



School Psychology Updates

September 2020

School Reopening, Social-Emotional Learning, and Equity:

There is no doubt that these three topics have permeated our inboxes, newsfeeds, resource reviews, and implementation plans for the past few months. In a [reflection](#) from Dr. Dena Simmons, Assistant Director of the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence and an Associate Research Scientist at the Yale Child Study Center, COVID-19 is described as **our society's 'equity check'**. As schools reopen and educators grapple with the challenges of providing a sound basic education to all students, it is generally understood that the inequities in opportunity that have existed for many students have been magnified by the pandemic. As a result, what has ignited in our state is a strong sense of urgency to address these issues by prioritizing social-emotional learning for students and staff and acting ambitiously on issues of inequity.

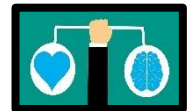
To hear more from Dr. Simmons, register for this upcoming (September 23) [webinar](#) ***Social-Emotional Learning for an Antiracist Future: A Conversation with Dr. Dena Simmons.***

Ψ As schools across NC return to learning, school psychologists are encouraged to maintain a consistent lens on advocacy for, and support of 1) quality instruction, 2) timely student monitoring, and, 3) appropriate matching of instruction/intervention to student need. These core elements of effective educational practices, ultimately, mitigate inequities and decrease the potential for emotional and behavioral health problems in students.

10 Question for Equity Advocates to Ask About Distance Learning

The resource linked above (original publication- May 2020) remains relevant. The 10 questions, associated challenges, and ideas to address the challenges may serve as an 'equity check' for local systems as they assess and improve their remote learning plans during the 2020-2021 academic year.

In preparation for school reopening, the NC DPI SEL Implementation Team released a [Social Emotional Learning and Crisis Response Practice Guide](#) to support the social-emotional needs of staff and students within the context of the pandemic.



As part of the ongoing efforts of this state level SEL Implementation Team is excited to share the current edition of the [North Carolina SEL Newsletter](#). In this issue, topics include:

- NC SEL Implementation Update to State Board of Education
- Summer & Fall 2020 Released Resources
- NC SEL Implementation Update
- Key NC SEL Resources
- SEL and Equity
- Important Dates

As we continue to implement social and emotional learning (SEL) across our state, the most common emotion shared around where we are heading is hopeful. We hope this edition finds you hopeful! Please distribute this highly relevant resource as you see fit!



Funding and Legislation:



MAKE NC COUNT
CENSUS 2020

Final Push Census 2020 – The Census deadline is **September 30, 2020**. With over 4 million North Carolinians left to be counted, there is no time to waste! The census provides the basis for reapportioning

Congressional seats, redistricting, and distributing billions of dollars in federal funding to support our state, county, and community's vