funding to relocate or collocate community providers into schools). Proponents of in-house services identify several key advantages such as (1) ease of access for children, families, and providers; (2) preexisting expertise of specialized school staff (e.g., school psychologists, school social workers, school counselors, etc.); (3) reduced stigma of school building services; (4) the ability to observe problematic behaviors and utilize interventions in a child's natural setting, and (5) that school employees have a more authentic connection to the school community. For example, school mental health professionals are more likely to be adept at infusing their practices into school and classroom routines, whereas outside professionals are likely to have more difficulty promoting their agency's vision of service provision to hosting schools. However, in-house services can be complicated to structure and difficult to maintain over time. Several barriers have repeatedly been identified in the literature. For example, school-based mental services are characteristically predicated on universal access for all children. Hence, the client base is framed as quite large and, due to limited resources, services tend to be skewed to universal/primary prevention (i.e., Tier 1) services. In contrast, community agencies tend to specialize in treating children with the most significant needs (i.e., Tier 3). In addition, schools typically restrict hiring staff to those who hold a professional license or certification from their representative state education department, whereas community agencies recognize noncertified staff provided they are adequately trained and supervised by a credentialed professional, consequently providing more human resources at a lower cost (Doll et al., 2017).

In an effort to supplement funding sources for health services in schools, the Preschool/School Supportive Health Services Program (SSHSP, aka Medicaid in Education) permits, under specific stipulations, Medicaid coverage of certain services included in the Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) of students with disabilities. Eligible services include, among others, psychological assessment and psychological counseling. Though school psychologists already provide such services to children regardless of their Medicaid eligibility status, a potentially larger population of Medicaid-eligible children could subsequently result in a greater funding stream being returned to the school, enabling more comprehensive service delivery. Unfortunately, a significant number of schools are disqualified from receiving the full benefit of these provisions. Although federal legislative language has provided well-defined classifications of qualified service providers (e.g., school psychologists) and eligible services, states are not required to recognize federal definitions within state-specific Medicaid/education policies. As a result, state regulatory agencies diverge markedly in the interpretation and implementation of Medicaid policies. Currently, school psychologists are considered qualified providers of Medicaid services in only 34 states. Yet, seven out of ten students receiving mental health services receive these services at school. These restrictions on Medicaid further marginalize these critical services and leave students without access to care (NASP, 2017). Moreover, a range of exclusions and limiting factors

contributes to inconsistency even within these 34 states. For example, several states require an additional level of supervision for service providers based upon licensure and/or graduate preparation, while other states limit billable services to a single activity (e.g., assessment for special education decision-making) (National Register of Health Service Psychologists, 2015).

A more recent Labor, HHS and Education Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2021 includes an amendment that allows for the piloting of $10 million training program for school-based mental health. The primary objective of the amendment would create a program at the Department of Education to test and evaluate partnerships between universities and state and local education agencies to train school psychologists, school counselors, and other mental health professionals for positions in public school systems serving low-income communities. Funding will support school safety activities, including student mental health services, bullying prevention, and professional development for personnel in crisis management (House Committee on Appropriations, 2020).

Perhaps the legislative act most familiar to school psychologists is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004). If a child is suspected of having mental or behavioral disorder eligible for special education services, this law affords the child and family several provisions and protections. The first entitlement is a comprehensive evaluation to determine eligibility and, if applicable, prerogative for re-evaluation every at least every 3 years unless parents and the school agree that it is not necessary. When a child qualifies under the classification of severe emotional disturbance (SED) or any of the other 12 classifications, guaranteed among other provisions is a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and an Individualized Education Program (IEP). As an extension of FAPE, special protections for disciplinary procedures must also be followed if they are suspended or expelled for 10 days or more (i.e., a manifestation determination). The IEP is a written document that includes specific goals for the child based on the child's current level of performance. IDEA also asserts the use of functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and positive behavioral strategies, known as a behavioral intervention plan (BIP), for supporting children with disabilities. This must be part of the child's initial or subsequent evaluation when the suspected needs of the child include behavior. This helps to ensure that alternative reasons for the child's difficulty are considered and that pre-referral interventions and multiple sources of case data are adequately assessed.

4 Leadership and Advocacy Within a Multitiered Framework

Despite the barriers and controversies that have arisen in the aftermath of the aforementioned legislation, it is clear that high-quality school-based mental health services must be child centered, family focused, culturally informed, and diverse

in-service options to meet individualized needs. Due to their skillset, school psychologists are in a unique position craft and market best-practice frameworks that optimize the benefit to children by merging in-house services with community pediatric mental health resources. In order to do so, school psychologists must possess, master, and employ complex set capacities to ensure that their daily practices foster effective personal strategies and organizational commitment to provide best-practice mental health services to students. According to NASP (2015), these services can be delivered in a multitiered structure and include psychoeducation for both students and parents, wellness promotion, assessment, early intervention, therapeutic supports for emerging problems and concerns, and more intensive therapeutic services for students with severe needs. Most school psychologists are familiar in working within a three-tiered framework of instruction and intervention (e.g., tier 1, core instruction; tier 2, smaller group interventions; tier 3, intensive interventions), the heart of which is a tailored needs assessment and trend analysis. Within this framework, the school psychologist customarily adopts a tripartite scientist-practitioner-advocate role. It is the intention of this text to advance a quaternary model of school psychology practice that expounds on advocacy roles and includes leadership roles, as these have been relatively neglected in school psychology literature. As stated in previous chapter, authentic leadership is rooted in multiple positions and titles throughout a school building and district. School psychologists might not be viewed, or view themselves, as leaders due the lack of positional leadership wherein persons in the roles of principal, superintendent, etc. have implicit leadership responsibilities. However, restricting leadership responsibilities for comprehensive mental and behavioral health services is likely to lead to ill-fated efforts due to the dissimilar skillsets between operating a school and developing/implementing a comprehensive behavioral health program for youth. Forman et al. (2017) recommend that a bipartite model of leadership that includes technical and adaptive leadership skills can provide straightforward guidance to school psychologists seeking to expand their roles to this end. This guiding framework is particularly fitting when considering the mental health needs of youth. Technical leadership is very congruent with and a natural extension of the practices most school psychologists are familiar such as screening, assessment, prevention, and intervention strategies. However, leadership in this realm would extend the role of the school psychologist to the role of trainer, coach, and even team manager with the goal of reaching large numbers of students. Adaptive leadership skills become necessary when the nature of problems or obstacles is unclear, solutions may be complex, and stakeholders aspire diverse or competing solutions. Hence, although both types of skills are needed at all levels, adaptive leadership skills such as trend analysis, synthesis of contextual/historical factors, and collaboration may become more vital to the success of tier 2 and 3 endeavors (Villarreal, 2018).

4.1   Tier 1: Increasing Mental Health Literacy and Reducing Mental Illness Stigma

Universal School-Based Mental Health Awareness Curriculum In light of the aforementioned prevalence rates of mental disorders in youth and the fact that many debilitating mental health disorders begin early in life, primary and secondary school-age is an opportune time to begin intervening on mental health concerns. A multitiered service approach requires that all students receive screening and prevention services (primary, universal services). Primary prevention services have strong potential to mitigate the need for more intensive treatments in the future. However, barriers to mental health treatment such as insufficient access, mental health literacy, and stigma must be addressed to improve health trajectories of American youth. Salerno (2016) conducted a meta-analysis examining the effectiveness of popular universal mental health awareness interventions in school-based settings, grades 5–12. The focus of these programs was general mental health awareness, suicide, and interpersonal violence. The effectiveness of three common desired outcomes was assessed: knowledge of mental health, attitudes toward mental health, and help-seeking behaviors. Knowledge of mental health was conceptualized in several ways, including knowledge of mental health/illness, violence spurred by mental health issues, depression and its risk factors, suicide and its risk factors/warning signs, suicide myths and facts, and mental health literacy. All studies suggested measurable improvement in knowledge of mental health with the overwhelming majority achieving statistical significance. Attitudes toward mental health were also measured in multiple ways. These included attitudes toward suicide, opinions about mental health, desire to learn about mental health issues, attitudes toward mental health professionals, opinions/attitudes toward mental illness, and mental illness stigma, among others. The most robust outcomes found, again, in a positive increase of knowledge, but only about half showing positive outcomes with regard to attitudes. Help-seeking was assessed by measuring intentions/likelihood/attitudes toward seeking help, knowledge of how to seek help, and actual help-seeking behavior. Results were mixed with some improvement noted in intentions/likelihood/attitudes toward seeking help.

Despite the fact that more research and implementation of these programs is needed, this analysis on universal mental health awareness programs in US schools overall supported improvements in mental health knowledge, attitudes, and help-seeking of students. These results suggest that school-based mental health awareness programs can be effective in positively influencing outcomes related to care seeking and social adversity among students with mental health concerns. Programs that have evidenced efficacy include SOS Signs of Suicide Prevention Program (SOS), Surviving the Teens/Suicide Prevention Program, and MasterMind: Empower Yourself with Mental Health (Salerno, 2016).

Peer-to-Peer Mental Health Awareness An increasing research base indicates that "greater degrees of social integration serve as protective factors against suicidal

thoughts and behaviors" (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, n.d.). Helping students feel integrated into their school communities therefore can play an important role in health promotion and prevention efforts in schools. Because peers are often the first contact when individuals are emotionally troubled, peers can be a fundamental asset in this social integration and in mental health promotion in schools. These types of programs are increasingly being launched at the high school level, and students are attracted for a variety of reasons such as vocational interests, a personal or family history of mental illness, or a desire to advocate. The programs typically begin by educating small teams of high school students about common mental illnesses such as depression, anxiety, and psychological trauma and then supporting them in finding creative ways to convey this knowledge throughout their school. The aim is to reduce stigma, raise awareness, encourage help-seeking when needed, and ultimately help to promote the early detection of mental disorders (Walther et al., 2014). Some models include "Peer-to-Peer Depression Awareness Campaign" (Ann Arbor Public Schools), Mental Health America's (MHA) "Back to School Toolkit," and National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) "Ending the Silence," "Bring Change to mind High School Program," and the "Adolescent Peer Support League," among many other resources.

Resource Allocation and Other Challenges in Implementing Primary School-Based Mental Health Programs It would behoove school psychologists embarking on the implementation of mental health programs to be prepared to address potential barriers by utilizing leadership/advocacy framework. Time and dedicated human resources are most often cited as barriers. However, historically, there have been a contingency of adult stakeholders such as parents, teachers, and administrators who fear that educating youth on mental health matters will have negative effects on students. Suicide and violence prevention programs are particularly provocative in this arena. Though research has demonstrated predominantly positive outcomes, parents, teachers, and administrators might not be particularly knowledgeable about this. Hence, school psychologists must put high importance on the value of communication of established knowledge and expectations to stakeholders in a manner that generates trust and optimism and advances the development of shared goals. Another barrier is that whether internally funded or grant-funded, financial and human resources in most school are stretched. Resources must be strategically allocated for any new curricular programs to be successful. Though school psychologists typically do not have the authority to dedicate such resources, they are frequently active participants on various school improvement teams and can be a compelling and instrumental voice in furthering school community values and goals that support mental health programming. Additionally, by virtue of their education in research models, assessment, and evidence-based programs, school psychologists can be invaluable resources in ensuring rigorous program/research designs that can more likely procure external funding and maintain fidelity to stated goals. Lastly, it is important to recognize that one common element to successful school-based mental health curricula is a multi-lesson format that would likely be delivered in the classroom. It is impractical to suggest that individual school

psychologist or other school-based mental health professionals can engage in sustainable push-in pedagogical work given their already overburdened schedules. For example, most school psychologists spend most of their time on Committee on Special Education (CSE) endeavors (e.g., assessment, meetings, etc.) and are able to allocate only about 9% of their time to individual mental health needs of students (i.e., tiers 2 and 3). Moreover, many school psychologists work far beyond the school psychologist-to-student ratio recommended by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) (Villarreal, 2018). If integration of mental health education into the general curriculum is a goal, it makes good sense that teachers are the most practical of school staff to deliver this education. It is probable that the prospect of this added teaching responsibility would be intimidating and unwelcome for some teachers. School psychologists are well prepared in instructional consultation and instructional leadership and must recognize that modeling behavior is an essential strategy to build human capacity. Hence, school psychologists can be impactful by modeling behaviors that align with expressed professional values and goals (i.e., highest standards of ethics, continuous learning, achievement motivation, strategic allocation of resources, etc.). Moreover, school psychologists can play an integral role in engendering collective expertise and responsibility and interdependence in goal attainment by engaging in collegial dialogue on matters of student outcomes and effective, informed professional practice.

A powerful strategy is to parallel the approach to mental health services to that of academic-based response to intervention (RtI) frameworks, with which teachers are already familiar. A potentially useful exercise is to inventory both existing academic and behavioral / mental health Tier 1, 2, & 3 programs with the description of services, intended goals, targeted population, desired outcomes, and assessments for measuring outcomes. This can be a perplexing and eye-opening experience for many school personnel when it is recognized that mental health goals for school-based programs tend to be far less structured than academic programs. Hence school psychologists can engage in technical leadership by delineating how RtI practices can uniformly be applied to behavioral/mental health preventions and interventions. This awareness can empower consulting teams to determine goals and objectives best suited for their unique school communities. As within an academic RtI framework, universal screening is the cornerstone of a needs assessment of the school. It is suggested that the in-house consulting group confers with other stakeholders such as parents, students, and community healthcare providers (i.e., focus groups) on screeners that best reflect the school's values to determine a screening procedure with the most fitting technical and construct validity. For example, a variety of screeners should be compared for their technical properties (e.g., normed on a comparable student population) and for a theoretical orientation congruent with the conceptualization of mental health and positive educational functioning of the focus group (i.e., social-emotional strengths vs. deficits, omnibus vs. targeted measures such as aggression/bullying/anxiety, etc.).

Once screeners are selected, school psychologists can apply their technical expertise in data collection and analysis to provide insight into the needs of the

students and identifying which students are in need of support beyond universal programming (i.e., tiers 2 and 3). Concomitantly, at this initial stage, sustainability of all planned programming must be addressed as assembling workable, maintainable, and effective programs are the ultimate goal of school-based mental health programming. However, this is a monumental task wrought with potential pitfalls that cannot be accomplished by school-based mental health professionals alone. An adaptive leadership paradigm is most fitting to spearhead stakeholders in troubleshooting program implementation. Questions that are likely to surface include goal development, selection of curriculum, evaluation measures, use of in-house resources, professional development, teacher and/or peer mentoring, and the possible use of external partnerships. Engaging and authentic collaboration with a diverse range of school staff and community stakeholders in these endeavors will likely promote their insight and commitment to comprehensive school-based services (Doll et al., 2017).

4.2   Tiers 2 and 3: Best-Practice Programming and Special Challenges

Multitiered Systems of Support Of the many Multitiered Systems of Support (MTSS) for improving student emotional/behavioral (EB) functioning that are being utilized across the country, (school-wide) positive behavioral interventions and supports (SWPBIS or PBIS) remains the most ubiquitous multitiered system that focuses on designing positive environments to prevent and reduce problem behaviors in school settings. The essential components of PBIS are that it is a proactive, interconnected, multitiered system of Tier 1 (universal prevention for all children), Tier 2 (targeted intervention for children at risk or showing early signs of problems), and Tier 3 services (intensive, individualized interventions for children and youth with more significant problems). A mounting evidence base supports PBIS as a foundation for increasing the efficacy of academic instruction decreasing student discipline referrals, reducing suspension rates, and improving various factors of school organizational functioning (e.g., staff turnover, self-efficacy among teachers, student-reported improved quality of life, etc.) (www.pbis.org). PBIS entails execution in seven domains: implementation in the organization; teaming; collaborative planning and training; family and youth engagement; intervention selection, implementation, and progress; and school-wide data-based decision-making. Like the RtI Model, the PBIS model assumes that 80–90% of students will respond successfully to proactive universal strategies that provide systematic reinforcement and training of expected social behavior (tier 1). A second group of students, about 5–10%, will not respond to universal school-wide interventions and will continue to engage in problem behaviors beyond acceptable levels. This group of students will require somewhat simple, efficient smaller group interventions that provide increased structure and support. Approximately 1–5% of students will

exhibit significant behavioral problems and/or skill deficits that do not respond to universal or more focused group interventions. These students will require more intensive, individualized interventions. This continuum of tiered support composed of three different levels of intervention creates systematic and durable model for schools in planning, implementing, and evaluation of programs but promotes lasting change in the outcomes of many students at risk for the development of persistent problem behavior patterns.

Despite its promise, the success of PBIS and similar programs, especially at tier 2 and 3 levels, can be jeopardized by a variety of systemic factors that undermine the aspiration of delivering a full continuum of holistic, school-based, mental health services. Perhaps the most vexing problem to mental professionals is the cultural forces that steadily marginalize the school mental health (SMH) agenda. Although enhanced approaches to academic goals are increasingly embraced by schools and their communities, the SMH agenda is often marginalized due to forces such as intense achievement pressures on school professionals and students, limited financial and human resources for mental health, and "gray zone" status, wherein SMH programming may not be viewed as fully under the purview of the school versus mental health system (Weist et al., 2012).

The logistics alone make interdisciplinary teamwork a demanding endeavor in schools. However, when it comes to SMH, this teaming can be especially challenging due to the divergent nature of the typical professional groupings. Different professionals are likely to have distinct philosophies, goals, and approaches to programming, varying responsibilities, and/or concerns about their roles/job security which may lead to territorial attitudes and behavior. Training for mental health professionals who work in schools is also undoubtedly widely divergent with some receiving significant training on evidence-based practices (EBPs), and others not; some having a good understanding of educational law and school dynamics, and others not; some having good understanding of mental health ethics and diagnostics systems, and others not. Additionally, mental health professionals employed by schools must follow a different set of rules and regulations related to privacy and student records than those who work in schools or solely in mental health agencies. Because school staff are covered under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA; which states that student records may be accessed by family and relevant school staff), they are used to have open access to student records. Community mental health professionals, on the other hand, are bound by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), which requires a child's parent or guardian to sign a release before a mental health professional share mental health records. For example, FERPA can limit community mental health professionals' ability to participate in meetings focused on a child's IEP. Alternatively, HIPAA constrains what community mental health staff can share with school staff seeking critical information about individual students. Hence, both FERPA and HIPAA can encumber interdisciplinary collaboration when mental health services are provided to students (Weist et al., 2012, 2018). The type and quality of services that school psychologists are able to provide are ultimately affected by the practitioner's

available time. School psychologists are charged with many time-consuming responsibilities and often itinerant assignments to multiple school buildings. Nevertheless, the prevailing experiences of school psychologists is that they spend the majority of their time involved in assessment activities, especially as they relate to special education eligibility determinations even if this is not identified as the most valuable activity or the area where professional development is most desired. Although assessment and special education procedures are necessary roles, their continued dominance has prevented school psychologists from taking on a broader continuum of SMH services (Splett et al., 2013).

School psychologists' training and competence in SMH services is another area that can inhibit, as well as facilitate, the provision of SMH services. For example, research has suggested that surveyed school psychologists reported feeling less competent in providing prevention/intervention activities than assessment and consultation/collaboration activities. Similarly, a minority of school psychologists express confidence in the NASP (NASP, n.d.) Practice Domain 4: "Mental and Behavioral Health Services and Interventions." School psychologists may feel they are not experts in providing SMH services due to a perceived lack of content knowledge and applied experiences. Many contemporary school psychologists describe feeling they had too little exposure to important SMH topics in their training, such as treatment planning and group counseling during pre- and in-service training, likely leading to a lack of confidence in their ability to competently provide these services. Large majorities of school psychologists participating in studies in the state of current practice have noted a substantive discrepancy between actual and desired preparation, competency, and professional engagement with a wide array of critical SMH practices such as trauma-informed care, crisis intervention and prevention, and suicide assessment, prevention, intervention, and postvention (Adamson and Peacock, 2007; Erps et al., 2020; O'Neill et al., 2020; Splett et al., 2013). Even everyday encounters in collaborations with colleagues from mental health-related disciplines can be demanding and test the confidence level of even the most competent parties on both sides due to knowledge of different systems practices and professional lexicon. For example, although school psychologists must master a firm grasp on the complexities of federal and state educational laws, it may feel daunting when confronted with some diagnostic terms from which are bound to be novel unless they had been availed of specific training considering the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM–5; American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Consider that the DSM-5 has some 265 diagnoses, not including specifiers (versus 12 IDEA classifications). Moreover, though school psychologists are familiar with many resources and databases related to evidenced-based academic practices in the school, they may be less familiar with mental health service, especially for students with more intensive needs, such as the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Evidence-Based Practices Resource Center (https://www.samhsa.gov/ebp-resource-center), the American Psychological Association various help centers (e.g., https://www.apa.org/education/k12), and practice parameters from the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry AACAP   (https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Resources_for_Primary_Care/

Practice_Parameters_and_Resource_Centers/Practice_Parameters.aspx), all of which can serve as valuable resources for school personnel, as well as students and families. In addition, school psychologists may benefit from specific knowledge about how to synthesize student mental health within PBIS service delivery. Since 2007, leaders in school mental health and PBIS have been working to develop the defined interconnected systems framework (ISF) resulting in an initial white paper and subsequent monograph (Barrett et al., 2013). The ISF model provides guidance on the systematic interconnection of school mental health and PBIS, emphasizing mental health clinicians (from the mental health system) joining PBIS teams (in the education system) and coordinating work together across the continuum of promotion and prevention (tier 1), early identification and targeted small group intervention (tier 2), and more intensive individualized intervention (tier 3).

Limitations in Special Education Programming Although IDEA provides necessary safeguards for students classified as having a serious emotional disturbance that affects their ability to benefit from general education, there are a number of plausible shortcomings that can diminish the intended positive impact of its provisions. Potentially problematic is the inexplicit language used surrounding the definition, purpose, and implementation of the FBA and BIP provisions. Despite the fact that there was an effort to incorporate more explicit language in subsequent versions of the legislation, an examination and comparison of IDEA 2004, IDEA 1997, and final implementing regulations reveal no definition of functional behavioral assessment exists in past or present versions of IDEA or its implementing regulations. Hence, schools continue to be provided with only basic contextual guidance respecting their duty to provide the assessment, and school administrators continue to have pronounced flexibility with respect to the essential elements of the functional behavioral assessment such as components of the evaluation, interpretation, and implementation, which might result in lower-quality standards. In the absence of clear guidance, professional judgment remains essential for deciding how to conduct functional behavioral assessments on an individual basis. Because of their specialized training in this area, the crafting of best-practice FBAs and BIPs and the policies that guide their development consequently fall under the expertise and ethical responsibility of the school psychologist. Moreover, it is arguable that the intended protections of FBAs and BIPs would be most frequently employed in cases where students are classified as having an "emotional disturbance" (ED).

When comparing the rather general classification criteria for emotional disturbance under IDEA with the much more explicit criteria of DSM-5 (American Psychiatric Association, 2013), it is readily apparent that classification in the education arena of ED does not correspond well with known psychiatric disorders. Arguably, this misalignment may be a significant factor for delayed or incorrect educational classifications, leading to erroneous placement in ambiguous special education categories where treatment is not aligned with actual needs (Kataoka et al., 2009). Moreover, students meeting the criteria for SED and a DSM-5 diagnosis are among those in need of effective collaborative processes to meet their individual needs. Leadership in helping school-based and external professionals develop

a mutual understanding of the lexicons and system processes and capitalize on the provisions of both educational and clinical systems can be indispensable for students with the highest needs.

Perhaps one of the most significant safeguards of IDEA is the call for a continuum of educational environments to ensure the most appropriate and least restrictive educational setting for students with disabilities. Also, the placement of a student into the appropriate educational environment is one of the most complicated and contentious issues in special education. Findings of a 2014 study conducted by Hoge, Liaupsin, Umbreit, and Ferro suggest that placement decisions made for students classified as having an emotional disturbance have some alarming inconsistencies. These findings included a limited transitioning of students with ED back to less restrictive settings once placed in alternative schools, a greater number of factors considered during exit decisions from alternative schools than entry, and students' return to a less restrictive setting not contingent on those factors considered when placing the student into the school. For example, aggression was the most frequently identified reason for moving students with an ED classification out of general education placement, but in less than half of those same cases was aggressive behavior mentioned in rationale in maintaining these students in restrictive placements. Alternatively, failure to meet the requirements of a school-wide level system was the most common reason students were denied transition. It is important to be mindful that behavioral programming is the foundation of level systems utilized in many alternative educational placements for students with ED. Unfortunately, the development of many of these systems is highly susceptible to subjectivity based on staff collaboration marked by the opinions and perspectives of staff and administration rather than scientific-based principles. Hence, system procedures and practices may be sorely lacking in necessary components that would enable a student's successful transition back to less restrictive settings.

Barriers to students receiving special education services for ED have also been identified in the general education environment with regard to instructional practices. McKenna et al. (2018) state that although the majority of students with ED spend and receive a significant amount of instruction in general education settings, there is a severe dearth of research to guide school practice or teacher preparation programs in effective instructional practices with this population. As such, these authors assert there is a substantial disconnect between intervention research and the operationalization of LRE mandates, the academic demands in general education classrooms, and the rights and responsibilities associated with FAPE for students with ED. Hence, students classified as ED or at risk of classification present a notable need for advocacy and expert knowledge in mental health, behavioral, and academic intervention.

5 Conclusions

School mental health (SMH) programs have great potential to improve learning and life outcomes for children and youths with a range of mental health difficulties. School psychologists possess the knowledge and skills to advance these efforts through a variety of leadership endeavors. Though the needs, opportunities, and challenges will vary across school milieus, some principles are quite generalizable. First, successful relationships with key stakeholders must be cultivated. Strong support from administrators, teachers, and parents is essential from the beginning to collaboratively find practical ways to meet these challenges. Assessing and expanding mental health literacy among all stakeholders is a foundation to launching and sustaining effective programming in order to increase affiliation with program goals and increase willingness to devote resources and time to interventions. Mental health literacy has several components including (1) the ability to recognize mental health needs and related problems, (2) knowledge and beliefs about causes and risk factors, (3) understanding of potential short- and long-term outcomes, and (4) understanding and facilitation appropriate for help-seeking strategies. Among all the school-based professions, school psychologists are likely to have the broadest training in holistic understanding of the comprehensive, complex needs of students with mental health issues including academic, cognitive, behavioral, emotional, social, and ecological needs.

Leadership endeavors for school psychologists may also be indicated in targeted advocacy efforts such as destigmatizing mental health diagnoses, identifying mental health services that could be delivered by specific school staff, collaborating on the provision of professional development, evaluating the effectiveness of different models of providing resources for mental health interventions by seeking ways to diminish conflict over scarce resources, and exploring differentiated approaches that promote both learning and social-emotional development.

An overarching leadership tenet for leadership in high-quality SMH programming is addressing marginalization of SMH, as part of a broader array of school services and target outcome goal, as opposed to be viewed as a peripheral agenda in schools. School psychologists who may feel uncertain about their roles in SMH leadership can find edification through the vast research and professional organization guidance on EBPs for instruction in general education classrooms, supplemental programs, and interventions for students with mental health needs.

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School Psychology Leadership in Crisis Intervention and Prevention

Amanda B. Nickerson

Preventive and responsive services is a major domain of school psychology practice, of which crisis prevention and intervention are central aspects. In this chapter, the historical context of crisis and its prevention and intervention is reviewed. Best practices for taking a leadership role in all aspects of crisis preparedness, including prevention and protection, mitigation, response, and recovery, are detailed, guided by NASP's *PREPaRE* model (Brock et al., 2009, 2016). The chapter concludes with the implications of these best practices for training and practice.

1 Historical Context and Contemporary Practice

The impact of crises was recognized in the professional literature dating back to the 1940s following a fire in a Boston nightclub that killed nearly 500 people. Eric Lindemann and the Massachusetts General Hospital worked with families of survivors and victims, studying their grief processes (Fairchild, 1997; Pitcher & Poland, 1992). Lindemann (1944) found that, following the crisis, individuals experienced acute grief, characterized by symptoms such as a delay in reaction and impaired relationships that needed to transition to normative grief processes (e.g., somatic complaints, guilt, preoccupation with the crisis) to be resolved. Lindemann also worked closely with Gerald Caplan to establish the Wellesley Project, a community mental health program at Harvard University that provided care for people in crisis (Fairchild, 1997).

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Caplan went on to further study the crisis state and models of prevention. Notably, Caplan (1964) described that a person's homeostasis (i.e., steady state, internal equilibrium) is disrupted when a crisis occurs, which can cause stress and discomfort. In a crisis, individuals' attempts to use customary problem-solving strategies are largely inadequate in coping with the magnitude of a crisis event, which leads to further feelings of stress and inadequacy. Individuals then seek out alternative problem-solving strategies and redefine the problem. According to Caplan (1964), the crisis state can last about 4–6 weeks, at which time homeostasis is reestablished or, if the problem is not resolved, the individual may suffer extreme disorganization or psychiatric problems (Brock et al., 2001; Fairchild, 1997).

Caplan's model of prevention, consisting of primary (i.e., preventing crises from occurring in the first place), secondary (i.e., providing early treatment to prevent problems and to keep crises from escalating), and tertiary (i.e., treatment of problems and mental health issues arising from crisis) levels (Caplan, 1964; Pitcher & Poland, 1992), continues to guide practice today. Caplan (1964) also differentiated between developmental crises, which occur when difficulties arise from transitions in different life stages (e.g., starting school, the onset of puberty) and situational crises, which are more sudden, unpredictable, and not related to a developmental transition (Brock et al., 2001; Slaikeu, 1990). With the recognition of the importance of crises, preventive and community mental health services became prominent. This was an early foundation for crisis prevention and intervention, exemplified by the 1963 Community Mental Health Act, which included the provision of 24-hour crisis intervention services by non-hospital community-based organizations (Pitcher & Poland, 1992).

Much of the earlier work in school crisis prevention and intervention occurred in Israel, guided by Avigdor Klingman's multi-phase model of preventive intervention (Klingman, 1978, 1985, 1987, 1988, 1996; Klingman & Ben Eli, 1981). According to this model, activities that occur prior to a crisis, in the predisaster phase, include developing and exercising plans and training responders. The impact phase, referring to the early stage of a crisis, involves coordinating services, providing consultation to school leaders, and conducting initial classroom intervention and crisis intervention to those at-risk for psychological trauma. After the crisis has passed, in the short-term adaptation phase, service providers assist students and families in adapting to the circumstances. In the long-term adaptation phase, the focus is on reintegration of students back into their school routines and relapse prevention (Klingman, 1996).

Schools in the United States became more concerned with school violence in the 1960s and 1970s, leading to increased collaboration with police and implementation of prevention programs targeting a wide variety of medical, nutritional, vocational, special educational, and mental health issues (Crews & Counts, 1997; Pagliocca & Nickerson, 2001). Beginning in the 1970s, the U.S. Department of Education funded the Safe Schools Study to assess information on crime, violence, and safety in schools, an effort that has continued today with the National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES, 2000) School Survey on Crime and Safety. Descriptive studies of school crisis response also appeared in the professional literature in the

late 1970s (e.g., Danto, 1978; Keith & Ellis, 1978) and into the 1980s (e.g., Blom, 1986; Schwarz, 1982).

Beginning in the 1990s, several books and manuals were published that focused on developing school crisis teams and plans (e.g., Brock et al., 1996; Petersen & Straub, 1992; Pitcher & Poland, 1992; Poland & McCormick, 1999). Across these models, it was suggested that there be district crisis teams to coordinate training, provide consultation, and respond directly in the event that a crisis overwhelmed the needs of the school-based crisis team, although the school-based crisis team should execute the majority of the response if able (Brock & Poland, 2002). Another commonality among these models was the inclusion of specific protocols and plans to guide the response to a crisis. These plans included identifying individuals to fulfill specific roles related to determining facts; assessing the impact of the event; deciding how to communicate the facts to students, families, and the community; identifying and responding to the needs of those impacted; coordinating logistical details (e.g., establishing an emergency operations center, guiding the development of memorials); and responding to the needs of the crisis interveners (Brock & Poland, 2002). Clearly, this expanded role for educators requires preparation. In the late 1980s through the early 2000s, researchers assessed the preparedness of educators in issues of school violence, school safety, and crisis prevention and intervention, with a consistent finding that most educators did not have a university course focused on these issues (Allen, Burt et al., 2002; Allen, Jerome et al., 2002; Astor et al., 1998; Wise et al., 1987).

In the 2000s, the federal government established directives and technical for schools and other agencies to facilitate a standardized response to emergencies. More specifically, Bush's administration signed Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 5–Management of Domestic Incidents in 2003, requiring all federal departments and agencies to adopt the National Incident Management System (NIMS) using the Incident Command System (ICS) structure in order to receive federal assistance for crisis preparedness (US Department of Homeland Security, 2004). In 2004, the US Department of Education's (DOE) Office of Safe and Healthy Students established the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center (rems.ed.gov), which serves as a hub of information, training, and other resources to assist schools with crisis planning.

The US Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students' ([U.S. DOE], 2013) *Guide for Developing High-quality School Emergency Operations Plans* details the importance of a comprehensive approach where crisis preparedness occurs across five mission areas: prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery. Prevention starts before a crisis event occurs and refers to capabilities needed to avoid, prevent, or stop a threat, thereby reducing the potentially harmful outcomes linked to the threat. Protection involves securing against threats (e.g., violence, disasters), often by actions such as securing exterior door locks and implementing visitor control systems. Mitigation is focused on reducing the impact of crises by developing and implementing emergency protocols for a wide range of threats. Response includes saving lives, protecting property, and meeting basic needs after a crisis. Finally,

recovery involves assisting schools and communities in recovering effectively from an event through rebuilding infrastructures and restoring natural, health, social, and cultural resources and services.

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) has taken a leadership role in school crisis prevention and intervention. In 2002, NASP published *Best practices in school crisis prevention and intervention* (Brock et al., 2002), now in its second edition (Brock & Jimerson, 2012). In addition, NASP's (2010a) *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services*' Domain 6: Preventive and Response Services specifies that school psychologists have knowledge and skills in order to implement effective crisis preparation, response, and recovery. NASP also developed the *PREPaRE Model* (Brock et al., 2009, 2016; www.nasponline.org/prepare), which focuses on balancing physical and psychological safety across all areas of crisis preparedness and interdisciplinary collaboration using the ICS. This model, regarded as best practice in the field, is described in greater detail next, organized by the U.S. DOE's (2013) mission areas of preparedness.

2 Best Practices in Leadership in School Crisis Prevention and Intervention

The *PREPaRE* workshops provide training for school-based mental health professionals on how to fulfill their roles and responsibilities as members of a multidisciplinary school crisis team. Several assumptions serve as the foundation for *PREPaRE*. First, the skills of school psychologists and other school-based mental health professionals are best utilized as part of a multidisciplinary team that engages in comprehensive preparedness activities including prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery. Second, *school* crisis response is unique from other types of crisis models and thus requires its own model. Finally, school psychologists and their school-based mental health professional colleagues are the most appropriate and best prepared to address psychological needs arising from school crises.

PREPaRE is an acronym that specifies the following hierarchical and sequential set of activities: **P**revent/Prepare for psychological trauma; **R**eaffirm physical health, security, and safety; **E**valuate psychological trauma; **P**rovide interventions (**a**nd) **R**espond to psychological needs; and **E**xamine the effectiveness of prevention and intervention efforts. Within this model, crises events are (a) extremely negative and can cause physical and/or emotional pain, (b) uncontrollable with respect to contributing to feeling powerless or entrapped, and (c) often unpredictable in terms of the sudden and unexpected events that take place as the crisis unfolds (Brock et al., 2009, 2016).

2.1 Crisis Prevention and Protection

An essential part of preparedness is preventing a crisis from occurring, as well as ongoing efforts to secure schools and protect students and staff from crisis events. Comprehensive school safety efforts necessitate balancing physical and psychological safety based on a thorough assessment of the risks and vulnerabilities in a particular school or district. The U.S. DOE (2013) suggests four assessments schools should use: site assessments, culture and climate assessments, school threat assessment, and capacity assessment. Site assessments examine the safety and accessibility of school building and grounds (e.g., access, structural integrity). These assessments are grounded in principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED; Schneider et al., 2000), including (a) natural surveillance (arrangement of physical and human resources to maximize visibility); (b) natural access control (strategies to control entry to and exit from school building), and (c) territoriality (e.g., sense of shared ownership of the school by students and staff).

Culture and climate assessments obtain information about student and staff perceptions of school climate, which may include safety, connectedness, teaching and learning environment, environmental-structural considerations (Cohen et al., 2009), and relationships that encourage students to report potential threats to trusted adults (U.S. DOE, 2013; Eliot et al., 2010). There is growing evidence that more positive perceptions of school climate are related to reduced internalizing and externalizing problems (Hill & Werner, 2006; Shochet et al., 2006) and bullying perpetration and victimization (Nickerson, Singleton, et al., 2014; You et al., 2008).

Threat assessment is a process used to analyze communications and behaviors to determine whether an individual who makes a verbal or implied threat poses a serious threat to carry out violence toward others (Fein et al., 2004; O'Toole, 1999; Vossekuil et al., 2004). Based on findings related to the seriousness of the threat, a written safety plan is developed with the intent of resolving the problem(s) contributing to the threatening behavior by specifying the most appropriate provisions to monitor and support the student in school and protect the safety of potential victim (Cornell & Allen, 2011). For a more detailed explanation of threat assessment within the context of crisis prevention, response, and recovery, please see Nickerson and Cornell (in press). Finally, capacity assessment identifies the resources (e.g., equipment, supplies, capabilities of students, staff, and community partners) available to respond to crises.

Based on data about the demonstrated needs, a collaborative planning team identifies and refines goals and objectives for comprehensive school safety (U.S. DOE, 2013). Both physical and psychological safety are critical (Brock et al., 2009, 2016), and it is important for school safety teams to examine their comprehensive efforts related to both aspects. Although beyond the scope of this chapter, the reader is encouraged to consult resources about how schools can use the CPTED principles to guide physical safety (e.g., Brock et al., 2009, 2016; U.S. DOE, 2013; Schneider et al., 2000). There are also multiple resources that support prevention programming (e.g., Wilson & Lipsey, 2007), building social-emotional skills (e.g.,

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2018; Durlak et al., 2011), teaching and reinforcing positive behavior (e.g., OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support, 2017), and other approaches for increasing psychological safety (Brock et al., 2009, 2016).

2.2 Crisis Mitigation

In order to mitigate (i.e., build capacity to lessen the impact of a crisis in terms of loss of life and/or property), best practice is for schools and districts to have established crisis teams and plans (Brock et al., 2009, 2016; US DOE, 2013). As stated previously, the NIMS and ICS structure are mandated for emergency response, as they provide common principles, language, and processes to facilitate a standardized response across agencies according to five major functions: command, intelligence, operations, logistics, and finance (U. S. Department of Homeland Security, 2004). For a more detailed review of how school crisis teams can operate in compliance with the ICS, see Nickerson et al. (2006). Planning should occur in the context of the previously mentioned assessment of needs and using the ICS to specify roles and responsibilities of the team (US Department of Homeland Security, 2008; US DOE, 2013).

The US DOE (2013) and Brock et al. (2009, 2016) offer in-depth guidance for the important components of a crisis plan, including the basic plan, functional annexes, and threat and hazard specific annexes. The basic plan provides an overview of the approach to operations before, during, and after a crisis, serving as the foundation of overarching activities for any crisis situation. The functional annexes detail all operational functions and their related courses of action. These include topics such as evacuation, lockdown, and family reunification. Threat and hazard-specific annexes detail the unique procedures, roles, and responsibilities for specific hazards or threats based on the school's assessment. For details about the sections and content of these plans, see Table 1.

2.3 Crisis Response

When a crisis impacts a school community, the first priority is to ensure that students and staff are physically safe and healthy (Brymer et al., 2012; Haskett et al., 2008; National Commission on Children and Disasters, 2010). The efficient and coordinated execution of the school crisis plan (including the functional and threat and hazard-specific annexes) is critical to an effective response. A premise of *PREPaRE* is that the psychological trauma generated from crises differs based on the type of event (e.g., interpersonal violence vs. natural disaster) and its predictability, consequences (e.g., injury, death), duration, and intensity (Brock et al., 2009, 2016; Nooner et al., 2012). This becomes important in determining the level

Table 1 Sections and content of school crisis plans

Basic plan: Overview of approach to operations before, during, and after a crisis. Serves as a foundation of overarching activities for any crisis situation
Introduction
Purpose and Overview of Plan
Concept of Operations (authority, coordination, purpose of actions, accounting for individuals with disabilities)
Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities (roles and responsibilities of all school staff members, parents, students, and community agencies during crisis)
Direction, Control, Coordination (school's Incident Command System, relation to community/county's crisis plan, control of resources)
Information Collection, Analysis, Dissemination (crisis response and recovery information and sources, e.g., law enforcement alerts, mental health hotlines)
Training and Exercises (type and frequency of training and exercises, e.g., tabletop exercises, emergency drills, full-scale exercises)
Administration, Finance, Logistics
Plan Development and Maintenance (process; person(s) responsible; cycle for training, reviewing, and updating plan)
Authorities and References (laws and regulations relevant to plan; succession of authority)
Functional annexes: Operational functions and their related courses of action
Evacuation annex (how to safely evacuate school buildings and grounds; takes into account alternative routes and individuals with disabilities and other needs)
Lockdown Annex (secure the school and grounds when there is an immediate threat of violence inside or around the school)
Shelter-in-Place Annex (remain or move to area inside building protected from hazard)
Accounting for All Persons Annex (designated accounting specialist; accountability for students, staff, and visitors; documentation of medical treatment evacuations)
Communications and Warning Annex (crisis identification and notification, including equipment, language issues, media)
Family Reunification Annex (plans, roles, sites, process, documentation, and practice for reunifying students with parents/guardians)
Continuity of Operations (COOP) Annex (ensures that business, communication, technological, and facilities, and other essential functions continue during and immediately after crisis)
Recovery Annex (addresses emotional, physical/structural, academic, and fiscal recovery after crisis
Public Health, Medical, and Mental Health Annex (addresses crises of this nature; includes coordination with other responders and mental health support during recovery)
Security Annex (steps taken routinely to secure school; includes agreements with law enforcement and CPTED principles)
Threat and Hazard specific annexes: Courses of action (unique procedures, roles, and responsibilities) for specific hazards or threats based on the school's assessment
Natural Hazards (e.g., earthquakes, hurricanes, wildfires, floods, winter precipitation)
Technological Hazards (e.g., explosions, power failure, water failure, hazardous materials release)
Biological Hazards (e.g., infectious diseases, contaminated food outbreaks, toxic materials in school laboratories)
Adversarial/Incidental/Human-caused Threats (e.g., fire, active shooters, gang violence, bomb threats, domestic violence, suicide)

Note. Adapted from the US Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students (2013). This document is in the public domain

of resources needed to respond. According to Brock et al. (2009, 2016), a minimal response is where school professionals can respond within their traditional roles for incidents that do not affect a large number of people (e.g., suicidal ideation, playground injury). Depending on the magnitude, severity, and the resources available, an incident that impacts many members of the school community may necessitate a school-level, district-level, or regional-level response. In a school-level response, the school crisis team and resources manage the situation, as in the case of a nonfatal accident affecting several students. A district-level response (e.g., personnel from other schools or the district are required to manage the incident) or a regional-level response (e.g., staff and other resources from outside of the school/district assist) may be required for highly traumatic events that may also impact the crisis responders in the school.

In order to ensure physical health and safety, the crisis team or appropriate response agency should remove any objects from the school environment that could cause harm or injury (e.g., broken glass, chemicals) as soon as possible and ensure a clean and safe environment (e.g., adequate lighting and protections to minimize slipping or falling; prevent intrusions by unauthorized individuals; Brymer et al., 2006, 2012). Emergency procedures often require rapid movement, following directions, responding to verbal directives or sounds (e.g., sirens), hiding in unique positions, or being silent, which may be problematic for students with physical, psychological, educational, or social vulnerabilities (Boon et al., 2011; Campbell et al., 2009; Spooner et al., 2012). In order to comply with the American with Disabilities Act of 1990, individuals with disabilities need to be accounted for in preparation, notification and alerts, evacuation, transportation, sheltering, and medical care and services, and there must be provisions of aids and services (e.g., interpreters, captioning, accessible information technology) to ensure effective communication (U.S. DOE, 2013). In addition, students must maintain access to mobility and sensory devices (e.g., wheelchairs, glasses, hearing aids), service animals, assistive devices, and medications and/or medical devices (Brymer et al., 2006, 2012). Individualized plans for emergencies should include procedures and safeguards to help students with disabilities to meet the demands of crisis situations, which may include the aforementioned considerations and/or other adaptations (e.g., social stories; Boon et al., 2011; Clarke et al., 2014). The team should also be sensitive to and account for particularly safety needs of individuals who may be targets of crisis-related persecution because of their ethnic, religious, or other affiliations (Brymer et al., 2006, 2012). Acute needs will also need to be responded to, whether that involves medical treatment or calming and grounding individuals that may be disoriented or emotionally overwhelmed (Brymer et al., 2012). In order to perceive that one is safe, there is often a need for information about actions being taken to manage the crisis and keep people safe discussed further with respect to crisis interventions used to facilitate recovery.

2.4 Crisis Recovery

When the crisis event has passed, the process of recovery begins. Most central for the role of school psychologists is preventing and intervening with the psychological trauma that may be generated by the crisis. As mentioned previously, various aspects of the crisis event impact the level of response required, and this is also applicable to the extent to which individuals are impacted.

Psychological triage is an ongoing process of evaluating risk based on several factors, such as one's physical proximity (e.g., how near one was to the crisis event) and emotional proximity (i.e., closeness of relationship with victim(s) of crisis), and threat perceptions or one's subjective impressions of danger (Brock et al., 2009, 2016). The risk for posttraumatic stress symptoms increases the more one is physically proximal to or directly exposed to the crisis (Eksi et al., 2007; Kolaitis et al., 2003). Emotional proximity, or the relationship with the victim, is also important in predicting outcomes for children, such as depression, complicated grief, and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD; Cohen & Mannarino, 2004; Kolaitis et al., 2003). In addition, an individual's negative perception of the event and its threat is related to the crisis becoming more personal and significant (Rubin et al., 2008), which has implications for recovery. Internal and external vulnerabilities, immediate crisis reactions, and ongoing crisis reactions and coping are also important variables to consider when determining the need for crisis intervention (Brock et al., 2009, 2016). Individuals with prior trauma histories are particularly at risk after a crisis (Nader et al., 1990; Olff et al., 2005). Lower developmental level also makes children vulnerable to problems after a crisis due to less developed emotional regulation skills and lack of experience coping in crisis situations (Lonigan et al., 2003). Children who lack family support or have parents with mental illness, in distress, or with poor coping abilities are also more likely to experience negative outcomes after a crisis (Caffo & Belaise, 2003).

Effective leadership in school crisis situations involves conducting psychological triage to determine risk for psychological trauma and to make effective and efficient decisions about resources. Importantly, psychological triage helps to determine who may not need or want intervention. As stated previously, people are impacted differently by a crisis, and recovery is the norm (Brymer et al., 2006; Gerson & Rappaport, 2013; Hornor, 2013). Illustrating this point, although 61.8% of adolescents in the United States have been exposed to a traumatic event in their lifetime, the prevalence of PTSD is estimated at 4.7% of the population (McLaughlin et al., 2013). Therefore, the crisis interventions in *PREPaRE* are offered depending on whether an individual is at low, moderate, or high risk for psychological trauma.

Universal Crisis Interventions for Individuals at Low-Risk of Psychological Trauma Although recovery is to be expected, there are some interventions that should be provided to decrease the risk of having an adverse reaction following a crisis. As mentioned previously, crisis response focuses initially on ensuring the physical health and safety of students and staff. During and immediately after the threat, it is important to convey accurate information and reassurances about safety,

as children's perceptions of threat is guided by the reactions of the adults in their lives (DeVoe et al., 2011). Another critical universal intervention is to reconnect children to their social support systems, as perceived social support contributes to children's resiliency when facing a range of traumatic events (Asberg & Renk, 2014; Kleiman et al., 2014). The reestablishment of support may include reunifying children with their parents, connecting them with teachers, and allowing opportunities to spend time with peers (Brock et al., 2009, 2016). A consistent routine also helps keep structure and stability after a crisis. Another important class of universal crisis interventions is providing psychoeducation, or information about the crisis, common reactions, assistance with coping, and referral sources for individuals who need additional assistance (Brock et al., 2009, 2016). This can be provided to school staff (e.g., in a faculty meeting), parents (e.g., informational documents, open meeting), and students (e.g., in classroom meetings, usually with scripted information; Brock et al., 2016). Students find informational support particularly helpful (Hombrados-Mendieta et al., 2012), and there is evidence to suggest that providing psychoeducation after a crisis is related to improved coping and fewer mental health symptoms (Gelkopf & Berger, 2009; Pynoos et al., 1998). A sample script that may be used as part of a classroom meeting is provided below:

> *I have some very sad news to share with you. Samantha Collins, a sixth-grade student at our school on Team 6-B, died in a car accident last night. She was in the car with her mother, who also died. The driver of the other car is in the hospital with minor injuries and is expected to make a full recovery. No one else was involved in the accident. People react to this sad news in different ways. Some people cry, others have trouble eating or sleeping, some people can't get their minds off of what happened, and others don't have much of a reaction at all. These reactions are all OK, and we respect that each of you may cope in a different way. Our school counselors and psychologists are in the media center to help anyone who may want to share their reactions and get support. You can just tell me or anyone else if you want to go there. You may also have questions, and I am going to give you a chance to ask me about what is on your mind. I will answer your questions by telling you the facts, or I may also tell you that I do not know. I may ask you to talk to your parents or see if I can find someone who might know the answer or be able to help. What questions do you have?*

Crisis Interventions for Individuals at Moderate-Risk of Psychological Trauma If the psychological triage process reveals students who are at moderate risk of psychological trauma due to their physical and/or emotional proximity to the crisis, perceptions of threat, preexisting vulnerabilities, and/or crisis reactions and coping, the school crisis team may choose to provide more intensive crisis interventions such as a student psychoeducational group or classroom-based/group-based crisis intervention (Brock et al., 2016). In each of these interventions, students are provided facts about the event, and their questions are answered in an age-appropriate way that dispels rumors and avoids speculating about or sensationalizing the crisis. In the psychoeducational group, students are taught about common crisis reactions and provided with specific strategies to cope with the crisis and manage stress (see Table 2 for the steps of the psychoeducational group). The classroom-based/group-based crisis intervention is longer in duration and involves direct exploration of the

Table 2 Steps of interventions for individuals at moderate risk for psychological trauma

Student psychoeducational group	
Introduce lesson (5 min)	Introduce facilitators; review (or establish) rules; describe lesson
Answer questions (10 min)	Allow students to ask questions about crisis; respond with facts and dispel rumors
Prepare students for reactions (15 min)	Identify and normalize common physical, behavioral, cognitive, and social reactions; identify reactions indicating help is needed
Teach strategies (15 min)	Teach stress management and/or relaxation/mindfulness techniques; have students identify supports; redirect maladaptive coping
Close (5 min)	Review; ensure students have plan for managing reactions
Group-/classroom-based crisis intervention	
Introduce session (5–10 min)	Introduce facilitators; establish rules (include confidentiality); describe session
Provide crisis facts (10–30 min)	Allow students to ask questions about crisis; respond with facts and dispel rumors
Share crisis experiences (20–40 min)	Ask for volunteers to share their experience of the crisis (sight, sound, taste); emphasize common experiences
Identify crisis reactions (20–30 min)	Have students share crisis reactions; normalize common reactions; identify reactions indicating help is needed; share referral information
Empower students (30–60 min)	Identify stress management and relaxation techniques; have students identify supports; redirect maladaptive coping
Close (15–30 min)	Review; ensure students have plan for managing reactions, plan activities if appropriate (making cards, collecting donations)
Individual crisis intervention	
Establish contact	Introduce self; ask about basic needs; express empathy
Verify readiness to proceed	Ensure emotional readiness to identify crisis problems
Identify and prioritize crisis problems	Ask for the "crisis story"; explore and prioritize problems generated from crisis; identify resources and support
Address crisis problems	Ask about previous and current coping strategies; facilitate problem-solving
Evaluate and conclude	Ensure access to social support; plan for follow-up; express optimism; if immediate coping not restored, repeat the process

Note: Adapted from Brock et al. (2016)

students' crisis experiences and their reactions (Brock et al., 2016). This intervention makes use of the group process to help students realize they are understood. The group leaders link students' experiences and reactions to those of others, engaging the group in identifying ways to cope with their reactions and empowering them to take actions to help themselves and others (Brock et al., 2009, 2016). Because this type of intervention can arouse emotions given the sensitive nature of the traumatic experience (Bisson, 2003; Yule, 2001), it must be co-led with mental health professional and conducted with individuals who have similar levels of exposure to and experience with the same crisis event (Brock et al., 2009, 2016).

These groups approaches are not indicated for students who are highly traumatized or direct victims. Instead, individual crisis intervention, also known as psychological first aid (Brymer et al., 2006, 2012), should be used as a basic problem-solving model that aims to reestablish immediate coping. In individual crisis intervention, rapport is established and basic needs are met first. Next, the crisis intervener asks for the person to tell what happened in their own words and helps to identify and prioritize the problems generated by the crisis. The focus is on supporting problem-solving and adaptive coping, which may involve providing information, ensuring the individual identifies sources of social support, and linking the person to appropriate resources to assist with the problems (Brock et al., 2009, 2016; Brymer et al., 2006, 2012). For descriptions of the steps of each of the interventions for individuals at moderate risk of psychological trauma, see Table 2.

Crisis Interventions for Individuals at High-Risk of Psychological Trauma For the minority of individuals who are more severely traumatized, sustained and intensive treatments are warranted. There are cognitive-behavioral group interventions that can be used in the school setting for youth who have been traumatized. Cognitive-Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS; Jaycox, 2004) is a 10-week manualized treatment that has been shown to be effective in reducing PTSD symptoms (Jaycox et al., 2009; Kataoka et al., 2003). Providing ongoing interventions to treat children's disorders is beyond the role and scope of most school-based mental health professionals, however. It is essential that schools have effective referral systems and partnerships with community partners to meet the mental health needs of students and their families (SAMHSA Now is the Time Technical Assistance Center, 2016). Evidence-based clinical treatments for trauma in children include Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT; Cary & McMillen, 2012; Cohen et al., 2000; Cohen & Mannarino, 2008), Cognitive–Behavioral Therapy for Childhood Traumatic Grief (CBT-CTG; Cohen & Mannarino, 2004) and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR; Ahmad et al., 2007; Rodenburg et al., 2009; World Health Organization, 2013).

3   Implications for Training and Practice

School psychologists, by virtue of their professional training and NASP's commitment to these issues, are poised to take leadership roles in school crisis prevention and intervention. Embedded within a multidisciplinary team, school psychologists are particularly well-suited to provide leadership in promoting psychological safety and resilience and to provide crisis interventions to minimize the impact of psychological trauma. Program evaluation of *PREPaRE* indicates that participation in the training workshops results in significant improvements in attitudes and knowledge gains regarding crisis prevention and intervention, with high satisfaction (Brock et al., 2011; Nickerson, Serwacki, et al., 2014). Lazzaro's (2013) follow-up study revealed that knowledge gains were maintained even several months after taking

Table 3 Resources for crisis prevention and intervention

Crisis prevention, protection, and mitigation
Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center. rems.ed.gov
Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans https://rems.ed.gov/docs/REMS_K-12_Guide_508.pdf
FEMA ICS Training for Schools. https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-100.SCa
I Love U Guys Foundation *Standard reunification method: A practical method to unite students with parents after an evacuation or crisis*. http://iloveuguys.org/srm/Standard%20Reunification%20Method.pdf
Crisis response and recovery
NASP School Safety and Crisis Resources www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis
National Child Traumatic Stress Network http://nctsnet.org
Treatment and Services Adaptation Center http://traumaawareschools.org
Coalition to Support Grieving Students http://grievingstudents.scholastic.com
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and Suicide Prevention Resource Center. *After a suicide: A toolkit for schools* www.sprc.org/sites/sprc.org/files/library/AfteraSuicideToolkitforSchools.pdf
Sesame Street Toolkit for Grief https://www.sesamestreet.org/toolkits/grief

PREPaRE Workshop 2. Because there is a Training of Trainers (TOT) model and participants with fewer hours of previous crisis training benefit especially from the training (Nickerson, Serwacki, et al., 2014), school psychology trainers can choose to either present the workshops or use the textbook (Brock et al., 2016) to teach school psychology graduate students the content and skills.

Crisis preparedness and response is now part of NASP's (2020) standards for graduate preparation, and school psychologists engage in many crisis prevention and intervention activities as part of their professional roles (Nickerson & Zhe, 2004). However, based on results of earlier surveys (e.g., Allen, Jerome et al., 2002; Wise et al., 1987), many practitioners that have been in the field for quite some time may not have had formal training in crisis prevention and intervention. Therefore, it is important for schools to offer in-service training on these skills using the *PREPaRE* model or other resources. There are some excellent, accessible resources for crisis prevention and intervention in schools. Table 3 includes some of the key resources that school psychologists and other key school personnel may wish to consult to be consistent with best practices for preventing, protecting, and mitigating schools from the impact and to respond and recover from crises.

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School Psychology Leadership in Ethics and Professional Practice

John Garruto

School psychology presents as a widely heterogenous field. Upon completing a proscribed plan of study for certification of school psychology, there are a myriad of directions that one may pursue. These include working as school psychologists in public schools, private schools, and government settings or working as university trainers, engaging in higher education instruction and ongoing research (Fagan & Wise, 2007).

While the directions taken by school psychologists may vary with regard to occupational ends, there is also tremendous diversity within the various occupations. For example, a school psychologist in the public schools may be focusing on direct intervention with problematic behavior, spending the majority of their time in consultation with teachers and parents to help youth with varied challenges, spending time with individual evaluations to meet mandated eligibility guidelines, or working primarily within special education administrative frameworks (such as chairing IEP Team Meetings) (Fagan & Wise, 2007).

Within each of these specializations, there exists even further diversity. For example, for the school psychologist who primarily engages in assessment, they may follow a fixed framework for how the assessment is to be conducted, prescribed from an immediate supervisor. Another school psychologist who spends the same percentage of time within this framework may have more professional autonomy, carefully selecting each technique based on the referral concern. For the school psychologist who primarily engages in counseling, they may restrict their focus to counseling mandated in IEPs, focused on working with the student toward their

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individualized goals. The one with more professional autonomy may have some latitude to provide services for broader concerns, such as counseling students with anxiety or depression, regardless of whether or not they are identified with educational disabilities.

A common thread that unites all of these frameworks relates to the importance of following professional standards. Professional standards are a set of procedures and guidelines that may dictate or guide professional practice (National Association of School Psychologists, 2019). Some standards may present as a series of best practice guidelines, while others identify minimum mandates required for continuing practice and certification. For example, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) mandates adherence to their ethical principles in order for an individual to maintain their national certification (National Association of School Psychologists, 2020).

One topic that has not engendered a lot of study in the professional literature is the relationship of leadership to ethics. This chapter aims to identify how leadership skills and ethical and professional practice present a symbiotic relationship. That is, the nurturance of ethical and professional practice skills leads to a strengthening of leadership, while at the same time, the development of leadership skills leads to a fortification of ethical and professional practice skills. This chapter will briefly review some of the research behind leadership and ethics in school psychology. However, the focus will primarily be on how these two frameworks are intricately related. Finally, a case study will highlight how a school psychologist with stronger leadership skills may be more equipped with solving ethical dilemmas than one whose leadership skills are not as well developed.

1   Review of Leadership Skills

While much has been written on the subject of leadership, the role of leadership in the field of school psychology is more spartan (Augustyniak et al., 2016). Because leadership is the focus of this text, it will only be summarized briefly here. The focus of leadership here is distributive leadership. The literature has indicated that distributive leadership is stretching out of leadership among many individuals, rather than from a single, autonomous person (Harris, 2004; Spillane et al., 2004).

Such a framework has been evolving in schools. Rather than a hierarchical top-down framework where leaders cascade from a single point on down (think of a superintendent who oversees multiple administrators, who in turn oversees multiple staff), distributive leadership has several leaders within the institution, leading to a decentralized process (Harris, 2004).

School psychologists are in prime positions to assume roles of leadership if their working paradigms are conducive to this end. A school psychologist who is split among several buildings, completing evaluations in compliance with federal and state special education guidelines, will find themselves challenged to take on positions of leadership as their roles may relate more to legal compliance. However, for

the school psychologist who is working in a single building with manageable evaluation and counseling caseloads, they are in unique positions where leadership opportunities are significant. School psychologists are the only individuals in schools with unique skillsets not shared by any other professional. This includes assessment, academic intervention, social-emotional intervention, consultation, research, and expertise in special education law.

While this is discussed elsewhere in this text, it is important to highlight the types of leadership styles present. Transactional leadership relates itself to setting agreements and goals between those who provide direction and those who receive direction. Transformational leaders, on the other hand, work with others to create solutions to difficult problems; they are flexible within their approach and adapt to changing demands (Augustyniak et al., 2016; Bass et al., 2003).

Before leadership skills emerge, one should also consider one's competence to engage fully within their roles. Although there is little information in the literature about the interaction of leadership and competence, it is important to explore the relationship. Benner's (1984) stage model of competence, while used primarily in nursing, also has implications for the field of school psychology (Harvey & Struzziero, 2002; Jacob et al., 2016).

A review of Benner's (1984) model indicates that there are five stages to competence: novice, advanced-beginner, competent, proficient, and expert. At the novice level, the school psychologist relies on rules, doesn't look ahead, and may be dependent on the supervisor for direction. The advanced-beginner is focused on mastery of technical aspects, may start to observe recurring situations, and may be disconnected from the student as they are focused on the rules. The competent school psychologist is better able to see relationships, can balance skills and empathy, can start to appreciate the long-term effects of their actions, and engages in planning and goal setting. The proficient school psychologist recognizes patterns, no longer relies on rules, and can analyze and respond to small nuances of situations. Finally, the expert school psychologist uses past experiences to generate paradigms. They don't mind rapidly changing situations and see their skills as a transformation of self. Harvey and Struzziero (2002) note that not all school psychologists do not automatically reach this level. Some will remain at the level of competent or proficient for long periods of time. It makes sense, then, that those who have reached the level of "expert" within this field are the most equipped to be transformative leaders.

2 Ethics in School Psychology

The study of ethics in school psychology is relatively young. The first actual code of ethics in psychology was not present until 1953 (Armistead et al., 2011). Armistead et al. (2011) also highlight that it was not until 1974 that the first code of ethics appeared for school psychology in response to some of the ethical and legal issues that ensued.

Ethics in school psychology have continued to be revised and have seen several iterations (Armistead et al., 2011). The current ethical standards are within a framework of four ethical principles. They are as follows:

1. Respect and Dignity for All Persons
2. Professional Competence and Responsibility
3. Honesty and Integrity in Professional Relationships
4. Responsibility to Schools, Family, the Profession, and Society (Armistead et al., 2011; Jacob et al., 2016)

The four principles, or domains, each highlight important characteristics that permeate the profession of school psychology. Respect and Dignity for All Persons is largely about ensuring that all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, regardless of any circumstance (which not only includes their backgrounds but also respects the wishes of various individuals, such as consent for parents to intervene for their children.) Professional competence and responsibility are largely about ensuring that school psychologists have the appropriate skills to engage in the various components of their work. For example, all certified school psychologists have basic skills with cognitive, academic, and social-emotional assessment. However, not all school psychologists have had experience in administering such impairments with very young children, or who might present with a visual impairment. Honesty and Integrity in Professional Relationships relates to guidelines on how school psychologists respectfully work with other professionals. Finally, Responsibility to Schools, Family, the Profession, and Society relates to the conduct of school psychologists as it relates to their professional responsibilities and roles outside of school (such as supervision of graduate students, publications, etc.) (Armistead et al., 2011; National Association of School Psychologists, 2020).

The introduction to the Principles of Professional Ethics reviews the justification for the NASP Principles for Professional Ethics. Specifically, it indicates, "The purpose of the *Principles* is to protect the public and those who receive school psychological services by sensitizing school psychologists to the ethical aspects of their work, education them about appropriate conduct, helping them monitor their own behavior, and providing standards to be used in the resolution of complaints of unethical conduct" (National Association of School Psychologists, 2020, p. 39). As can be seen, the *Principles* are used as guidelines to help identify the expectations of conduct and provide a framework for decision-making for school psychologists.

3   School Psychology Ethics in the Context of Leadership

Although the *Principles* provide an overarching framework for appropriate school psychology conduct, the practice of ethics in school psychology may look different for professionals engaging in the basic practice of school psychology, compared to school psychologists who serve as leaders within their roles. One may see a school

psychology leader who not only follows the *Principles* but rather has a command of them. Knapp et al. (2017) focus on positive ethics. Knapp et al. (2017) contrast a floor approach of ethics to an aspirational approach. A floor approach is exclusively related to following laws and standards in a way that protects the public (e.g., do no harm.) However, aspirational approaches based on positive ethics relate to striving to do the right thing. For example, instead of avoiding engaging in poor practices (e.g., violating confidentiality), striving toward the highest of aspirational positive practices (e.g., creating a therapeutic relationship where a client not only knows the school psychologist will not violate confidentiality but creates an atmosphere of acceptance both within the office and within the school system) represents a more advanced level of practice. The school psychologist who is able to approach the practice from a perspective of positive ethics may be more able to engage in a role of transformative leadership, compared to the school psychologist who only utilizes a floor approach.

As noted earlier in the stage model for competence (Benner, 1984; Harvey & Struzziero, 2002), there are changes that occur as one becomes more competent in their work. Novices and advance-beginners are more rule-governed, whereas proficient and expert school psychologists quickly pick up on patterns and apply these toward quickly, yet systematically engaging in professional decision-making. Those who have achieved proficient and expert levels of competence are the ones who may not only create structures to streamline the mandated components of their work but also help to influence systems-level structures that lead to benefits for school students, parents, staff, and administration.

Taken together, it is truly the expert school psychologist, who espouses positive ethics, who is well-equipped to utilize the *Principles* within a leadership capacity. The expert school psychologist not only is knowledgeable about the *Principles* but knows how to quickly and effectively utilize them in complex situations. Furthermore, by applying the *Principles* beyond the floor approach toward an aspirational approach, expert school psychologists can not only solve complex ethical dilemmas for singular cases but also work within a leadership capacity to help effect systems changes.

So how might the application of the *Principles* look different between school psychology practitioners vs. transformational leaders? Let's look at one of the standards. Standard I.2.4 under the broad principle of privacy and confidentiality indicates "School psychologists discuss and/or release confidential information only for professional purposes and only with persons who have a legitimate need to know. They do so within the strict boundaries of relevant privacy statutes" (National Association of School Psychologists, 2020, p. 44). A new or even a competent-level practitioner may look at this standard and work to maintain due diligence in not releasing confidential information. A school psychology leader may take this standard and provide specific examples to other district school psychologists and provide specific strategies about how to safeguard confidentiality. Another example may be the school psychology leader who reviews the importance of confidentiality with *all building staff* and provides reasons as to why practicing confidentiality is of professional importance and how to avoid common pitfalls with breaking the release

of confidential information (such as sharing this information in the staff room.) Following the minimum standards, one quietly maintains confidential information. Following positive ethics in a way that emphasizes excellence, one applies the standard in a very thoughtful way and explains this to others. This would relate to transformational leadership if others change their practices as a result. In summary, the transformational leader looks beyond simple protection of the public by gaining consent but instead thoughtfully applies the *Principles* in a way that works well not only for individual students but for school systems as well.

4   Case Study Highlighting Transformational Leadership

This case study reviews two school psychologists, Chris and Jamie. Chris is a competent school psychologist. He has been working for 5 years in an elementary school and believes he can do the job well. He listens to his administrators, completes his evaluations on time, works with a couple of students individually, and sits on one or two committees. Jamie is an expert school psychologist who has also been working for 5 years. She is often approached for difficult situations. She is recruited to sit on many committees, given her ability to analyze situations. She has advocated for paperwork reduction and expanding the role of the school psychologist by helping to create a Multi-Tiered System of Support at various tiers for both academics and behaviors.

This case study will review how Chris and Jamie each seek to problem-solve the behaviors of Bobby, a new entrant to the third grade. This is Bobby's fourth school within 2 years. He was retained in first grade. His records indicate that he is showing significant academic delays, but schools have not been able to utilize a Response to Intervention framework with enough fidelity before he moves again. Bobby does well for the first 3 days of school but then begins to show more behavioral difficulties. At first, they are minor, with refusals to do work. Within 2 weeks, he insists on using the iPad and attempts to remove the iPad that led him to start yelling, throwing objects (including the iPad), and spitting at those who come near him. Parents have started calling the principal, who approaches the school psychologist, asking what can be done? The exasperated teacher starts complaining about Bobby in the teacher's lounge, and, before too long, each adult (and most students) become quickly aware of Bobby. When the school psychologist enters the classroom for any reason at all, the students quickly point at Bobby and say, "He's over there!" Bobby's mother is difficult to reach. When she picks him up from being suspended, she pulls him by the arm and says, "You're gonna get me fired again…let's go!"

How Chris Responds to This Situation   Chris, a competent school psychologist, attempts to find ways to manage Bobby's behavior. Although other schools have not engaged in evaluation yet, Chris decides to start there to see if he can get some more information about Bobby…preferably before he leaves again. He gets a consent for evaluation signed and does the mandatory social history. Chris learns that Bobby's

father is incarcerated for repeated domestic violence and that Bobby's parents have an eighth-grade education. This helps Chris understand Bobby better, but Chris won't broadcast this publicly to others; after all, Standard I.2.1 says school psychologists "do not seek or store private information about clients that is not needed in the provision of services" (National Association of School Psychologists, 2020, p. 43).

Attempting to help Bobby's behavior, Chris tries to put a behavior plan into place. Chris knows Bobby likes the iPad; after all, he always requests it. He creates a behavioral chart, and he and the teacher agree if he gets all smiley faces in a given day, he can have 10 minutes on the iPad at the end of the day. Bobby is successful on the first day and Chris is relieved that a solution has been found. However, after the first day, not only is Bobby unsuccessful the following day but becomes extremely angered after the first frown face and is more destructive than before.

Chris is able to build a relationship with Bobby as he works better in one-on-one situations. Chris works as a competent school psychologist and is able to get Bobby to complete the evaluation. On the WISC-V, Bobby has a verbal standard score of 89 (23rd percentile), a visual spatial standard score of 92 (30th percentile), a fluid reasoning standard score of 81 (10th percentile), a working memory standard score of 78 (7th percentile), and a processing speed standard score of 77 (6th percentile). His full-scale IQ is an 83 (13th percentile). On the WIAT-III, Bobby receives standard scores in the low 70s in reading and spelling and the low 80s on math and written expression. The BASC-3 has elevations on the aggression, hyperactivity, conduct problems, and depression scales on the teacher scale and elevations on all scales on the parent scales. Chris makes the argument with his director that he qualifies as a student with a learning disability in reading and makes a recommendation for special education services in a self-contained therapeutic setting. While he cannot justify an emotional disturbance because his behavior seems to be in control (after all, he earned the iPad on the first day), he knows this child isn't safe for the classroom, has not responded to a behavior plan, and requires a safe environment that will help with both his learning disability and his behavior problems.

How Jamie Responds to This Situation Jamie looks at this situation and sees multiple layers of problems. First, she knows that Bobby has tremendous behavior concerns that require immediate addressing. Second, she sees systemic problems as well. This student has been alienated by the teachers, students, his mother, and administration. She realizes Bobby has little connection with anyone and the environment is immediately toxic. She knows that she needs to engage on a multi-pronged approach. She begins to work on a systems-level intervention and a classroom intervention. Jamie does suspect a disability and does want to get moving on an individual evaluation as well. She knows she has 60 days to complete the evaluation and that will hopefully be just enough time to put some other levels of support into play before he moves again.

Jamie quickly gathers the social history. She learns that Bobby's father is incarcerated for domestic violence and that Bobby's parents have an eighth-grade

education. Jamie also recognizes as stressed as Bobby's mother is, she is also his biggest expert. She asks him what are things he likes? Bobby's mother smiles and says, "Legos!" Upon further elaboration, Jamie learns that whenever she takes her son to the store, that's all he wants. Jamie did ask his mother about the iPad. Bobby's mother said that whenever he gets ticked off, he goes into another room with their tablet. She knows he should not be on screens for too long, but she needs the break.

Jamie thinks about many of the ethical principles. She thinks about standard I.3.3, specifically school psychologists "take steps to foster a school climate that is supportive, inclusive, safe, accepting, and respectful toward all persons (National Association of School Psychologists, 2020, p. 44). She also thinks about Standard III.3.1 that school psychologists "cooperate with other psychologists and professionals from other disciplines in relationships based on mutual respect. They encourage and support the use of all resources to serve the interests of students" (National Association of School Psychologists, 2020, p. 51). Jamie knows her work is not just with Bobby; it's with the school.

Jamie knows she has much to do. She knows under ethical standard I.2.1 that she must be careful about confidential information (National Association of School Psychologists, 2020). She tells the teacher that Bobby has gone through a lot in his short life. The teacher asks if she can better understand. Jamie says she's not at liberty to share that information, but says, "Your other students are fortunate that they haven't had the same experiences." Bobby's teacher finds Bobby exasperating but, thinking about what he might be dealing with on a daily basis, has a great deal of compassion for him. She tells Jamie, "I understand, but what can I do?" Jamie says she is working on it.

Jamie then asks the principal if there is an adult who can briefly work in Bobby's classroom for a few weeks. Jamie's principal knows resources are scarce but briefly transfers a teaching aide from a classroom for a few weeks. Jamie knows she will take data for a functional behavioral assessment but knows she cannot stay in there all the time. She trains the aide how to record data. Jamie then creates a spot in the classroom where Bobby can go if he gets upset. She lets the aide know that if he is getting angry, to allow Bobby to go into the break space for 8 minutes.

Jamie decides to purchase Lego toys and shows them to Bobby. Bobby is excited and creates something for Jamie. Jamie asks if Bobby would like to go to her room at the end of each day to play with the Lego toys. Bobby seems excited. Jamie lets Bobby know that if he keeps himself and others safe each day, he can have 15 minutes with the Lego toys. He only has to go into his break space if he is upset. Bobby is willing to give it a try.

Jamie realizes she is not done; there is a school climate issue to address. She asks the principal for 15 minutes in the next faculty meeting. She reviews what it means to give students their dignity. She acknowledges that it's hard to work in schools where students have behavioral difficulties. She indicates that it's these students who often have the toughest home lives. They go home without definitive meals, where parents are overworked, or who have significant mental health challenges, which makes parenting a very difficult task. Jamie mentions that gossip in the staff room not only violates the child's right to privacy but actually works to create a

more toxic culture. She suggests that teachers lean on each other for support but in a way that frames the work as important but difficult, rather than engage in child blaming. Jamie looks around the room and sees many heads nodding, except for Mrs. Pringle, the fifth-grade teacher, who is rolling her eyes. Jamie thinks to herself, "Her retirement at the end of this year cannot come quickly enough." She knows she has helped to change the perspective on Bobby without mentioning his name and hopefully has helped to create a more effective climate.

Jamie does the evaluation. On the WISC-V, Bobby has a verbal standard score of 89 (23rd perentile), a visual spatial standard score of 92 (30th percentile), a fluid reasoning standard score of 81 (10th percentile), a working memory standard score of 78 (7th percentile), and a processing speed standard score of 77 (6th percentile). His full-scale IQ is an 83 (13th percentile). On the WIAT-III, Bobby receives standard scores in the low 70s in reading and spelling and the low 80s on math and written expression. The BASC-3 has elevations on the aggression, hyperactivity, conduct problems, and depression scales on the teacher scale and elevations on all scales on the parent scales. The conclusion is that Bobby has a learning disability. Jamie works to fold in support at school for both his learning concerns as well as his behavioral concerns. The Functional Behavioral Assessment revealed that Jamie is most likely to act out when asked to do any type of academic task, either one he excels at or one where he has difficulty. The Behavior Intervention Plan indicates that Bobby can have time with Lego toys or the iPad in his break space for 5 minutes when he completes an activity. The teacher nearly protested; after all, the other students don't get to do this. Then the teacher remembered that other students go home to safe environments where their basic needs are met. Bobby still has outbursts. Sometimes they are still very challenging, but they are not as often.

As can be seen from the case study, both school psychologists engaged in the practice of school psychology. Both also used the NASP Principles for Professional Ethics to help guide their decisions. However, it was Jamie's work applying the ethics toward her system that made her a transformational leader. Others saw her as a place for answers and also placed within her a degree of trust given her skills. Her expertise allowed her to quickly identify the various dimensions that were unique to this case (the toxic climate, Bobby's home situation, Bobby's social and emotional challenges, Bobby's learning challenges, and Bobby's strengths) and to coordinate a multi-pronged approach utilizing a systems application of the *Principles.* School psychologists who are experts within their field and have a strong knowledge and ability to apply the *Principles* are well suited to be transformational leaders within school systems.

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School Psychology Leadership for Marginalized Students

Staci Ballard, Stacy L. Bender, Brian Daniels, and Andrea Molina Palacios

School psychologists provide services to help youth succeed socially, emotionally, behaviorally, and academically by conducting assessment, consultation, and intervention at both the individual and systemic levels (National Association of School Psychologists [NASP]). While these three domains are considered the primary focus of school psychology practice, incorporating leadership and advocacy skills within these domains is becoming required of school psychologists (Augustyniak et al., 2016), particularly in the context of persistent educational inequalities faced by students from marginalized backgrounds. As advocates, school psychologists are required to "speak up for the rights and welfare of students and families, and … provide a voice to clients who cannot or do not wish to speak for themselves" (NASP, 2020, p. 41). *Leadership* in advocacy further asks school psychologists expand their advocacy efforts by encouraging school-wide changes for marginalized students.

School psychologists serve as leaders by working collaboratively with others to combine various forms of expertise to meet the needs of schools. Contemporary leadership practices in schools emphasize decentered models and a team approach to distributed leadership practices (Coleman, 2011; Harris, 2005). Although the field reports a lack of research and definition of "leadership" as it relates to school psychology practice (Shriberg, 2007), efforts have been made to examine what this means. According to a survey of school psychologists (Shriberg et al., 2010), the ability to achieve positive outcomes for students and systems is an imperative characteristic of a leader. Furthermore, competence, knowledge, and strong interpersonal skills and personal character were terms that described school psychology leaders.

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Augustyniak (2014) adapted five dimensions of effective school leadership practices to illustrate how they could be utilized within school psychology service delivery. These include (1) establish goals and expectations; (2) resource strategically (e.g., advocate and dedicate resources aligned with instructional goals, model effective use of own professional resources); (3) plan, coordinate, and evaluate teaching and the curriculum; (4) promote and participate in teacher learning and development; and (5) ensure an orderly and supportive environment for students. As Augustyniak describes dimension 5, "a practice orientation for social justice is enriched to a leadership orientation when, in addition to designing and implementing interventions and programs that promote fairness and social justice, school psychologists actively collaborate with others in monitoring and responding to the broader school culture."

Leadership in advocacy and social justice naturally align with the transformational model of leadership, a style that many school psychologists already identify with (Shriberg et al., 2010). The transformational model of leadership calls for school psychologists to "emphasize values while fundamentally targeting growth in motivation and capacity" of other team members (Augustyniak, 2014). Taking a transformational approach within the five leadership domains can help school psychologists function as leaders collaboratively, sharing and distributing leadership power with others as they strive to create meaningful change for marginalized students (Augustyniak et al., 2016).

Leadership in advocacy for marginalized students and social justice go hand in hand. Shriberg & Clinton (2016) described social justice as both an aspirational goal, a filter through which information is gathered, and something school psychologists actively do while faced with injustice. Furthermore, it is described as a distinct approach that emphasizes fairness, equity, advocacy, and cultural awareness (Moy et al., 2014; Shriberg et al., 2008, 2010). School psychologists are placed in a critical role to advocate for marginalized students, which can be done from a leadership perspective due to the knowledge and skills they possess. Moreover, school psychologists have access to the systems and systemic forces that are involved when delivering psychological services to the school system, students, and families. Collaborating with different partners has proved to be helpful in sharing resources to support the mission and responsibility of advocating for social justice (Barrett et al., 2019).

School psychologists strongly embrace the view of themselves as active leaders in their roles (Augustyniak et al., 2016). Given the importance of understanding, supporting, and advocating for students from marginalized populations, it is imperative for school psychologists to provide leadership in this area through ongoing critical reflection and engaging in culturally responsive practices, as well as action toward equitable service delivery at the individual and systemic levels (Vera and Speight, 2003). The purpose of this chapter is to describe ways school psychologists can serve as leaders for advocating for marginalized students in schools. The chapter briefly describes the importance of supporting marginalized students and

describes individual and systemic leadership efforts school psychologists can engage in to advocate for students. Throughout the chapter, vignettes are included to illustrate examples of the practices described.

1 Importance of Advocacy for Marginalized Students

School demographics in the United States have shifted rapidly over the past decades, with schools continuing to become more diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, language, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation (Aud et al., 2013). In 2010, non-Hispanic European-American children accounted for only 60% of the population, compared to 74.6% in 1980 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). Furthermore, ethnic minority populations are expected to represent a majority in the United States by 2042. In public school, approximately 10% of students are currently considered English Language Learners (ELL; Aud et al., 2013). There are currently 13 million children living in low-income and economic marginalization (LIEM; Fontenot et al., 2018). Four to five percent of students self-identify as lesbian, gay, bi−/pansexual, transgender, queer, questioning, asexual, aromantic, or other sexual orientations, gender identities, or gender expression (LGBTQA+) (Proctor & Meyers, 2014). Family composition is also becoming increasingly diverse, with 191,000 children reportedly living with same-sex parents (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019) and 23% of children living in an only-mother household (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). Students with disabilities represent approximately 14% of the total student population (7.3 million students; NCES, 2021). Clearly student populations are reflecting a wider range of culturally and linguistically diverse identities, a trend which will likely continue throughout coming years (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

Although diversity in schools is certainly growing and is a reality (Miranda, 2014), minoritized students have faced systems of oppression that continues to marginalize them and contributes to negative academic outcomes. For instance, Hart and Risley (1995) found that by age 4, children from low-income families have heard, on average, 30 million fewer words than children from higher-SES backgrounds, which was found to be correlated with reading achievement. Poverty impacts school readiness, with less than 50% of students in LIEM possessing necessary readiness skills compared to 75% of their middle-upper class peers (Isaacs, 2012). Fifty-two percent of African American and 51% of Latino students in fourth grade scored below a basic level on NAEP reading tests (Fiester, 2010), and less than two-thirds graduated on time (Proctor & Meyers, 2014). Fewer than one in five students that are ELL meet reading and writing state standard level (Thorius & Sullivan, 2013). Students from marginalized backgrounds continue to be overrepresented special education yet underrepresented in "gifted" programs (Proctor & Meyers, 2014).

In addition to academic disadvantage, students from historically marginalized populations are placed by systems as "at-risk" for social, emotional, and behavioral challenges. Black and Brown students, as well as Latino students are more likely to receive exclusionary school-based discipline and face grade retention (Skiba et al., 2011). LGBTQA+ students face increased school-based victimization including physical and verbal harassment and assaults; these instances of victimization are associated with increased levels of depression, substance abuse, lower grades, school avoidance, and higher dropout rates (McCabe, 2014). Students with disabilities are bullied at far higher rates than peers without disabilities and report feeling less safe and included at school (Graybill et al., 2016). In addition, students with disabilities are found to drop out more frequently and receive less preparation for the transition out of high school (Proctor & Meyers, 2014).

If school psychologists are to provide high-quality educational services, the above risks must be addressed. The foundations of school psychology practice are grounded in the Professional Standards of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP, 2020). The Professional Standards make explicitly clear the need to create equitable school environments for all students, regardless of background. The Practice Model calls for "an understanding and respect for human diversity and promote effective services, advocacy, and social justice for all students, families, and schools" (NASP, 2020). This encourages practitioners to develop culturally sensitive skills in direct services for students, including interventions to support academic development and life skills (e.g., instructional strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners, evidence-based interventions targeting student social, emotional, and behavioral wellness) and indirect services and school-wide services to promote learning (e.g., policies and practices that support effective discipline and home-school collaboration, multitiered continua of services). Similarly, NASP, (2020) clearly establishes an ethical responsibility to respect the rights and welfare of all persons and "cultivate school climates that are safe and welcoming, and equitable to all persons regardless of actual or perceived characteristics, including race, ethnicity, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, immigration status, socioeconomic status, primary language, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, or other distinguishing characteristics" (p. 44). NASP explicitly embeds a call to action within school psychology training and practice, creating a critical responsibility to lead advocacy efforts for all students, especially marginalized and underserved students.

Despite the professional urgency for school psychologists to function as advocates and leaders for marginalized populations, and the growing number of students that would benefit from such efforts, action remains difficult for many practitioners. Competing daily priorities, fast-paced school environments, and growing caseloads already leave many school psychologists feeling overwhelmed so that additional leadership and advocacy work feels infeasible to many. Even when school psychologists can make time, many are unsure of what action looks like. *Why* school psychologists need to be advocacy leaders might seem obvious, but the *how, what,*

when, and *with whom* of leadership and advocacy are much less clear. To help guide school psychologists, the following sections outline specific strategies practitioners can take at the individual and systemic level to become leaders in advocating for marginalized students.

2 Individual Practices to Support Marginalized Students

Self-Awareness and Self-Reflection From an individual level, it is imperative for school psychologists to be aware of and continuously reflect on their own world-view and biases and acknowledge how this plays a role in the work they do (e.g., NASP, 2020; Shriberg et al., 2008). This can be challenging, given that implicit bias, the bias in judgment and/or behavior that results from subtle cognitive processes, operate at a level *below* conscious awareness and *without* intentional control (National Center for State Courts, 2012). As a result, implicit bias often goes *unexamined*. How can one examine something that they are unaware of? It is important to educate oneself on what implicit bias is and how it is formed. It is even more important to acknowledge that everyone is susceptible to implicit bias. It is helpful to continuously reflect and educate oneself about biases and work to actively combat them. There are excellent resources available to more fully understand how to identify implicit biases and evidence-based practices that help minimize the effects of implicit biases (see NASP (2017) list of resources). One of the resources suggested by NASP (2017) is the Implicit Association Test (Project Implicit, Harvard University; https://implicit.harvard.edu), an online tool designed to measure the strength of associations between concepts and evaluations or stereotypes. The researchers that created the IAT report that it is not intended to predict behavior at the individual level. However, it could be used to provide a way to reflect and have conversation about one's results of the test. As research has suggested, "… implicit bias is arguably one of the most significant challenges facing our profession as it influences the educational outcomes of an increasingly diverse student body" and "only when the effects of implicit bias are effectively addressed will all students have access to quality education and a positive affirming educational experience" (NASP, 2017).

Assist Others in Self-Awareness and Self-Reflection Consistent with dimension 4, promoting and participating in learning (Augustyniak, 2014) and the transformational model of leadership (Shriberg et al., 2010), school psychologists can engage in leadership efforts to support school personnel in examining their own implicit biases and providing cultural responsiveness and social justice training in the school. This could be used as an opportunity to educate and enhance school climate, rather than a punitive and reactionary practice used after a negative incident occurs. Just as school psychologists are susceptible to bias, teachers and administrators are too. By providing educational opportunities to learn about and examine implicit bias, school

psychologists can help increase school-wide awareness of the ways in which these factors impact students.

> **Example**
> Mr. Green is a school psychologist in a medium sized suburban district. With frequent discussion of racial inequalities in the media, several teachers have expressed feeling "unsure" about how to talk to their students about privilege, power, and inequalities. Mr. Green decides to conduct professional development for school staff designed to provide information on how bias and privilege can manifest in school relationships. As part of the training, Mr. Green includes some concrete suggestions for teachers and makes himself available for follow-up discussions with individual personnel.

Education on implicit bias may be particularly important in reducing instances of microaggressions often experienced by students and families from marginalized backgrounds. Microaggressions are "everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership" (Sue, 2010, p. 4), which often stem from individuals' implicit biases. Microaggressions can take the form of microinsults (insensitivity to or disregard for an individual's identity), microinvalidations (dismissing of thoughts, feelings, or experiences, of an individual from underrepresented background), or microassaults (overt discrimination) and often leave the recipient feeling invalidated, confused, or hurt by the interaction (Sue et al., 2007).

While many microaggressions are delivered unconsciously by individuals without malicious intent, the negative consequences are nonetheless very real for the recipients of microaggressions. Research has shown that microaggressions can negatively impact students' behavioral, cognitive, physical, and emotional health (Sue, 2010), in addition to negatively impacting their school relationships (Malone, 2019). In advocating for students that are minoritized, school psychologists can educate themselves and others on microaggressions, helping minimize invalidating experiences for students based on identity factors.

Leading efforts to examine implicit bias and instances of microaggressions within staff and students is difficult. Discussions of microaggressions in particular are highly controversial in nature and may not be well received by some. It is suggested that when one takes this on, that they are comfortable doing so. At the same time, discomfort should not be an excuse to not engage in self-examination at all. While it may be challenging to discuss implicit bias or white privilege, depending on one's own awareness, comfort level, and context, school psychologists can still function as advocates by leading education on other topics that could be informative, contribute to a supportive environment, and further the mission of advocacy for marginalized populations. In helping raise awareness of implicit biases and

microaggressions, school psychologists can lead others by establishing a safe and supportive environment for students from all backgrounds (dimension 5; Augustyniak, 2014). For example, Malone (2019) suggests the following recommendations:

- Acknowledge when a microaggression has occurred
- Understand that intent does not equal impact
- Speak to the behavior, not the person
- Ask questions to make the invisible visible

Knowledge and Understanding of Factors that Influence Service Delivery While school psychologists might be well positioned to lead advocacy efforts for marginalized students, they are not automatic "experts" in culture, diversity, social justice, or understanding the experiences of all students. Understanding the influence these factors exert on practice could help school psychologists be more equipped to take a leadership stance in the advocacy process. This practice is consistent with school leadership practice 4, promoting and participating in learning and development (Augustyniak, 2014).

Suggestions from NASP (2017):

- Support school staff in the implementation of culturally responsive academic and behavioral MTSS
- Increase positive representation of people of color (and people from marginalized backgrounds) throughout school building
- Emphasize professional objectivity
- Show professional accountability when incidences of implicit bias occur
- Review disproportionality data in a variety of areas (e.g., discipline practices and outcomes, special education eligibility, representation in gifted programs) regularly
- Acknowledge and disrupt instances of microaggressions experienced by students and staff

Example

Jo, a school psychologist in a large, urban school district with a large number of students that are immigrants and students from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds, was recently tasked with assisting schools in implementing trauma-informed practices. Jo thought it would be helpful to educate teachers and administrators about what trauma is, the effects of trauma, and how it might impact students' functioning at school. To do this, she provided didactic instruction and facilitated small group discussions with administrators and then with teachers. For both groups, she shared copies of her presentation materials, readings about the topic, and additional resources.

Collaborate with Staff and Students School psychologists do not necessarily need to assume sole responsibility for educating others around issues of marginalization. Collaborating with others to provide information to others in the school is also a great way to gain buy in, improve sustainability, and allocate resources effectively (dimension 2, resource strategically; Augustyniak, 2014). Many other professionals within schools have extensive knowledge that may help enrich education and professional development. Collaboration can be particularly powerful when students become involved, allowing students to identify meaningful issues within their schools and feel connected to and empowered by staff.

> **Example**
> Ms. Lee is a school psychologist at Sunshine High School. Recently it was brought to Ms. Lee's attention by the students that many people in the school misuse terms related to sexuality and gender and do not honor students' pronoun use. With the support of the principal, Ms. Lee and students worked together to create a presentation describing accurate terminology, common misconceptions about sexuality and gender, and strategies to support all students, including LGBTQ+ students. After Ms. Lee and the students presented in several health classes, students reported to feel comfortable and empowered in taking the lead and presenting this information to their peers and teachers in other classes.

Enhance Student Connectedness Students' connectedness to adults and peers in schools is important and related to academic, social, and emotional functioning (e.g., Roeser et al., 2000). This is particularly important for students from marginalized backgrounds. Students of color are significantly less likely to feel connected to school adults and report less care, support, and encouragement compared to their White counterparts (e.g., Anyon et al., 2016; Bottiani et al., 2016). Research has also suggested that poor relationships between educators and marginalized students, particularly students of color, is one of several causes to racial discipline gaps. Serving as a mentor or helping others learn to serve as mentors for students can help to improve the quality of student-adult relationships in schools. The school counseling literature suggests that students who report having a responsive mental health professional with whom they had a relationship and could turn to in the school improves their feelings of connectedness and safety (Lapan et al., 2014). Given that school psychologists provide intervention and therapeutic services for students, they can also contribute to supporting students as a mentor.

School psychologists can advocate for student clubs/organizations that aim to enhance connectedness among students. For example, the Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSA; formerly known as Gay-Straight Alliance) is a student-led extracurricular club focusing on LGBTQA+ identity, support, and advocacy (Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network [GLSEN], n.d.). While the Equal Access

Act (1984) protects the right of students participating in GSA clubs, people within the school and broader community have tried to prevent the formation of GSAs. School psychologists could serve as leaders in their school community by helping form or chair the GSA at their school/district. Research shows that students who attended schools with GSAs were less likely to feel unsafe due to their sexual orientation or gender expression and LGBTQA+ students reported less discrimination (GLSEN, n.d.).

> **Example**
>
> Mr. Plume, a new school psychologist in a small-sized, rural district learns that there is no GSA in the high school he currently works in. He raises this to administrators, who respond "there are no gay students in our school." This is likely an inaccurate assumption, as students may not have identified themselves because they may perceive the school as an unsafe environment to do so. Mr. Plume believes that he is in a position to challenge the administrators' assumptions. He also knows the research that indicates GSAs are positive for school climate for all students, including students who identify as LGBTQA+. Mr. Plume leads efforts to inform students of what a GSA is and prepare an initial survey to gather student interest. As part of his advocacy, Mr. Plume provides deidentified survey data to the administrators to show them empirical evidence that interest in the club exists. After being approached by a few students who expressed great interest in leading the club, Mr. Plume worked with the students to get the club up and running and then agreed to serve as faculty chair of the club.

Engagement and Outreach to Families   As outlined by NASP (2017), school psychologists should take initiative to understand students' cultural background. They should also strive to improve a cultural match between educational and psychological practices and student identity and background. To better understand students' identity, culture, and background and improve family-school collaboration efforts, it is important to engage students' families, who may also be marginalized, in the educational process. Schools are less likely to engage diverse families, often due to the misconceptions by schools that families of marginalized students "value education less" or are "less interested" in their child's schooling (Blanchett et al., 2009). Since research suggests that schools make fewer efforts to make parent engagement culturally relevant for families from diverse backgrounds, caregivers mays perceive that they are not welcome in the school environment, and additional barriers make it difficult to navigate the educational context (e.g., discrimination, bias, and less social capital) (Ong-Dean, 2009), school psychologists can lead in these areas by acknowledging this and taking actionable steps to reduce these barriers.

Considerations when reaching out to families:

- What are my preconceived notions or biases about the marginalized families I work with?

- How do I conceptualize family engagement?
- Are my efforts to engage families culturally sensitive?
- What method am I using to reach families (e.g., phone, email, text, note home)?
- Am I considering what families may face when being invited to engage with the school?
- What am I doing to reduce these barriers?
- How am I collecting family input in overall school culture (e.g., school climate and practices)?

3   Systems-Level Advocacy for Marginalized Students

While working at the individual level is an important (and necessary) component of advocating for marginalized populations, school psychologists do not work in a vacuum. As practitioners, school psychologists must also work as advocates as a member of a larger school system. This requires school psychologists to work collaboratively with others across a variety of teams in order to create and sustain change, all while balancing needs of the school with the needs of students. An important function of the school psychologists at the systems level is to ensure that the needs of school systems do not overshadow the needs of students, particularly the needs of marginalized students, who are historically and currently impacted by systemic inequalities. School psychology leadership "seeks to change the status quo for purposes of breaking down institutional barriers to student learning" (Ratts & Greenleaf, 2018, p. 2). As leaders, school psychologists should guide school teams in examining systems-level factors within their schools and advocate for necessary changes that can benefit marginalized students. While this task may seem overwhelming, school psychologists can start by taking concrete steps in evaluating systemic level factors within their schools and districts.

School Materials The foundation of all systems-level school practices should include culturally appropriate and responsive materials. School psychologists should already strive to use culturally responsive materials and practices within their own work, but they can also function as leaders in advocating for school-wide culturally sensitive, inclusive materials (Briggs, 2013). Consistent with leadership dimension 3 (planning, coordinating, and evaluating teaching and curriculum; Augustyniak, 2014), school psychologists can help evaluate the curriculum for culturally sensitive material at a classroom level, utilizing formal tools (e.g., Culturally Responsive Curriculum Scorecard; Bryan-Gooden et al., 2019; Curricula Appropriateness Scale; Howard & Weiler, 2003) and/or empowering teachers to evaluate their own curriculum. This allows for diverse representation and has the potential to help students from marginalized backgrounds feel safer within their environments (Snapp et al., 2015). Additionally, less marginalized students can be exposed to diverse perspectives. By advocating and leading others in creating culturally inclusive classrooms,

school psychologists can help ensure that students feel represented within their classrooms and learning materials.

> **Example**
> A parent reaches out to Ms. Bee, the school psychologist at Central Middle School, with concerns that their child with a physical disability feels "different" than the "normal" kids in his class. At a curriculum meeting, Ms. Bee collaborates with teachers and administrators to brainstorm ways to include representation of individuals with varying abilities within classrooms. The team decides to include books that depict students with disabilities into the reading curriculum, ensure that positive role models with disabilities are included in history units, and buy inclusive classroom decorations that depict students with varied physical abilities.

Materials used outside of the classroom, including decorations, celebrations, and communication with families, should also be evaluated for inclusiveness. School psychologists should strive to create an atmosphere that acknowledges and validates the cultural experiences of students from traditionally marginalized backgrounds. In creating environments that feel welcoming and collaborative, school psychologists can help ensure that students feel connected to their schools rather than excluded and/or different. Materials used for schoolwide communication should utilize representative and inclusive language, helping to create an atmosphere that emphasizes respect for students and families of all backgrounds. By addressing these changes on a school-wide basis, school psychologists can help inspire and lead others in advocating for marginalized populations.

> **Example**
> Mr. Sommer notices that all communication sent home is addressed to "parents." Recognizing that student family composition is diverse, he asks at a staff meeting if official paperwork can be changed to use "caregiver" instead.

Considerations that might guide evaluation of school materials:

- Do history curricula cover material related to non-Eurocentric events?
- Do English curricula include a variety of diverse authors?
- Do science curricula acknowledge historically ignored contributors to scientific discovery?
- Do health curricula contain LGBTQ friendly terminology?
- Do school enrollment forms contain gender diverse options?

- Does communication with families acknowledge diverse family compositions?
- Do school decorations, photos, and celebrations represent a variety of backgrounds?
- Are materials translated into families' preferred or native languages?

Multi-tiered Systems of Support In addition to being inclusive, school materials should be examined to ensure that all students are benefitting equitably. Through the use of evidence-based practices such as Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), school psychologists can help evaluate the impact of their school's universal curriculum to ensure that the academic and behavioral needs of all students, including those from marginalized backgrounds, are being met (Avant, 2016; Shriberg & Moy, 2014). The MTSS model (which encompasses other models such as PBIS and RTI) calls for a three-tiered approach to providing academic and behavioral services, with students receiving progressively more support based on their need as identified by universal behavioral and academic screening. At a foundational level, MTSS calls for culturally responsive universal curricula and behavioral expectations to be provided to all students (Tier 1). Students identified as needing additional support receive targeted, evidenced-based interventions (Tier 2) or intensive supports (Tier 3). The use of an MTSS model helps schools move away from a traditional student deficit model, instead moving toward an ecological perspective and creating system-wide accountability for student outcomes (Li & Vazquez-Nuttall, 2009).

The use of an MTSS framework helps increase equitable outcomes for marginalized students in many ways. For one, the use of MTSS has been shown to reduce inappropriate special education referrals in culturally and linguistic students by providing curricula to all student needs and identifying a need for support before the referrals to remedial services (Li & Vazquez-Nuttall, 2009; Castro-Villarreal et al., 2016). Thus, schools can ensure that underserved students are receiving proactive supports and interventions. In a behavioral sense, the use of MTSS has been shown to decrease disproportionality in office discipline referrals by proactively teaching behavioral expectations and proving social-emotional learning to all students (Noltemeyer et al., 2019). Through the ideal implementation of MTSS structures, schools embed cultural responsiveness within all levels of policy and help reduce the impact of implicit bias by creating objective criteria for behavioral and academic referrals, ensuring that marginalized students are not unfairly penalized for cultural factors (Avant, 2016; Castro-Villarreal, 2016; Naser et al., 2018). School psychologists are in a particularly good position to lead collaborative MTSS implementation teams in ways consistent with Augustyniak's (2014) five leadership dimensions (Eagle et al., 2015):

- School psychologists can help set goals and expectations (dimension 1) by collaboratively developing and communicating school-wide goals for behavior and academic improvement.
- Leaning on their extensive training in MTSS, school psychologists can help resource strategically (dimension 2) by provide information and resources that facilitate implementation.

- In planning, coordinating, and evaluating teacher and the curriculum (dimension 3), school psychologists can manage and monitor student-level data to evaluate universal curriculum for bias.
- Consistent with promoting and participating in teacher learning and development (dimension 4), school psychologists can provide training and consultation on the use of various interventions at all three tiers.
- Finally, school psychologists can ensure an orderly and supportive environment (dimension 5; Augustyniak, 2014) by aligning their school's MTSS framework with evidence-based practices that reflect sensitivity and concern for traditionally marginalized populations.

Importantly, MTSS implementation requires significant structural change and high levels of staff and administrative support. This makes taking a transformational leadership approach crucial in collaborating and inspiring others to make systems-level changes within their schools and districts.

Example
Jaime, a school psychologist in a large urban district, is a member of her school's MTSS team. Throughout the year, the team has been collecting academic and screening data. Jaime has noticed that students of color are being disproportionately identified by the systems being used as "at-risk" in math, and she shows the team how she reached this conclusion by modelling her data analysis strategy. Jaime suggests to the team that they reexamine the universal math curriculum to determine if it is meeting the needs of as many students as possible. Jaime also leads the team in setting a data-driven goal for reducing disproportionality.

Example
Ramone, a school psychologist in a medium-sized suburban district, is a member of their school's PBIS team. Currently, the team has well-developed academic practices in place and school-wide behavioral expectations. However, the school does not currently implement behavioral screening. Noticing that students of color and students whose English is a second language are disproportionately referred for special education based on behavior, Ramone advocates for adopting behavioral screening to help identify students that may need additional support and implement preventative interventions before the need to refer for special education services. Additionally, implementing a data-driven process to identify students in need of additional support reduces subjectivity in the referral process.

School Policies/Procedure Embedded within the implementation of a culturally responsive MTSS model is the examination of broad school policies (Briggs, 2013;

Shriberg & Moy, 2014). School policies should be fair, explicit, and consistent and in line with best practices; however, school policy does not often reflect this ideal. In fact, many school-wide policies have the potential to unfairly impact traditionally marginalized students (Rogers & O'Bryon, 2008). School psychologists can take the lead in critically examining all school policies, helping school teams recognize harmful policies, and advocating for the implementation of fair alternatives that contribute to equitable outcomes across the student body. The identification of problematic school policies and procedures can be aided by MTSS data, which should be examined for disproportionality. In taking the lead in advocating that ineffective, harmful, or unjust school policies be addressed, school psychologists can help develop a safe and supportive environment (leadership dimension 5) by helping ensure marginalized populations are not further disadvantaged by school policy.

> **Example**
> Dr. Noname works as a school psychologist in a public school district, which has decided to adopt school uniforms. Families are required to purchase the uniforms, and students face disciplinary consequences for uniform infractions. Several families struggle to afford the uniforms, resulting in higher rates of discipline referrals for students that are economically marginalized. Dr. Noname recognizes this and raises this issue to administration.

Also consistent with ensuring a safe and supportive environment (dimension 5; Augustyniak, 2014), school psychologists can also assist in the proactive development of explicit procedures that address issues faced by marginalized students. Students from marginalized backgrounds are at higher risk for being targeted (Rogers & O'Bryon, 2008; Williams & Greenleaf, 2012), necessitating that school staff effectively know how to manage these incidents. To help prepare staff, school psychologists can help develop training or professional development that addresses how to manage incidents related to different identity factors, helping to address lack of confidence in dealing with incidents of bullying or harassment (Bradshaw et al., 2013; Greytak et al., 2013). Through these school-wide trainings and the development of specific policy, school psychologists can take the lead in ensuring that staff responses to incidents of bullying or harassment based on factors such as limited wardrobe, religious-related clothing, gender identity, or sexual history which are appropriate and culturally sensitive. School psychologists should advocate for the development of clear and explicit policies that protect marginalized populations from discrimination or harassment.

While all school policies should be monitored for equity, the following policies and procedures may warrant special consideration and closer examination:

- Do school discipline policies disproportionately impact marginalized populations?

- What are school procedures for referring students for special education evaluation?
- What are the policies and procedures around grade retention?
- What are the policies and procedures around placement of students into AP classes or gifted and talented program?
- Are staff trained to appropriately respond to instances of bullying and harassment related to identity factors?
- Do proposed new school policies and procedures have evidence to support their use with culturally and linguistically diverse students?

Ethical, Professional, and Legal Guidelines Although it may be difficult to develop fair alternative policies and practices that can be implemented to create equity for students, school psychologists can take guidance from various professional resources. NASP's ethical codes, for example, can provide a helpful framework for guiding school psychologists in their advocacy work, encouraging school psychologists to "assume a proactive role in identifying social injustices that affect children and youth and schools, and they strive to reform systems-level patterns of injustice" (NASP, 2020, p. 53). School psychologists can take the lead in advocating for systems level change by incorporating aspects of these ethical principles within school policies.

In addition to professional ethical codes that provide aspirational goals, school psychologists can also look to professional bodies for specific guidance related to systemic change. NASP releases position statements related to working with marginalized populations frequently, including working with low SES, hard of hearing, indigenous communities, and many more (https://www.nasponline.org/research-and-policy/policy-priorities/position-statements). In addition, both the American Psychological Association (APA) and American Counseling Association (ACA) have released multicultural and advocacy competencies, both of which can prove important resources for school psychologists looking to structure their school's systemic practices in ways that support marginalized students (APA, 2017; Ratts et al., 2007). By maintaining up-to-date knowledge on these professional guidelines, school psychologists can help educate and inform others regarding current standards on how to best advocate for marginalized students, positioning themselves as social justice leaders within their schools.

In addition to knowledge of their own professional standards, school psychologists should also remain up to date on current legal issues that have the potential to impact marginalized students. The law often fluctuates at federal, state, and local levels, requiring that schools remain abreast of legal implications for their students, for better or for worse (Briggs, 2013). Laws such as transgender bathroom laws, anti-discrimination laws, special education law, and immigration policies have the potential to either support or further marginalize some students (Jacob, 2013; Lemke, 2017). School psychologists can start by being knowledgeable regarding these legal issues; they can take knowledge one step further by advocating that fair laws become reflected and ingrained in their school policies and help lead school

teams in minimizing the potential for harm resulting from unjust legal regulations (Ratts & Greenleaf, 2018).

By continuously remaining up to date on the latest changes in ethical, legal, and professional guidelines, school psychologists can help ensure that their school policies are aligned with current standards in how to best serve marginalized students. Consistent with leadership dimension 5 (ensuring an orderly and support environment; Augustyniak, 2014), school psychologists can advocate as members and leaders of their teams to align their school policies with current guidelines in the field that facilitate safe environments for all students. By helping create school-wide policies and practices based on these professional standards, school psychologists help ensure that the needs of marginalized students are being protected and upheld by educational institutions.

Example

Ms. Foster, an early career school psychologist, has been seeing an increase in special education referrals for multilingual students. In seeking to develop explicit and fair assessment procedures within her school (a requirement of her professional ethics), Ms. Foster consults various guidelines for the assessment of culturally and linguistically diverse students. She reviews relevant special education law (IDEIA) for regulations surrounding CDL evaluations. She also refers to various NASP resources for suggestions and guidance on best practices for evaluating multilingual students. After reviewing these resources, she is able to meet with the school leadership team and develop school procedures that align with current guidelines in the field.

Advocacy For and With Students   While school psychologists can certainly function as independent leaders, the transformational model of leadership calls for a focus on growth and personal development, in both the leader and within other members of the team. In addition, distributed leadership calls for the sharing of power among different stakeholders, allowing school psychologists to further resource strategically in their advocacy efforts (Dimension 2; Augustyniak, 2014; Augustyniak et al., 2016). Therefore, while a school psychologist can certainly be a leader in advocating *for* others at a systemic level, as described above, it also becomes important for school psychologists to become leaders in advocating *with* others. The ACA calls for advocacy on behalf of and with others at all levels of advocacy, including the individual, school, and public level (Ratts et al., 2007). In their advocacy, school psychologists should "consider if and when [they] should speak on behalf of others as opposed to working in collaboration to help create and support a platform for other to speak for themselves more effectively" (Shriberg & Moy, 2014, p. 26). This calls for the shifting of traditional leadership dynamics toward the sharing of leadership power with invested stakeholders, allowing marginalized students and individuals to create socially just, meaningful change that will be sustainable in the absence of the school psychologist.

Advocacy *with* others in schools starts by recognizing and empowering the students themselves, helping to support and encourage traditionally marginalized students to create their own change (Briggs, 2013; Shriberg & Moy, 2014). By empowering students to advocate for themselves rather than assume the role of primary advocate, school psychologists can facilitate the creation of socially just schools through student action (Pearrow & Pollack, 2009). School psychologists can help and encourage students to take their own action against unfair systemic practices, as identified by the students themselves. This necessarily involves sharing power and resources with students, which school psychologists can do and encourage others in the schools to do through facilitating empowerment-focused clubs, afterschool programs, and school-based social justice projects (Russell et al., 2009; Zimmerman et al., 2018). In this way, school psychologists can lead with instead of for, reducing the impact their own biases may have and recognizing the efficacy of marginalized students in creating change. School psychologists should lead by example in allowing this sharing of power, which may be difficult for many educational professionals to accept given tradition teacher-student roles. This view of leadership involves taking less of a leadership role, instead of empowering the students themselves to take the lead in addressing issues that most impact them.

Suggestions for student empowerment:

- Encourage students to form groups and clubs to further their own advocacy interests.
- Actively solicit feedback from students on what social justice issues need to be addressed at their school.
- Create opportunities for authentic student leadership (e.g., clubs, projects, classwork).
- Encourage staff to take a genuine and supportive stance toward student advocacy work.

In alignment with an ecological approach, advocacy with others and sharing of power should also incorporate stakeholders beyond the school building, particularly the caregivers of students from marginalized backgrounds (Cooper et al., 2010; Li & Vazquez-Nuttall, 2009). The development of strong family-school collaboration has been shown to impact all students' academic outcomes and social emotional health (Sheridan et al., 2019), including students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Kratochwill et al., 2009). Although a collaborative approach and sharing of power often requires a difficult systemic shift from traditional models of family-school relationships, "school psychologists can be key players on leadership teams who aspire to develop family-school partnerships," helping other school staff incorporate parents as true decision-making partners (Jones & Hazuka, 2012, p. 208). As part of this intentional leadership team, school psychologists can help strengthen family-school collaboration by revising tradition school-family roles and responsibilities, developing a collaborative school structure, and recognizing family marginalization (Cooper et al., 2010; Jones & Hazuka, 2012). Through collaboration in advocacy work with families and caregivers, school psychologists can help identify targets for social justice change that impact marginalized students

and families across settings and utilize a shared leadership approach to address barriers outside of the school. Again, school psychologists can lead other educational professionals by example, setting the stage meaningfully including caregivers in advocating against systemic marginalization.

Outreach and Engagement with the Community Going beyond even the home level, school psychologists as leaders in social justice advocacy should take steps to create and sustain partnerships with crucial community organizations to help develop even stronger systems of support for marginalized students (Jones & Hazuka, 2012; Williams & Greenleaf, 2012). Organizations such as community mental health centers, hospitals, police departments, or charities can offer opportunities for marginalized students and families to access resources (particularly mental health resources) and get connected with advocacy efforts themselves (Briggs, 2013; Hess et al., 2017). By including and empowering community organizations within school advocacy work, school psychologists can again help lead in collaboration with others to create change for marginalized populations and providing for equitable access to services. By helping to facilitate these connections, school psychologists can help lead the effort to create even broader systemic supports for marginalized students and families.

Suggestions for collaboration with community:

- Invite local organizations to speak at school events to address issues currently faced by students and families.
- Collaborate with community organizations to distribute resources that may be helpful to students and families.
- Maintain a list of active community organizations available for students and families.
- Reach out to community organizations for guidance on what advocacy efforts the school could engage in.
- Refer students and families to relevant community resources as necessary.
- Develop and maintain professional partnerships with community organizations in the area.

Example
Jordan works as a school psychologist in a district with a large population of students that have documented and undocumented immigration status. Recognizing the challenges this presents for many students, Jordan initiates a group for immigrant students. Upon the suggestion of the students, Jordan restructures to allow for family attendance. When several issues are raised that go beyond a school psychologist's expertise, Jordan reaches out to a local community center that frequently works with documented and undocumented immigrants, and individuals that are displaced, refugees, or asylum-seekers, Jordan asks them to participate in the group and provide resources. Jordan continues to facilitate the organization of the group and provide the space but transfers primary leadership to the students and families, allowing them to collaborate with the community agency in meeting important goals.

4 Conclusion

School psychologists are well positioned to serve as a leader and advocate for marginalized students. Emerging research suggests that the ability for school psychologists to emphasize values and target growth in other team members, while working toward achieving positive outcomes for students and systems, are important characteristics of leaders. These characteristics are well aligned with the field's mission of social justice. By striving to be an advocate and leader that creates change within themselves and others, school psychologists can also work to address structural inequities within schools at a systemic level in order to create environments that benefit all students and sustain equity for marginalized populations.

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School Psychology Leadership in Advocacy for the Profession

John Kelly

1 School Psychologists as Leaders

At the most basic level, leadership theories can be summarized as falling under either the "leaders are born, not developed" or "leaders are developed, not born" categories. The reality is that leadership development probably falls between these two extremes. "Leadership" is one of the most widely researched social science constructs, with multiple theories of leadership development emerging from this research (Shriberg et al., 2005). Unfortunately, very few "discipline specific" models have been developed, particularly related to the field of school psychology. According to Augustyniak (2014), "Preparing school psychologists for leadership practice inarguably resonates with expressed values of the profession and, because effective school psychologists often serve as catalysts for a variety of change, is intuitively valid from a functional perspective" (p. 28). The need for leadership skills among school psychologists is incontrovertible. The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), in the *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services* (NASP, 2020) or NASP *Practice Model*, advocates for a broad and comprehensive practice of school psychology. School psychologists are encouraged to use their expertise and training to be "educational leaders" across the direct services, indirect services, whole school services, and systems services domains. In fact, the NASP Strategic Plan (2017) has established "leadership development" as a strategic goal for the Association. The NASP has defined leadership

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development as an effort to equip school psychologists with leadership skills so that they may effect change at the local, state, and national levels.

Augustyniak et al. (2016) discuss the concept of "distributed leadership" in schools which posits that the level of demand for leaders to address the myriad of critical issues in schools requires a "distribution" of responsibilities based upon areas of expertise. Augustyniak and colleagues propose that "given school psychology training and skills that are both specialized and widely applicable within the school situation, the involvement of school psychologists as distributed leaders is vital" (p. 371). Their study on school psychologists' self-perception of their leadership qualities as compared to the perception of school administrators and teachers yielded interesting results. While the study was limited by certain factors, one robust outcome was that school psychologists perceive themselves as active leaders in their professional roles.

2   Models of Leadership

To understand school psychologist leadership and leadership behaviors, Shriberg et al. (2010) surveyed school psychology leaders on how they would define leadership and what constitutes the primary characteristics and behaviors of effective school psychology leaders. In relation to perception of characteristics and behaviors, findings indicated that effective school psychology leaders are characterized as being competent, knowledgeable, and possessing strong interpersonal skills and personal character. Knowing that leaders within the field of school psychology express these qualities and characteristics of effective leadership, a brief analysis of existing models may prove useful in identifying a context for leadership development. While there are no discipline-specific leadership models for school psychology, Augustyniak (2014) posits that the "Information Processing Model," "Trait Model," and "Transformational Model" of leadership seem to provide frameworks congruent with desired qualities of a school psychology leader identified by Shriberg et al. (2010).

2.1   Information Processing Models of Leadership

Information processing models of leadership (Lord & Maher, 2002) propose that leaders emerge based upon a combination of professional knowledge and expertise along with situational perceptions held by the leader and by the followers. The situational perceptions are generally guided by cognitive schemata or preconceived ideas and frameworks about how leaders should behave. These schemas guide the behavior of the leader, as well as the follower. The essence of leadership is that others perceive you as a leader. Leadership schemas develop based upon experience with and previous knowledge of leaders. Therefore, the leader's behavior builds a

basis for future influence through its impact upon the followers' perceptions of leadership. They are held in memory and allow us to make decisions or judgments about individuals. Identifying an individual as a leader involves matching certain characteristics or traits of this individual to a schema or prototype of a leader held in memory (see Trait Theory of Leadership below). Individuals are often perceived as leaders by others based upon their expert knowledge and their association with positive outcomes for a group (Lord & Maher, 2002).

Identified leaders in school psychology often possess a high level of knowledge and expertise in topics related to the field (Augustyniak, 2014). However, this knowledge alone is not sufficient to result in the emergence of a leader. Necessary conditions include the potential leader's perception of their ability to effectively lead, perception of their relationship to others, and perception of their role in accomplishing activities and goals important to followers. Leaders in school psychology perceive themselves to be able to positively influence others and engage in behaviors that result in attaining goals for the group (self-schema). Reciprocally, these leaders are perceived by the group as possessing the knowledge and skills to achieve the goals of the group (leadership schema) (Augustyniak, 2014). Behaviors engaged in by the identified leader and their association with goal attainment reinforce the schemas of the group (Lord & Maher, 2002). It is this mutual process that results in the emergence of leaders. Augustyniak et al. (2016) study regarding teachers' and administrators' perception of school psychologists' leadership qualities has direct implications for leadership development. This study found that while school psychologists perceived themselves as leaders (self-schema), that perception was not always matched by the administrators and teachers. It was proposed that school psychologists' "behavior" did not always reinforce the perception of being a "leader."

Central features of this model that result in the advent of a school psychology leader include the individual's ability to attain appropriate school psychological knowledge and expertise; the belief on the part of the leader that they are in a position to effectively lead and influence the group; the perception or schema on the part of the group that the individual possesses characteristic or traits associated with leadership; and the ability of the leader to seek and use feedback to modify their schemas to meet the needs of the group (e.g., talking frequently to the group, providing information, focusing on goals). Essentially, this model posits that the processing of information, both factual/technical and subjective, is critical for leadership development.

Case Example: The Informational Expert Thomas has been a school psychologist within a suburban school for the past 15 years. He works with three other school psychologists, who are all supervised by an administrator. Thomas' position is the same as the other school psychologists; however, he is considered to be the "lead" school psychologist and others, including administrators and teachers, often look to him for professional guidance. While Thomas does not have a formal position of leadership, he has developed extensive knowledge regarding children's mental health factors and their impact upon learning. He is more than willing to share this

information with others and has conducted several workshops for his fellow school psychologists, teachers, administrators, and parents. In fact, Thomas often attends conferences and other professional development events so that he can bring useful information back to the school. Thomas has become an important part of the decision-making team at school.

Based upon the Information Processing Model of Leadership (Lord & Maher, 2002), Thomas has become a leader within his school because of the informational expertise that he has developed over time and his behavioral interactions with others (e.g., consulting with fellow school psychologists, teacher, and administrators, providing workshops for others). He is engaging in leader schemata, or what others think a leader should "act" like, which results in the perception of being a "leader" by others. As Thomas is given the opportunity to engage in "leadership" behaviors, he develops his own schemata of what behaviors he should continue. This interaction between Thomas' perceptions and schemata and those of others surrounding him form the basis of the Information Processing Model of Leadership.

2.2 Trait Models of Leadership

The concept of a unique set of traits or immutable characteristic that are possessed by a leader dates to the mid-nineteenth century. From Thomas Carlyle's "Great Man" Theory (Carlyle, 1841/2007) to Francis Galton in *Hereditary Genius* (1869), early work proposed that leadership was a unique property of extraordinary individuals and suggested that the traits which leaders possessed were immutable and could not be developed (Galton, 1869). While these theorists were influential in shaping the dialogue around leadership qualities, researchers began to recognize that specific traits identified in good leaders did not always predict leadership across situations. In 1948, Stogdill proposed that leadership exists between people in specific situations and that individuals who are leaders in one situation may not be leaders in other situations.

What has emerged in current thinking around leadership traits reflects the interaction of specific individual characteristic and mediating environmental influence, which impact the effectiveness of leaders. Zaccaro et al. (2004) have proposed a model which accounts for the effects of leader attributes and performance. The Model of Leader Attributes and Leader Performance (Zaccaro et al., 2004) provides a conceptual framework for the interaction of leadership attributes and environmental influences that impact leadership outcomes. The model draws upon the work of early trait theorists regarding identified attributes correlated with effective leadership and the influence of environment. Within this model, trait-like attributes, such as cognitive abilities, personality, and motives, are categorized as "distal" attributes because they are generally not impacted by environmental influences and exhibit strong cross-situational contributions to leader outcomes. However, the model also

accounts for "proximal" factors, such as knowledge or skills possessed by the leader. These individual differences suggest that the characteristics that distinguish effective leaders from non-effective leaders are not necessarily stable through the life span, implying that these traits may be developed.

While the following list of attributes is not exhaustive, all these factors have been found to be positively correlated with effective leadership (Bass, 1990; Hoffman et al., 2011; Judge et al., 2002; McClelland & Boyatzis, 1982).

Distal factors	Proximal factors
Extraversion	Interpersonal skills
Conscientiousness	Problem-solving skills
Openness	Decision making skills
Honesty/integrity	Management skills
Charisma	Technical knowledge
Intelligence	
Creativity	
Need for power	

According to Augustyniak (2014), distal and proximal attributes contribute to the flexibility of the leader's behavioral response to challenges. She proposes that "because proximal attributes can be altered substantially by training and experience, they are the implicated targets for curriculum designed to improve leadership outcomes" (Augustyniak, 2014, p. 20) in school psychology.

Case Example: Leadership Traits Katie is often described as a "powerhouse" by her colleagues. She is an outgoing school psychologist who seems to light up the room whenever she is present. Children seem to gravitate toward her in school, as she is known to provide fun and creative projects to work on. Katie describes herself as someone who has always wanted to be leader since she was a child. She was the captain of her high school soccer team and continued playing when she went to college. Katie is very good at problem-solving and is organizing professional development events for teachers and staff, and she guest lectures on school psychology practice and child development at her local university. In her first year at her school, she recognized a need for developing emotional regulation techniques in many of her students. After convincing school leadership, Katie began implementing an evidence-based whole-school mindfulness program, which both teachers and parents alike have noticed considerable improvement in student well-being. Katie conducted pre- and post-program evaluations of this initiative and published the results. When a research project related to developing a social and emotional whole-school program was proposed, Katie was the first person to be recommended to lead this by her administrator.

Katie possesses many of the distal and proximal characteristics of a leader (e.g., outgoing, self-assured, creative, driven, good management, and problem-solving skills). Because she displays many of these characteristics, Katie is thought of as a leader by many of her peers.

2.3   Transformational Models of Leadership

Transformational leadership (Burns, 1978) is a form of leadership that elevates the beliefs and motives of others and supports them in achieving higher levels of functioning (Avolio, 1999). Since Burns introduced the concept of a "transformational leader," research in this area has grown to become the most extensively studied model of leadership (Barling et al., 2010). Transformational leadership comprises four dimensions: *idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration,* and *intellectual stimulation* (Bass & Riggio, 2006). When leaders display idealized influence, they behave as role models and stimulate the trust and respect of followers. Leaders who engage in inspirational motivation communicate high expectations, are optimistic with regard to what followers can achieve, and energize others to go beyond minimally accepted standards. These leaders recognize and adapt to others' individual needs and abilities. Finally, when such leaders engage in intellectual stimulation, they encourage followers to think independently and contribute their own thoughts and ideas (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

According to Augustyniak (2014), "consideration of transformational leader models suggest that school psychology leaders equally reflect on and invest in their organization and its members as they do in themselves" (p. 22). In fact, school psychologists seem to perceive and align their role closely to the transformational leader model (Augustyniak et al., 2016). Once they recognize their school needs to change systematically to improve student outcomes, transformational leaders seek and create opportunities to share ownership in collaborative strategic planning (Stollar et al., 2008). Bennis (2007) identified six competencies that serve as target outcomes of transformational leadership in school psychology: (a) leaders create (or facilitate) a sense of mission; (b) they motivate others to join them in that mission; (c) they create an interpersonal environment wherein others can be successful; (d) they generate trust and optimism; (e) they develop other leaders; and (f) they get results. It is through these competencies that the leader exerts a positive influence on the group.

Case Example: The Transformational Leader   Amy grew up in a rural area of South Carolina. Her family was poor, and she knew what it felt like to come from "the wrong side of the tracks." However, growing up, school was her "safe place." This is where she felt valued and encouraged. Amy developed a love for education and a sense for the power that a good education provides. After graduating from college with a degree in teaching, she went to work back in her small rural community in South Carolina. However, she noticed the barriers to education caused by poor literacy and mental health issues and felt that she needed more knowledge to be able to truly help. Amy returned to a university to complete her degree in school psychology and learned evidence-based practices for addressing mental health issues. Amy saw education as a social equity issue and believed that the opportunity to succeed at learning was crucial for all children, no matter what their background.

Amy was able to work within her schools to run programs teaching social skills and using cognitive behavioral techniques to help prevent depression and anxiety. She taught this in conjunction with teaching staff to increase their skills and understanding. At the same time, with the help of parent-volunteers, she was able to implement a reading program for small group of students that was so successful it inspired other teachers to do the same. As the school's literacy levels significantly improved, the programs gained the attention of administrators and eventually politicians to extend it to other schools. Amy was able to inspire others with her story and her belief in the power of education. Others shared Amy's passion for wanting to help schools to truly address these important barriers to education and advocated for her methods to be implemented in similar schools.

Amy was a transformational leader by developing a vision based upon her values and beliefs. This vision resonated with her colleagues who trusted that Amy was genuine in her desire to help the community. Shared responsibility and leadership resulted in the development of effective programs for addressing mental health issues and for teaching literacy.

3   School Psychology Training and Leadership Development

School psychologists work in a variety of settings from preschool through secondary school. Some school psychologists work in single school settings, while others work within the school system and tend to have coverage over various size regions. School psychologists are credentialed at the state level by various credentialing agencies (e.g., state education departments, psychology boards). However, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) has established the Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) credential, which recognizes school psychologists who meet rigorous national standards for graduate preparation and continuing professional development. Many states and school districts accept or align their credentialing requirements with the NCSP. While the NCSP credential is based upon extensive training and experience related to the ten domains of practice outlined in the NASP *Practice Model* (2020) and training that school psychologists receive aligns well with leadership activities, explicit training in leadership development is not part of the core curriculum.

Traditionally, school psychologists are often seen as leaders in schools. They lead data teams, problem-solving teams, multidisciplinary evaluation teams, and crisis response teams. School psychologists are also perceived as leaders regarding intervention, multitiered systems of support, behavior support, collaboration, consultation, special education, assessment, and prevention in schools. Augustyniak (2014) summarized it best when she states:

> …school psychologists often find themselves confronting issues that have a great deal of breadth, complexity, and visibility. These include occupying key roles in instructional leadership teams, consultation for behavioral and academic concerns, mediating cultural biases, crisis intervention, school violence deterrence and response programs, and a variety of

other prevention and harm-reduction programs aimed at curtailing youth risk. Often, these roles place high demand on school psychologists' professional and interpersonal competencies to work effectively across internal and external boundaries within the school and broader community. Success often requires the ability to build alignment with and inspire commitment in diverse groups of people over whom the school psychologist has no direct authority and whose views and objectives might be vastly different from their own. (p. 23)

Because of these demands inherent in the school psychologists' role, explicit leadership development opportunities at the graduate preparation level would seem beneficial. Augustyniak (2014) provides a reasonable framework of these leadership tenets for integration into school psychology training experiences. Essentially, Augustyniak recognizes various leadership development opportunities inherent within the current structure of many school psychology training programs. She advocates for the development of leadership skills for all school psychology graduate students as part of their training program.

4   Advocacy as a Leadership Development Activity

School psychologists are invariably placed in a position where they may need to advocate for individual clients, parents and families, systemic changes, their role, and their own profession. Advocacy at the microlevel often involves advocating for individuals within a system (e.g., speaking up for a student in a disciplinary hearing; helping a parent understand their son/daughter better). However, advocacy at the macrolevel involves advocating for groups within a system (e.g., presenting to the local school board to preserve school psychologist positions; working with an elected official to get a bill passed authorizing a new grant program).

The need for advocacy may be dependent on factors ranging from political, systemic, individual workplace, or how others value and understand the role of school psychologists and their purpose. Given that much of their work is not visible to others, their role is particularly vulnerable at points of change, for example, where a new principal is appointed in a school, or a new superintendent is hired who wishes to stamp their mark on the system.

School psychology is also certainly not immune to the factors that impinge upon the profession as a whole: shortages in the professional workforce, lesser trained professionals or other mental health professions performing school psychological duties, and confusion in roles with other school-based mental health professionals. These factors are compounded where there is a lack of understanding about the school psychologist's role and the issues presenting in the school setting.

Why advocate? Advocacy at the local, state, and federal level is crucial to the advancement of the profession of school psychology and increased access to comprehensive school psychological services. Critical to effective advocacy is articulating the value of school psychologists to decision-makers at all levels including parents, teachers, principals, school boards, superintendents, state education

agencies, the media, and state and federal legislators. The NASP states on its website that "School psychologists ensure that their daily practice respects and honors the individual, cultural, and other contextual differences that shape child and youth development. Equally important is the promotion and adoption of public policies and practices that ensure that our nation's schools support the success of all students." School psychologists must be advocates for the systems and services that lower barriers and create genuine, sustained equity and opportunity for all children. The NASP Board of Directors adopted the following definition of "social justice" from a school psychological perspective, "Social justice is both a process and a goal that requires action. School psychologists work to ensure the protection of the educational rights, opportunities, and well-being of all children, especially those whose voices have been muted, identities obscured, or needs ignored. Social justice requires promoting non-discriminatory practices and the empowerment of families and communities. School psychologists enact social justice through culturally-responsive professional practice and advocacy to create schools, communities, and systems that ensure equity and fairness for all children and youth" (NASP, 2017).

Case Example: Advocacy for School-Based Mental Health Services School psychological services are often the initial resource for young people with problems and are far more likely to be accessed when they are available in the schools. Sometimes, they may be the only professional services that are available in a community (Boyd, et al. 2007; Juszczak et al., 2003; Rickwood et al., 2007). The high level of need for mental health services for children and adolescents has been repeatedly documented in studies. Research shows that school children have significant unidentified mental health needs, and many receive no treatment for the mental health challenges they face (Brown et al., 2014). Every year in the United States, up to 20% of children and youth experience a mental, emotional, or behavioral disorder (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013). However, nearly half of all children with emotional or behavioral difficulties receive no mental health services (Simon et al., 2015). Among the relatively few children and youth who do receive mental health services, most do so at school (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2017). School psychologists are uniquely positioned in schools to facilitate the development, delivery, and monitoring of culturally responsive mental and behavioral health services for prevention and intervention. As Hughes and Minke (2014) have observed, "school psychologists are situated in real time in the biopsychosocial system where children spend 35 hours or more a week" (p. 29). School psychologists' broadly focused preparation as academic, mental, and behavioral health service providers, coupled with their engagement in and familiarity with schools' organizational and cultural context, equips them to specifically play a primary role in multi-tiered and responsive school-based mental and behavioral health programs.

5   Basics of Advocacy

Advocacy is the act of pleading or arguing in favor of something, such as a cause, idea, or policy; it is about providing active support for an issue (Advocacy, 2015). There are several basic elements to effective advocacy campaigns (NASP, 2020). However, before engaging in any type of advocacy, it is important to understand why this type of action is needed. Considering the following issues will help to identify some of the key elements for your campaign:

1. Know <u>what</u> you believe and understand about a specific topic or issue.
2. Know <u>why it matters</u> to you and should matter to someone else.
3. Know <u>what you want to do</u> about it.

The answers to these questions provide the basic outline for any advocacy campaign. Based upon this information, key messages that inform others about the issues are crafted and a strategic plan to engage in purposeful actions is developed. Kathy Cowan, Communications Director of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), devised the "advocacy equation" (NASP, 2020). She posits that strong leadership plus a well thought out communication plan leads to inspiration of others and an intentional planning process which results in effective advocacy.

Identification of effective leadership is a critical component of the strategic plan. It is this leadership that will make informed decisions about the campaign, communicate the key messages, and guide others in support of the campaign. Leadership is often a team effort, which requires time and commitment from all involved. Advocacy campaigns are often compared to training for and running a marathon. Continuity of efforts over long periods of time (sometimes years) is vital. However, the "leadership team" is often led by one individual who serves as a "champion" for the campaign. This leader guides the efforts of the team based upon the vision and mission of the campaign. Key characteristics of the leader include being easy to "follow," embracing and encouraging others participation, and communicating effectively with others. It is said that a successful campaign is dependent upon having an ethical, visionary leader, <u>and</u> courageous followers.

Effective communications should be incorporated into any strategic plan and involves several steps. Good communication in an advocacy campaign is responsive to emerging situations and the needs of key audiences. Determining what people need to know and why the issue is critical to the target group helps the message resonate with the audience. Effective communication is vital to achieving the goals and objectives of school psychologist, whether trying to improve services at the school level, secure funding at the state level, or shape policy at the national level. Failure to communicate well can result in negative outcomes and missed opportunities (NASP, 2020). Engaging in an intentional planning process will enhance this message development (Fig. 1).
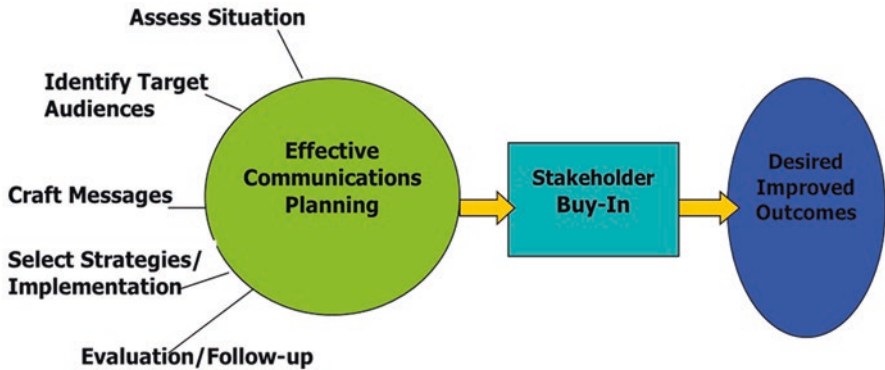
Fig. 1 Communication planning and message development (NASP, 2020)

1. Assess situation – During the assessment phase, the problem that is being addressed is defined. Factors related to the problem or potential supports are identified. Goals for the communication plan are outlined during this phase.
2. Identify stakeholders – The audience for your messaging may vary, but it is important to know their priorities. Identify their knowledge or level of awareness of your issues and their perspective on these issues. Recognize potential barriers to their understanding of your message and their willingness/ability to act. Anticipate potential obstacles or individuals/groups that may oppose your efforts. Avoid "turf battles" that others need to mediate. Identify and engage your allies or partners. Working with a "coalition" of organizations that share your goals provides "strength in numbers."
3. Craft your message – Define your main point. Choose three key messages based upon your main point, with two to three key supporting facts. Use simple language but resonate with your audience. Avoid facts and statistics (e.g., 51% of suicides in 2016 were caused by firearms). Instead use personal stories or "social math" to illustrate your point (e.g., firearms were the most common method of death by suicide in 2016). Offer solutions or benefits to what you are proposing.
4. Select strategies to implement – There are three levels of strategic communication:

   (a) Proactive communication: Engaging in communication that offers information or an action on your part, but requests nothing in return. This type of communication facilitates visibility with key stakeholders (e.g., administrators, policymakers) and/or allows others to raise awareness or comfort level with an issue. Building relationships with others is accomplished with this type of communication. Examples of this type of communication include articles in school newspapers, webpages with relevant information for parents, providing information on a crisis event, or commenting on legislation being discussed at the state or national level.

(b) Action requests: Engaging in communication that offers information or action on your part, with a request for action or support for your issue. This type of communication is utilized to facilitate audience "buy in" and a decision to do something. Strengthening relationships is accomplished with this type of communication. Examples include needing support for the implementation of a mental health program in school, you offer to participate in the planning and design of the program, or wanting legislative support for an important issue, you offer to serve on an "educational advisory committee."

(c) Crisis communication: Engaging in communication that is intended to minimize potentially damaging consequences of a situation (e.g., school shooting, proposed cuts to school psychological positions). Using pre-existing relationships often facilitates this type of communication. There is often need for a rapid response, with designated contacts to deliver the message.

Understanding the interrelationship between all three communication strategies is important. Proactive outreach leads to relationships that result in action requests which strengthen relationships needed for crisis communication.

5. Evaluation and follow-up – Establishing measurable and concrete goals for your communication plan will allow for an assessment of the effectiveness of your actions. Do not hesitate to change strategies if your desired outcomes are not achieved.

6   Summary

Recognizing the needs of the children and families that school psychologists serve and external factors that often impact the provision of these services, the emergence of effective leaders within the profession and development of advocacy efforts that influence decision-making and policy agendas is critical. However, without state or national mandates to engage in these actions, the responsibility falls upon those professionals practicing school psychology and the graduate preparation programs training future school psychologists to ensure that leadership development and engagement in activities falls within the rubric of activities of the profession. The National Association of School Psychologists promotes the enhancement and professional development of requisite leadership and advocacy skills. It is important for school psychologists to avoid the group dynamic of thinking that others will engage in the needed actions or to simply "ride the coat-tails" of others. Instead, school psychologists need to embrace the concept of "personal responsibility" to ensure that appropriate actions are taken when the situation demands these actions. As Winston Churchill once said, "I never worry about action, only inaction." However, most apropos to leadership and advocacy is the unknown author who said, "if you are not at the table, you may be on the menu!"

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School Psychologists as Leaders for Social Justice

David Shriberg and David Kim

This book provides an important focus on leadership as an essential school psychology skill. To what ends does school psychology leadership seek to achieve? Social justice is a potentially powerful framework from which to address this question.

Over the past several years, social justice has gone from a somewhat fringe school psychology topic to an approach that is increasingly viewed as central to school psychology practice, particularly in the United States (Jenkins et al., 2017). For example, in 2016 the then-president of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Melissa Reeves created a Social Justice Task Force. By 2017, NASP had approved a formal definition of social justice and identified social justice as one of its five strategic aims. NASP also launched a monthly podcast on social justice beginning in October 2017. Globally, the International School Psychology Association lists social justice as one of the six prevailing ethical principles in its ethics code (International School Psychology Association, 2011).

Just as leadership can be challenging to define, so also does social justice have many different definitions and interpretations. We thus begin by providing an overview of the historical origins and common modern definitions of social justice. We follow with a synopsis of the nascent best practices social justice literature in school psychology. In particular, we posit that a commitment to children's rights and to culturally responsive practice is central to bringing social justice principles into

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school psychology practice. We close with a case study and potential implications for practice and training.

1 Historical Context and Contemporary Practice

Defining Social Justice in School Psychology Like leadership, social justice is something that is widely sought but is very challenging to define and takes on different meanings in different contexts. In the first comprehensive book on school psychology and social justice, Shriberg et al. (2012) argue that there are at least three ways that one might think of social justice. First, social justice can be considered an aspirational goal for society. Second, borrowing from multiculturalism, social justice can be thought of as a filter through which one takes information. Finally, social justice can be thought of as a verb, something school psychologists *do*.

To date, there have been six empirical studies where social justice has been defined through a school psychology lens, including definitions offered by cultural diversity experts (Shriberg et al., 2008), school psychology graduate students (Briggs et al., 2009; Moy et al., 2014), and practitioners (Jenkins et al., 2017; Biddanda et al., 2019; Shriberg et al., 2011). Most recently, a qualitative study was conducted with nine practicing school psychologists who were within 7 years of receiving their degree (Jenkins et al., 2017). Recurring themes from these studies are that social justice can be defined by taking personal responsibility both to promote the protection of rights and opportunities for the children and families served by school psychologists and by engaging in culturally responsive practices while doing so.

Echoing this research, in 2017 NASP created and endorsed its own definition of social justice. This definition reads:

> Social justice is both a process and a goal that requires action. School psychologists work to ensure the protection of the educational rights, opportunities, and well-being of all children, especially those whose voices have been muted, identities obscured, or needs ignored. Social justice requires promoting non-discriminatory practices and the empowerment of families and communities. School psychologists enact social justice through culturally responsive professional practice and advocacy to create schools, communities, and systems that ensure equity and fairness for all children and youth.
>
> (Adopted by the NASP Board of Directors, April 2017, definition can be accessed at: http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/diversity/social-justice)

Even within this relatively concise definition are a number of complex and interrelated topics and terms. One way to sift through this complexity is to divide social justice into three of the broad subcategories articulated by Diaz (2014): distributive justice, procedural justice, and relational justice. Distributive justice has to do with how resources are distributed in society. Procedural justice relates to the process through which decisions are reached. Relational justice speaks to how people are treated (Diaz, 2014). Each is described in more detail.

Distributive Justice Scholars suggest that the concept of distributive justice dates back to Aristotle, who first introduced equity and allocation of resources by relative deprivation (Jost & Kay, 2010). Aristotle viewed equity as proportionality, which is in line with the current view of equity and distributive justice. That is, if an individual feels that they are not getting the proportionate deserving of inputs, psychological distress would result, followed by the emergence of the need to restore equity. This approach has parallels in the equity theory of leadership, first popularized by Adams (1963), in which leaders seek to ensure that people feel that their rewards (e.g., pay, status) are commensurate with both their individual contribution and with the contribution of others. Applied to societies, Aristotle argued that real or perceived inequities would bring resentment and anger towards the group who the under-benefited perceives as over-benefitting. The emphasis is the word "perceived." Each individual is entitled to their own perception of equity, meaning they will feel uncomfortable when they perceive themselves being over-benefited and subsequently feel resentful when they perceive to be under-benefited (Jost & Kay, 2010).

In equity, people tend to compare their allocation of resources to others to determine their status of benefit. When they feel that their needs for equity are not met, relative deprivation theory suggest people will engage in collective action to redefine the status quo (Jost & Kay, 2010). Furthermore, people become motivated to take collective action to rectify the situation when they believe that the system is unjust. They believe that the system, the world, listens to the voices wanting justice, and rules/laws are made to be as just in allocating resources.

Within education, distributive justice is perhaps most associated with Jonathan Kozol's seminal book *Savage Inequalities* (Kozol, 1992). Describing how the funding for US schools is heavily based on local wealth, Kozol vividly describes the inequity of schools in wealthy areas being able to provide a world-class education, whereas schools in poor areas often struggle to provide the basics. Research suggests that more experienced staff members tend to move to schools that are from more advantageous areas (e.g., higher socioeconomic level, less number of students with disabilities). As a result, schools in poorer neighborhoods typically end up with more novice staffs and fewer material resources (Darden & Cavendish, 2011). While school psychologists do not control the funding structure of US education, distributive justice principles compel school psychologists to advocate that all students have access to the resources needed to reach their potential, both monetary resources and human resources.

Procedural Justice Procedural justice has to do with how decisions are reached. This model suggests that people will consider the final outcome to be fair if they perceive the decision-making process and rationale to be just. In order to have a just outcome and decision-making process in their own perception, people desire to be involved in the process themselves by either presenting evidence to influence the decision or being involved in the decision itself (Jost & Kay, 2010). In addition, Tyler (1994) suggested that people care much about the fairness of the decision-making process and outcome as a means of expressing their voices to the fellow society members and checking their social standing. By being entrusted with

decision-making, people perceive how much the authorities accord them with trust, value, and respect and provide belongingness (Jost & Kay, 2010).

A primary mechanism for achieving procedural justice is the creation and just application of laws designed to protect the rights of all students (Shriberg, 2016). While not commonly viewed from this lens, modern school psychology might be viewed as owing a lot of its growth to the special education rights movement (Shriberg, 2014). The 1954 Brown v Board of Education case led to the desegregation of US schools by race. If it was no longer legal to keep children out of school due to race, special education rights advocates were successful in bringing changes to the law that not only ended legal exclusion of children from school based on ability status but also provided, through PL 94-142 and subsequent revisions, the legal framework for providing a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment for all students. Whether focusing specifically on the rights of students with special needs, or, more broadly, on ensuring that fair and equitable practices are followed in all school procedures, the modern school psychologist needs to have command of the law. Indeed, in a study of randomly selected NASP members, one of the most important social justice tools identified was knowledge of the law (Shriberg et al., 2011).

Relational Justice   Relational justice speaks to how people are treated. This can be viewed as either the absence of harm (e.g., the absence of discrimination) or the promotion of positive relationships (Diaz, 2014). Various forms of oppression where power is used to harm people is often based on one or more elements of cultural diversity, e.g., sexism, racism, classism, religious discrimination, homophobia, transgendered oppression, and ableism. The burgeoning research on microaggressions speaks to how individual interactions can be quite damaging, if not devastating, to the educational future of children (Allen et al., 2013). Microaggressions are defined as everyday stereotypes, insults, and snubs that send denigrating messages to a target group (Sue & Sue, 2016). These messages are often subtle and the person delivering this message may or may not consciously intend harm. An example would be assuming that parents of an Indian/Southwest Asian student work in a convenience store or that the parents of a student who is Muslim are not patriotic.

At the systems level, the well-documented racial disparities in school discipline practices, including the common finding that students of color, especially African American males, tend to be sent for discipline procedures for more subjective violations (e.g., teachers feeling "threatened") (Skiba et al., 2002), are another example of a violation of relational justice. On the positive side, the movement towards restorative practices can be viewed as a mechanism for relational justice. Central to restorative practices is the idea of seeking to repair the harm done to others (Morrison & Vaandering, 2012).

Just as school psychologists cannot control policies covering school funding but can advocate for equitable practices, so also cannot school psychologists monitor every interaction that occurs in schools to protect against all microaggressions. However, school psychologists, with the combination of our psychological training

and unique positioning in schools, are often well positioned to act as agents of social justice (Song et al., 2019). As relates to relational justice, school psychologists can both view situations through a multicultural lens, making both violations of relational justice and opportunities for positive relational justice experiences easier to spot and ensure that they themselves are models of relational justice. We can "walk the walk" when it comes to putting relational justice principles into practice. While not explicitly using the term "relational justice," this idea of "walking the walk" and treating others with respect and dignity has been prevalent throughout different studies of school psychology and social justice (e.g., Jenkins et al., 2017; Biddanda et al., 2019; Shriberg et al., 2008).

This approach also has several overlaps with leadership theory, perhaps particularly in terms of servant leadership (e.g., Greenleaf) and the appropriate use of referent power. Servant leadership was first articulated by Robert Greenleaf. In a book commemorating the 25th anniversary of Greenleaf's classic writings, Greenleaf and Spears (2002) describe that the servant leader takes care to ensure that other people's greatest needs are being met and that those people, while being served by the leader, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely themselves to become servants. According to Greenleaf, servant leaders (a) listen first so they may understand a situation; (b) develop their intuition and the ability to "foresee the unforeseeable"; (c) lead by persuasion, forging change by "convincement rather than coercion"; (d) conceptualize the reforms they seek and lift others to see the possibilities also; and (e) empower by creating opportunities and alternatives for those being served.

Referent power comes from a larger model originally developed by French and Raven (1959) about ways in which individuals can exert power and influence in organizations. Referent power is based on the ability to influence others based on others' positive perception of you. Thus, regardless of one's individual job responsibilities, school psychologists have the potential to set a moral and ethical example in terms of the ways in which they demonstrate respect for all children and families. If others see the school psychologist as ethical and credible, then the school psychologist may be more successful in positively influencing others to also respect all children and families.

2   Best Practices in Leading for Social Justice in School Psychology

While the literature on school psychology and social justice is just emerging, there is evidence to suggest that the application of social justice principles to practice is quite broad. An analysis of the articles appearing in five leading school psychology journals from 2010 to 2013 found that 13% of these articles met research criteria for both having an applied focus and covering at least one pillar of their definition of social justice (Graybill et al., 2017). In a study of randomly selected NASP

members, 94% of respondents indicated that considerations of institutional power in schools were salient to social justice and school psychology. Respondents rated "promoting best practices in school psychology," "conducting culturally fair assessments," and "advocating for the rights of children and families" as the most realistic actions practitioners can take to support social justice. In addition, significant age differences were evident, with younger respondents appearing to be both more apt to report exposure to social justice concepts and also less willing to take personal risks to pursue social justice aims than older respondents (Shriberg et al., 2011). In recent qualitative studies of school psychology practitioners regarding bringing social justice principles to practice, the primary barriers to social justice identified were lack of fair evaluation practices in the special education process, lack of resources, resistance from those in the school who have different philosophies, lack of awareness of best practices, and apathy on the part of fellow educators. The primary opportunities for supporting social justice that were identified were advocating for fair special education evaluation practices, maintaining cultural awareness about the students they are working with, engaging in self-reflection and being aware of one's privileges, educating staff members, implementing effective interventions oneself, and identifying and working effectively with allies, particularly school leaders, whenever possible (Jenkins et al., 2017; Biddanda et al., 2019).

The two meta-themes among this research is the importance of taking a child rights framework and using a culturally responsive framework in the service of social justice advocacy. This overlap was the focus of a conceptual piece by Shriberg and Desai (2014). Their position is that these concepts are two sides of the same coin in terms of the end goal of supporting the rights and opportunities for child. In the next two sections, each concept is described in more detail.

2.1 Child Rights Framework

Child rights is a concept perhaps most closely linked with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (hereafter referred to as "the convention"). Passed in 1989 and subsequently adopted by all nations except the United States, the Convention lays out foundational rights for all children, covering aspects of life both directly (e.g., the right to an education) and indirectly (e.g., the right to live in a safe home) related to positive school experiences. Perhaps most directly germane to school psychology are the right to a free education (Article 28), the right for this education to be respectful of the child's personality and culture (Article 29), and the right of a child with a disability to "a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community" (Article 23), which is inclusive of the right to education (United Nations, 1989).

These and other rights spelled out in the Convention speak to different elements of distributive, procedural, and relational justice. For example, the right to a free education (Article 28) can be viewed as a distributive justice idea. Article 19, which

states that governments have an obligation to protect children from violence, can be viewed as a form of procedural justice. Article 12, which speaks to the right of children to have input into decisions affecting them, can be thought of as relational justice. Recurring throughout this document is a vision of child rights that is holistic and does not view children through a deficit lens but rather challenges adults to ensure that children have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

In a series of articles edited by Cavin Mcloughlin and Hart (2014) that appeared in six leading journals widely read by school psychologists, connections between the Convention and school psychology were described. For example, using a distributive justice framework to take on modern notions that link "accountability" solely with academic test scores, Garbarino and Briggs (2014) challenge school psychologists to imagine a world where accountability is based on there being no correlation between socioeconomic status and child well-being. To achieve this aspiration, school psychologists would need to engage in advocacy to support equitable access to services that promote healthy development. They argue that this can be advanced both at the individual school level through data collection and focused advocacy, as well as through collective action such as school psychology organizations advocating for legal and public policy reform.

Reflecting both procedural and relational justice, Lansdown et al. (2014) focus on a child's right to active participation in decisions impacting them as a central school psychology value. They note that whereas it would be widely viewed as inappropriate for a group of men to speak for all women, as one example, we regularly exclude children from discussions and decisions that impact their lives, a clear violation of Article 12 of the Convention. Article 12 states that every child is capable of forming his/her own views and has the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them and that their opinions should be given weight in accordance with their age and maturity.

Translated to school psychology practice, an implication is that school psychology should not be done *to* children but rather *with* children. An example of valuing children's right to active participation and input into their school came in a pair of studies focused on reducing bullying at a middle school. In these studies, which took place over a period of 3 years in the same school, the students in this school played an active role in shaping the changes that took place. For example, after an initial round of student interviews revealed that there were great inconsistencies in how teachers and administrators defined bullying and responded to similar situations, with some imposing harsh sanctions and others looking away, a sustained effort was made to standardize practices (Shriberg et al., 2015). The following year, following up on students' desires to have more input, a student leadership group was formed where the leadership task was to develop strategies for reducing bullying at the school. Teachers nominated students who had leadership potential and were not believed to be involved with bullying. School administration was involved so that there was a greater chance of the student suggestions being implemented (Shriberg, Brooks, et al., 2017a). Ultimately, changes were made based on student suggestions.

2.2   *Culturally Responsive Practice*

The second essential pillar of leading for social justice in school psychology is culturally responsive practice. In a chapter on "Diversity in School Psychology and Culturally Responsive Practices," Song, Miranda, Radliff, and Shriberg (2019) describe culturally responsive practice as a core school psychology competency, a view also reflected in the NASP practice model (NASP, 2020a). Specifically, this model identifies "Diversity in Development and Learning" as one of three "Foundations of School Psychology Service Delivery," followed by a list of sample culturally competent practices.

Cultural competence—we prefer the term "culturally responsive practice" as "competence" implies a binary classification (one is competent, or one is not) whereas "responsive" implies a continuum—is defined as the ability to understand and interact with people from different cultural backgrounds (DeAngelis, 2015). Culturally responsive practice has three primary components: (1) awareness of one's own assumptions, values, and biases, (2) understanding the worldview of others, and (3) developing culturally appropriate intervention strategies and techniques (Sue & Sue, 2016). Examples of cultural awareness include asking oneself "how was I socialized?" and identifying one's core beliefs, values, and potential cultural blind spots (Song et al., 2019). As one becomes more self-aware, one can begin to learn more and value the perspectives of others. Often graduate courses in multiculturalism emphasize this component, with class discussions and assignments geared toward greater awareness and appreciation for the worldview of persons with different backgrounds and life experiences (Song et al., 2019). Finally, there is a commitment to action.

Social justice can be seen as the latest phase of multicultural school psychology (Shriberg & Desai, 2014), the phase that springs directly from cultural responsiveness. Based on a framework described by Vera and Speight (2003), the first phase of multicultural school psychology involves establishing cultural diversity as a valid focus of research inquiries and practice discussions. Does the world look different based on cultural diversity elements such as gender, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, religion, and age and/or ability level, among others? The society-altering Brown v Board of Education of Topeka (1954) court case featured research by Kenneth and Mamie Clark that demonstrated that when presented with White and Black dolls, Black children almost always stated that the White dolls were prettier, smarter, and better at everything they did than the Black dolls (Shriberg, 2014). This was the first time that psychological research played such a pivotal role in a major court case (Benjamin & Crouse, 2002). Subsequent decades saw rapid growth in scholarship related to cultural diversity, as well as professional endorsements of the value of cultural diversity. Summarizing trends in counseling psychology that could also apply to school psychology, Speight and Vera (2003), noted:

> It is a sure sign of progress that we are no longer reading articles that argue whether diversity is important, but instead have a developing body of literature that allows for scholarly

debate regarding how to integrate multiculturalism into our research training, and practice. (p.253)

As multiculturalism gained acceptance, there was a need for research that described cultural competencies for working with different demographic groups. Thus, culturally responsive practice reflects phase two of multicultural school psychology. In a seminal study, cross-cultural experts in school psychology identified 102 critical cross-cultural competencies for school psychologists (Rogers & Lopez, 2002). These 102 competencies fell under fourteen distinct categories. These categories, listed in order of participant ranking of importance, are: assessment, report writing, laws and regulations, working with interpreters, working with parents, theoretical paradigms, counseling, professional characteristics, consultation, culture, academic interventions, research methods, working with organizations, and language.

Although defining and working toward cultural competence are important goals, critics (e.g., Song et al., 2019; Speight and Vera, 2003) argue that multicultural competence must be linked to social justice. The distinction relates to disrupting the status quo. For example, consider the previously described research on racial injustices in school discipline procedures (Blake et al., 2016: Skiba et al., 2002). If an individual child is referred to a school psychologist based on discipline concerns, this school psychologist can—and should—work with this student in a culturally responsive manner. However, reflecting prevention principles, if one is not also seeking to disrupt the underlying dynamic that is causing students of color to be disciplined in a discriminatory manner, then one is falling short of her/his potential as a positive change agent. This is where social justice comes in. Social justice involves using culturally responsive practices to disrupt individual, institutional, systemic, and/or cultural structures that harm children, disproportionality children from groups that are oppressed within the society where the school psychologist is working.

3   Implications for Training and Practice

3.1   Training

As social justice has become more entrenched as both an aspirational goal and a set of specific competencies for school psychologists, so also are school psychology graduate training programs incorporating social justice principles. While there has been no known scholarship documenting this change, anecdotally as a person who has taught in a university with a social justice mission for many years, it used to be the case that applicants would comment on how rare it was that our graduate program emphasized social justice in our materials. This has not been true for some time.

That said, as noted by Rogers and O'Bryon (2017), there is little to no scholarship evaluating the extent to which multicultural training is incorporated into school

psychology graduate programs, and it is likely that implementation is inconsistent. Additionally, faculty who teach on topics related to multiculturalism and social justice often receive great scrutiny, particularly faculty who are not white, cisgendered males (Reynolds, 2011). As one participant in a survey of faculty who teach multicultural counseling courses stated:

> As a white male teaching multicultural counseling courses, White students initially see me as 'selling out' while students of color are not sure they trust my motivations. My faculty colleagues of color are often victims of 'uprisings' by resistant (mostly White) students. My being White and male seems to unfairly buffer me from these angry expressions. (Reynolds, 2011; p. 172)

Thus, any consideration of teaching for social justice needs to consider the specific programs and instructors involved. However, there is growing scholarship on key components of graduate training on social justice in school psychology at the program level. In two book chapters on this subject, several overarching themes were identified: (1) engage in dialogue at the program level regarding why training for social justice is important, (2) develop a mission statement/core training goals related to social justice, (3) embed meaningful experiences that help to make social justice a real thing, not simply a theoretical construct or aspiration, and (4) provide a safe and supportive forum for eliciting voice and constructive dialogue (Shriberg, 2012; Shriberg, Vera, & McPherson, 2017b).

In program-specific articles on training for social justice, Li et al. (2009) described their school psychology program as taking a three-pronged approach: (1) integrating social justice into courses, (2) engaging students in social justice scholarship and research, and (3) faculty and students collecting acting in concern with their core values and ethical standards for the purpose of improving the lives of others in real-world settings. Radliff et al. (2009) identified five key areas central to infusing social justice in their program. These key areas are (1) mission statement, (2) student body, (3) program courses and experiences, (4) community partnering, and (5) community-based projects.

Grapin (2017) has summarized several studies examining graduate training in social justice in school psychology from the perspective of school psychology graduate students. First, Briggs et al. (2009) conducted a focus group with school psychology graduate students in a program that had an overt social justice mission. These students indicated that their most impactful social justice experiences occurred in service learning, practice, and internship. As an outcome of this study, at these students' recommendation, a specific required course on school psychology and social justice was created in order to better integrate the program's stated social justice mission with both the required service-learning component (which took place in year one, as did the new course) and with the curriculum as a whole (Moy et al., 2014). Moy et al. (2014) conducted focus groups with four different school psychology graduate cohorts in this same program over the course of 3 years. As with the pilot study conducted by Briggs et al. (2009), these students consistently identified their field experiences as the most impactful social justice learning experiences and stated a desire for more field experiences in underserved areas. In a

similar study, Miranda et al. (2014) surveyed graduate students in a school psychology graduate program that had a strong multicultural and social justice focus and also found that these students identified field experiences as particularly impactful.

Thus, there are preliminary but consistent findings from students in programs with an overt social justice focus that the applied experiences connected with this focus are quite important. There are also some important individual and personal factors that recur. Specifically, the students in Miranda et al.'s (2014) study recognized that they were in the early professional stages of a lifelong pursuit of cultural competence and social justice advocacy. In a study of impactful social justice experiences for counseling psychology doctoral students and practitioners who met criteria as social justice advocates, these participants spoke to the role of mentors, exposure to injustice, and the importance of their graduate curriculum (e.g., courses, assignments) as particularly powerful factors in their development as agents of social justice as graduate students (Caldwell & Vera, 2010).

Miranda et al. (2014) ultimately broke multicultural and social justice training into two broad categories, foundational and dynamic. "Foundational" relates to elements that reflect the program's core values, such as the program's mission statement, program philosophy and specific efforts to recruit, and mentor for diversity. "Dynamic" reflects elements that are more fluid, such as course assignments, community partnerships, and community-based projects. These elements can and should be adjusted based on community and student's needs and emerging understandings of social justice. The strong social justice training program is both rooted in its foundations and continuously adjusting its dynamic elements.

3.2   Practice

A recurring theme in applied social justice research in school psychology is the necessity to openly address issues of power and privilege (Jenkins et al. 2017; Shriberg et al., 2008, 2011). In a chapter centered on social justice advocacy in school psychology, Briggs (2012) provided several advocacy strategies that can be used across the public health prevention tiers. As a prelude to social justice advocacy, she offers the following questions to consider before deciding if and how one might act in accordance with social justice principles:

1. Am I acting on behalf of others because it is easy or because it is necessary?
2. Is immediate change critical in order to prevent harm, or can I take the time to empower others to advocate for themselves?
3. If I advocate on behalf of others, what will happen when I am not around to lead advocacy efforts? Will change be institutionalized; will the process continue, or will my efforts disappear with me? (p. 300)

Several studies have been conducted focused on common challenges and opportunities related to bringing social justice principles into practice. Consistent with Rogers and Lopez's (2002) findings, Song et al. (2019) notes the most salient cultural

diversity issue in school psychology from the 1960s–1990s was assessment. In social justice research, school psychology practitioners identified the overrepresentation of racial/ethnic minorities in special education as a major social justice challenge (Jenkins et al., 2017; Biddanda et al. 2019). Relatedly, conducting culturally fair assessments is consistently identified as an important social justice action step (Jenkins et al., 2017; Shriberg et al., 2008, 2011).

From the first study of multicultural experts in school psychology (Shriberg et al., 2008) through the most recent examination of veteran school psychologists who identify as social justice advocates (Biddanda et al., 2019), the theme of taking personal responsibility recurs as a critical social justice action step. While no individual school psychologist is responsible for social injustices nor can any individual, school psychologist or otherwise, single-handedly eliminate social injustice, we all have the opportunity—and, based on NASP's Ethical Code (NASP, 2020b), the ethical responsibility—to speak up and combat the status quo when that status quo is unjust. Specifically, veteran school psychologists who identify as social justice advocates described using three primary strategies for taking personal responsibility: (1) using political savvy, (2) modeling the change one is seeking to bring about, and (3) working in a culturally responsive manner. Miranda et al. (2014) argue that social justice practice reflects CARE: cultural competency, advocacy, relationship building, and empowering and engaging.

While generally not couched in leadership terms, there is believed to be much overlap between this emerging literature on social justice advocacy and prevailing leadership principles. In a chapter on advocacy in school psychology, leadership—along with social justice and ethics—is identified as a central pillar of effective advocacy (Song et al., 2019). Indeed, there are interconnecting relationships between social justice, leadership, ethics, advocacy, and cultural responsiveness. Can one be an effective leader if one is unethical? Not if one believes that leadership is different from power grabbing. The head of a cult may have power, but if this power is used to control others, this is not leadership (Shriberg & Shriberg, 2010). Similarly, anyone can advocate, but there is likely a big difference in effectiveness between someone who advocates using strong leadership practices versus someone who advocates in a destructive manner. Inasmuch as social justice topics are typically deeply rooted both culturally and systemically and accordingly typically bring risks with those who question the status quo, social justice advocates can clearly benefit from having knowledge about and a commitment to core leadership competencies. Like cultural responsiveness, there is no one "correct" way to lead and practice can be very situationally dependent.

Leadership theory also places a premium on self-awareness of one's leadership strengths and of the environment in which leadership is expressed (Shriberg & Shriberg, 2010). In this spirit, Fig. 1 provides a potential template for getting started as an agent of social justice who seeks to be connected with leadership theory and practice. This template has questions covering four primary areas: identifying the topic, considering yourself as an agent of social justice, considering the context/environment in which you seek to bring about change, and questions to get started. Social justice leadership is thus considered both a personal and a professional

endeavor. At a personal level, one might be most successful if one is working on topics that one is personally passionate about and where one is in a position to actualize one's leadership strengths. At a professional level, social justice leadership involves leveraging one's knowledge, passion, and strengths within a context where change is more likely to occur. This is not to say that change is impossible in some situations rather that some situations are more conducive to change than others. For example, a school that has just experienced a highly visible incident of bullying may be more

The Topic/Issue
What is the topic/issue?
What makes this a social justice issue?
Why does this topic/issue matter to me?
Why does this topic/issue matter to my school/district?
Myself as a Social Justice Advocate
What are my leadership strengths?
What biases do/might I have?
What social justice advocacy skills do I bring to the table and where do I need to grow?
What conditions lead to my doing my best work?

Fig. 1 Starting a social justice action plan

Professional Self in Relation to School/District
What real world barriers and opportunities impact upon this topic?
Who are my allies?
Who else would need to be involved in order to obtain success?

Getting Started
What elements of social justice am I seeking to address (e.g., distributive justice, procedural justice, relational justice)?
What would the measurable goals and other indicators of success be?
How can I ensure a participatory process?
What should my first and second step be in light of the answers to the above?

Fig. 1 (continued)

open to leadership on bullying prevention than another school that is in denial that bullying is occurring. The authors encourage you to use this template to consider a social justice issue that you might address in your role as a school psychologist.

Case Example   While social justice can be a potent aspirational goal and while the topic does not lend itself to set strategies, it is often helpful to think about a specific case in which one might apply leading for social justice principles. In this spirit, the following fictitious case is provided, with analysis afterward.

Zahra is a 10-year-old fourth grade girl whose family recently emigrated from Iran to a suburban US elementary school. Zahra comes from a well-educated and professional family, although her parents have had to take minimum-wage-level jobs upon coming to the United States and thus live in the poorest area of the town. Zahra was a strong student in Iran but had limited to no English skills upon coming to the United States. Despite having a growing Iranian population, this school only provides instruction in English and Spanish and has not hired any staff with fluency in Persian, these students' native language.

Zahra's teacher is concerned about her minimal academic progress. She states that she senses that Zahra is quite bright but that her language barriers are getting in the way of her ability to succeed. Zahra's parents indicate the same thing. They also note that Zahra reports being called a terrorist by some of her classmates and, while not directly calling out Zahra's teacher, indicate that many Iranian parents report that their children are regularly called "terrorists" by other students and do not feel welcome in the community, including by many of the school staff. Noting that the school provides support for students whose native language is Spanish, they report that Iranian parents are questioning why similar support is not provided in Persian to students such as Zahra.

If you were the school psychologist in the school, keeping the social justice frameworks of distributive justice, procedural justice, and relational justice in mind, and also considering the importance of child rights and culturally responsive practice to social justice advocacy, how might you proceed?

There are no easy answers to this question. Zahra's situation touches upon all of the core social justice frameworks highlighted. Going in chapter sequence, let us first consider this situation in light of distributive justice, procedural justice, and relational justice. In terms of distributive justice, this scenario speaks specifically to resource allocation in this school. At the level of the individual student, Zahra's educational needs are not being met. How can resources be adjusted to address this? Also, at what point does it become inappropriate that the school has language supports for students who speak English or Spanish, but not Persian? There are no easy answers to these kinds of questions, but a school psychologist with an eye toward distributive justice both knows the law in this regard and also seeks to maximize existing resources and push the school to reallocate resources as appropriate. Similarly, from a procedural standpoint, it may be that this school does not have strong processes in place to track the learning outcomes of the Iranian immigrants both individually and as a group. Having this data and ensuring proper procedures

are followed when there are learning gaps can play a direct role in resource allocation and basic fairness. Finally, in terms of relational justice, as immigrants from a nation that is often demonized in the United States, this vignette speaks to violations of relational justice (e.g., being labeled as "terrorists," potential conscious or unconscious biases among students, educators, and in the community) that Zahra and other families are facing that negatively impact their rights and educational experiences.

There are also clear elements where a child rights orientation and commitment to culturally responsive practice come into play. Concerning child rights, Zahra has a right to a free education where she is able to achieve her learning potential. She also has a right to be heard in this situation—this vignette does not capture her perspective. Concerning cultural responsiveness, school psychologists have an obligation both to be self-aware of their own biases in this situation and to learn about and value the viewpoints of Zahra and her family. If the school is engaging in practices that do not reflection cultural responsiveness—e.g., violations of relational justice—the school psychologist is compelled to act, both in this specific case and in a systemic manner if there are systemic barriers (e.g., prejudicial school culture).

Finally, consider the action steps one might take using Fig. 1 as a guide. First, at the personal level, why does this situation matter to you? While school psychologists have an obligation to serve all students regardless of one's personal passions, social justice efforts are hypothesized to be more impactful if there is also a personal connection. Similarly, what leadership strengths do you bring to the table in this situation? For example, are you strong with connecting with the Iranian children and families? Perhaps you have a personal connection from your own history or have professional experiences you can bring to bear in this situation as a culturally responsive practitioner. Or maybe you have strong referent power and thus your advocacy with or on behalf of this family is more likely to be heard. Then, consider best practices research and the law as relates to this student's rights and the broader systemic issues at play. Is the school in compliance with the law? Are there individual and/or institutional barriers and opportunities toward achieving a just outcome (e.g., others in the school who either are already engaged on this issue or could be with some leadership)? Finally, what would be your concrete initial action steps? Most likely this would involve steps specific to Zahra's situation while also considering the broader ecology that may be impacting other Iranian students and families in a similar situation.

4   Conclusion

Social justice is proposed as a critical framework through which school psychology leadership can be expressed. Divided into distributive, procedural, and relational justice and based on the principles of child rights and culturally responsive practice, implications for training and practice are provided. Ultimately, however, much depend on the individual. Do you see it as your role to be a leader for social justice, and what talents do you bring to bear in this regard?

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Implications for Training Program Content, Pedagogy, and Field Experiences

Lisa Kilanowski and Kristine Augustyniak

Leadership in school psychology is a complex, applied competency regularly referenced in discipline-specific guidance documents, NASP conference strands, and other professional resources. Comprised of a complex set of skills extending beyond "expert knowledge" in domain-specific practice areas, cultivated by instructional, reflective, and experiential learning opportunities, the development of leadership ability among school psychology candidates may best be conceptualized as a parallel process, occurring alongside of content-specific instruction and in tandem with field experience opportunities. Given the roles, responsibilities, and imperatives set forth by our professional practice standards, as well as other influential works such as the NASP Blueprint for Training and Practice (Ysseldyke et al., 2006), it is incumbent upon masters and doctoral-level training programs to consider integration of leadership training frameworks into course requirements. For many years, despite robust reference to leadership in multiple outlets germane to the practice of school psychology, the field had not benefitted from a cogently articulated model for the integration of leadership skill development into graduate school psychology training programs. Following careful analysis of leadership theory vis-a-vis NASP Professional Standards and similar guidance works, Augustyniak (2014) presented an initial framework for leadership training in school psychology programs, serving as the foundation upon which the recommendations in this section rest.

The leadership viewpoints expressed by the contributors to this volume, though in some cases domain specific, share common characteristics, distilled in many ways from not only the NASP Professional Standards (2020) but from representative literature bases. However, though leadership is *implied* by language evident in

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the NASP Professional Standards, it has only been articulated as such in the NASP Blueprint for Training and Practice, which, to date, remains the sole guidance document for the practice of school psychology in which the term "leadership" is explicitly used. Written several years ago, the *Blueprint* highlights the role of the school psychologist as follows:

> School psychologists need to provide leadership in identifying those instructional environments and cognitive, emotional, social, and behavioral factors that have a significant impact on school achievement and the development of personal competence. (p. 18)

> School psychologists should be recognized by school administrators as leaders in data collection and interpretation, who can play significant roles in designing assessment practices to meet responsibilities for accountability reporting to the general public. (p. 18)

> School psychologists should provide leadership in developing schools as safe, civil, caring, inviting places where there is a sense of community, the contributions of all persons, including teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, families, students, and related services personnel, are valued; and there are high expectations for excellence for all students. (p. 18)

> School psychologists are viewed as leaders for improvement and change. In this capacity, they need to share leadership and coordinating responsibilities with other agencies and help form linkages within the community. The move in many places to make schools less 'independent' and more 'collaborative' with parents, social and health agencies, corrections authorities, and local businesses is a major and long-term effort. School psychologists should be prepared to help lead and maintain the emerging collaborations. (p. 19)

> School psychologists should be knowledgeable about development in social, affective, and adaptive domains and be able to identify and apply sound principles of behavior change within these domains. They should provide leadership in creating instructional environments that reduce alienation and foster the expression of appropriate behavior as well as environments in which all members of the school community-both students and adults-treat one another with respect and dignity. (p. 20)

While certainly progressive for its time, multiple elements of practice have since evolved, extending leadership principles more directly to the development of interventions for students in need, informing curricular initiatives, and developing, implementing, and evaluating programs, in addition to those leadership elements referenced by the *Blueprint.* Identification of the *ways* in which school psychologists serve as leaders, however, is only one of the several elements to be considered in leadership development. Theoretical alignment, or the degree to which school psychologists identify with, or are perceived to identify with, extant leadership theories, models, and styles, is of equal importance in forging training curricula. As discussed earlier in this volume, distributed leadership, which is increasingly the most utilized model of leadership observed in school settings, decenters leadership tasks and responsibilities from administration, distributing them to knowledgeable stakeholders throughout the organization. This distribution, which is the antithesis of centralized models of leadership, encourages cultivation and attainment of collective goals while calling upon the unique expertise of contributors and fostering

shared responsibility (Harris, 2004; Hartley, 2009; Ritchie & Woods, 2007). Beyond field-embraced leadership models, recent research exploring the leadership styles most evident among school psychologists indicates that practitioners endorse practices associated with transformational leadership, as opposed to transactional or passive leadership (Augustyniak et al., 2016), a perception of school psychologists that is also shared by teachers. The same study also revealed that school psychologists strongly believe that they currently function as leaders in their respective positions, that they strongly identify with models of leadership promoting empowerment of constituents, and that they perceive themselves as being more successful than other school professionals in representing the needs of others, meeting organizational requirements, and leading groups (Augustyniak et al., 2016). It is important to note that the identification of transformational leadership as the most leadership style evident among practitioners strongly aligns with provisions of both the 2010 and 2020 NASP Professional Standards as asserted over the past 10 years, given the emphasis of the standards on consultation, collaboration, educating others, and systems change. As is consistent with the viewpoint of Augustyniak (2014), school psychology preparatory programs serve as the primary vehicle by which the field may increase the facility of school psychologists as leaders, fortifying candidate knowledge and dispositions related to the application of leadership principles in their future work. We posit that the process of enhancing the capacity of practitioners as leaders must be infused into multiple elements of instruction, including candidate selection, curricular modification, and experiential requirements.

1   Candidate Selection Process

The candidate selection process has long served as the primary means by which programs identify and accept candidates who strongly orient with existing program missions and ideologies. Formal inclusion of targeted lines of inquiry, designed to demonstrate the degree to which prospective candidates identify with leadership constructs and established program goals and philosophies, can be effectively interwoven into the evaluation of admissions materials via letters of intent, letters of reference, and the interview process. Modification of existing evaluative tools, such as rubrics used to analyze personal statements, letters of reference, and the personal interview, may be modified to include criteria related to evidence of leadership across modalities, once leadership constructs are integrated into the program mission. In accordance with recommendations derived from Augustyniak's (2014) model, "candidates must be adequately briefed about the training program mission and must evidence congruence in traitlike 'distal' attributes, such as dispositions, and motives, and their beliefs about their future roles as school psychologists" (p. 25). While evaluation of candidate dispositions aligned with leadership may prove challenging during the admissions process, articulating a cogent framework specifying target characteristics indicative of leadership potential in the field of school psychology may enhance the potency of pre-admissions evaluative efforts. Selecting candidates who articulate or

demonstrate an interest in changing ineffective practices, who can readily identify incongruences between systemic or individual needs and realities, or who cite a desire to modify systemic practices and operations, based on observations or personal experiences, may prove helpful in identifying leadership potential. Candidates who identify with a broad-reaching, dynamic view of the scope of practice in school psychology and who demonstrate an interest in helping both students *and* systems may align more strongly with leadership traits found among currently practicing school psychologists (Augustyniak et al., 2016). Possessing a demonstrated history of leadership ability, coaching, or disseminating knowledge to others in an effort to cultivate change provides more overt evidence of leadership potential in the field. Review of letters of recommendation and personal statements for evidence of such, in accordance with the previously cited rubric modifications, is a valuable first step in discerning leadership characteristics or behaviors. Program requirements for the submission of personal statements related to candidate interest in and suitability for the field of school psychology may be directly modified to feature requirements eliciting their sentiments on leadership or leadership-related variables. In concert with analysis of letters of reference and personal statements, program admissions teams may also find the inclusion of questions designed to elicit candidate sensitivity to issues related to leadership should be included either directly or inferentially. Use of vignettes requiring interviewees to describe how they would address or respond to situations reflective of a need for leadership, empowerment, or change may also serve as a valuable means of distilling leadership potential via the interview process.

2 Curricular and Experiential Modifications to Support Leadership Development

2.1 Curricular Modifications

Curricular modifications to school psychology training programs lending to the development of leadership capacity among future practitioners is necessary in even the most progressive training programs (Augustyniak, 2014). While many contemporary school psychology programs have long featured coursework emphasizing the dynamic role of school psychologists as change agents, via emphases on systems change, program evaluation, large-scale intervention implementation, consultation, and advocacy efforts, course sequences explicitly imparting knowledge of leadership theory, style, and application are viewed as an integral first step in cultivating leadership potential among inexperienced professionals (McCauley et al., 1999). It is incumbent upon school psychology training programs interested in generating graduates with a high propensity for leadership to conduct rigorous program evaluations through which instructional needs are identified. In many cases, alongside of including content related to leadership theory, programs may need to reinforce the degree to which existing courses, such as consultation, provide for "development in candidate knowledge of conflict resolution, motivational

strategies, teamwork, communication, and analytical and process skills, and to foster candidate understanding the larger political, social, and economic contexts of school systems" (Augustyniak, 2014, p. 25). Identification of coursework in which general leadership related themes are already evident (e.g., coursework discussing advocacy, consultation, needs assessment and program evaluation, large-scale intervention planning, and implementation, among others) provides an ideal forum for more explicit and targeted instruction in leadership theory and related factors. To the greatest degree possible, brief micro-lessons integrating and reinforcing elements of leadership theory and application across all courses should be developed and implemented. For example, in an entry-level assessment course, micro-lessons and activities reinforcing the means by which school psychologists serve as leaders in data-driven practices capable of informing district policy as related to assessment data and data analysis can be included. Instructional and assessment tools such as "case studies, discussion, experiential exercises, and feedback instruments" (Augustyniak, 2014, p. 25) can be employed alongside of video analyses or other observational activities. In the event that courses have already reached content saturation or there are substantial needs for instruction in leadership as dictated by community imperatives, additional coursework specifically targeting multiple elements of leadership can be designed and implemented. At the most basic level, consistent reference to the role of the school psychologist as a leader by all faculty across all courses serves as a substantial means of reinforcing program ideologies related to leadership. The *Framework for Integration of Leadership Tenets into School Psychology Practice*, revised for this volume and presented at the conclusion of this chapter, provides a detailed presentation of the intersection of leadership frameworks, dispositional considerations, and training program considerations.

2.2   *Experiential Modifications and Assessment*

The development of an experiential framework for reinforcement and application of leadership skills is critical to program efforts cultivating leadership ability among candidates. We posit that an assessment and experiential system that parallels instructional components of leadership throughout the curriculum serves as the modal means of ensuring synthesis and application. The development of a formal program model identifying the alignment of instruction, experience, and assessment is a formidable manner of ensuring correspondence between instruction and application, as is required for programmatic components explicitly linked to NASP standards. From a curricular standpoint, programs are positioned to ensure that several assessments of candidate leadership knowledge and application are represented throughout courses, potentially through existing assignments, by the addition of assignment elements encouraging application of and reflection on leadership implications. At the most basic level, structured assessment questions surrounding leadership tenets and reflective assignments may be integrated into existing course assessment systems. Candidates may also be required to complete self-assessments

of leadership style at the outset of their studies and again at their conclusion. Valid and reliable assessments such as the Leadership Practices Inventory (Kouzes & Posner, 2003) and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass & Avolio, 2004) are well-suited for the purposes of establishing pre- and post-instruction approaches to leadership for those with and without experience in the schools. Larger-scale assignments, such as those designed to document candidate impact on student learning in accordance with NASP program approval standards, are ideal forums for the integration of implications for leadership, particularly in relationship to leading academic, behavioral, and social/emotional intervention design, implementation, and progress monitoring efforts at the individual and whole group level. Culminating portfolio assessment systems may feature requirements related to the conceptualization, administration, and evaluation of a leadership-oriented project, alongside candidate growth reflections as related to their leadership and application of theory and personal leadership style. For example, NASP standards related to organizational needs assessments and program evaluations serve as fertile ground for the integration and synthesis of culminating leadership principles. A more expansive approach to the development of leadership among graduate school psychology students is the development of well-planned, field-based experiential requirements in school settings outside of practicum and internship requirements. Specifically, in consultation with local school districts, faculty may identify areas of need expressed by partner schools and charge graduate candidates with conceptualizing a plan to address the need with guidance from the district. For example, a partner school experiencing an epidemic of school tardiness and absenteeism may solicit the assistance of a team of second year graduate students in providing and training school staff to implement evidence-based solutions as part of a consultation course. Graduate candidates would be responsible for leading the charge in obtaining data surrounding the district need, identifying evidence-based approaches, consulting with district leaders and staff to discuss targeted improvement plans, and consulting with stakeholders to disseminate information regarding potential program implementation and monitoring. Though not entirely similar to fully implementing the initiatives themselves, many critical leadership skills, including tacit leadership abilities, are required by virtue of this project requirement (Kilanowski, 2018). Any guided fieldwork project of a similar ilk may be positioned into upper-level graduate courses, meeting advanced requirements for application and evaluation of leadership tenets.

Integration of the application and assessment of leadership tenets in field experiences, including practicum and internship, serves as a capstone method of evaluating candidate comfort and proficiency with leading. Though we certainly do not wish to suggest that candidates who do not evidence strong leadership ability should not advance in programs, objective evaluation of several elements of leadership provides candidates with valuable feedback about the types of positions and roles in the field that they may be most interested in pursuing after graduation. Cultivating opportunities for applied engagement in leadership-oriented principles requires careful consultation with field-based supervisors to ensure shared understanding of the multiple manifestations of leadership-oriented skills during placement. It is also important to work with supervising school psychologists to discern the degree to

which they themselves believe they are leaders in their schools and for what reasons. According to Augustyniak (2014), leadership development during field placement and collaboration with sites "may begin by utilizing a framework of identified successful leadership characteristics and behaviors as a means to demystify leadership, develop mutual understandings between the field and training programs, and promote a purposeful structure where school psychologists may view themselves as leaders" (p. 25). Given the varied and dynamic nature of field placements, and, in many cases, differences between the workplace role of supervising school psychologists, consultation must occur to develop a sense of the opportunities available to candidates at each respective site. In situations where candidates interview for an internship placement and are competitively selected, the graduate program may have less control over the opportunities available to graduate students. It is particularly important in those cases to establish a sense of understanding between the site and the training program in terms of program missions related to leadership and the varied ways in which candidates may apply leadership in the context of their site. For this reason, inclusion of a culminating portfolio section involving leadership is recommended in an effort to universalize leadership-oriented requirements for all candidates, regardless of the strengths and limitations of their respective placements. Inclusion of leadership objectives in the internship requirement contract is also recommended to foster attention to program aims related to leadership while also articulating required experiential opportunities. In accordance with the aforementioned, existing practicum and internship evaluation forms should be modified to allow for assessment of "soft" leadership skills, aligned with professional dispositions, as well as more targeted leadership skills, such as their proficiency in leading an initiative, conducting professional development, or managing elements of other district or building initiatives. In short, application of leadership skills should be evaluated in the same way that professional dispositions and skills aligned with NASP training requirements are evaluated, with expectations increasing in developmental complexity, from practicum through the culminating internship.

3 Future Directions for Training Programs

Discussion of leadership in the practice of school psychology, though thematically evident in discipline-specific writings for many years, has only recently emerged as an area of focused interest in the literature and deliberations of our professional organizations. Limited extant research formally operationalizing leadership as related to the practice of school psychology speaks to the need for additional inquiry into the manifestations of leadership in our practice, practitioner characteristics associated with leadership strengths, and the outcomes of infusing leadership tenets into graduate training programs. Reflected in this volume is the integration of current research surrounding leadership in school psychology and the generalization of leadership tenets across domains of practice in which school psychologists *clearly* serve as leaders without administrative titles. The tendency for many in the schools,

including some school psychologists, to continue to view leadership as a centralized practice constrained to principal leadership, directorships, or district administration serves as testimony of the need to universalize understanding of leadership theory and applications as related to our discipline. In the absence of further development on this subject, both at the training level and among those currently working in the field, school psychologists may not maximize potential contributions across the current domains of practice. Regardless of the complexity of individual school psychology positions, whether one functions exclusively in an assessment-oriented capacity or more dynamically, school psychologists lead efforts among constituents on a daily basis. Explicit linkages between leadership tenets, existing school psychology leadership research, and our diverse roles in the schools are integral to attuning others to the scope of our contributions. It is incumbent upon practitioners, academics, and field supervisors to work toward greater understanding of the practitioner characteristics associated with strengths in school psychology leadership, as well as the most effective means of developing future school psychology leaders, by virtue of additional research and inquiry. Fortifying our discipline-specific leadership research base while simultaneously iterating the importance of leadership cultivation among graduate candidates is essential to meeting the progressive aims of contemporary school psychology.

Framework for integration of leadership tenets into school psychology training

Key theoretical frameworks	Associated skills, dispositions, and relevant contextual variables	Training program considerations
Global theory: Trait models	Distal attributes (e.g., cognitive abilities, dispositions, motives, values) Successful leaders (SLs) strive for continuous growth (expansiveness) Proximal attributes (e.g., social capabilities, technical skills, professional expertise) SLs possess both technical and tacit knowledge of strategies to manage complex situations	Training programs (TPs) duly consider relevant leadership traits in both recruitment and curricular endeavors TP culture vigorously facilitates and models continuous development (faculty, students, and practitioners) TP provides students requisite knowledge of leadership models TPs assist students in identifying and cultivating personal attributes that predict leadership success TPs purposefully provide developmental experiences and opportunities for reflective practice to enhance proximal attributes, tacit knowledge, and self-knowledge

Key theoretical frameworks	Associated skills, dispositions, and relevant contextual variables	Training program considerations
Global theory: Information processing models	SL behaviors are predicted by the interaction of expert knowledge structures and situational perceptions SLs are both present and future oriented SLs strive for innovative practice Positive and accurate beliefs of self and others are viewed as predictor of SL behavior	TPs build student skills and confidence with information literacy and encourage innovative practice TPs provide students requisite knowledge of leadership models TPs actively promote student self-awareness of current and anticipated strengths and weaknesses relevant to emerging professional objectives TP provides requisite knowledge of leadership models TP explicitly promotes feedback-seeking and initiative-taking behaviors TP requires students to engage in mindful analysis of interactions self-schema, organizational structures, and behavioral responses to challenging situations
Global theory: Transformational models	SLs form goal-oriented connections with others with a heavy emphasis on shared values SL behavior is cultivated through empowerment, visioning, and ethics SL behavior targets growth in motivational and capacity of stakeholders	TPs promote student commitment to developing potential in self and colleagues TPs create opportunity for students to actively consider emotional, motivational, and professional needs of others in their organizations In addition to traditional collaborative problem solving, TPs teach collaborative strategic planning with emphasis on establishing shared goals and high expectations, developing and supporting staff, and modifying organizational conditions to promote progress toward goals
Applied models: Distributed school leadership	SLs evidence effective communication skills to advance shared goals SLs strategically allocate their professional resources in alignment with goals SLs are highly involved in evaluation, consultation, and strategy development across multiple assessment enterprises SLs are actively engaged in initiatives to develop the human capacity of their organizations SLs actively collaborate with others to ensure a supportive and fair organizational climate	TPs cultivate an enthusiasm for building leadership capacity among their students TPs allocate sufficient curricular resources to provide a strong foundation in conceptual models of leadership development TPs clearly define for students basic discipline-specific leadership competencies and sensitize them to opportunities to develop and exercise applied skills TPs avail students of active learning to enhance applied leader skills within and beyond traditional modalities of school psychology service delivery TPs use multiple best-practice approaches to evaluate their success in developing leadership potential among their students

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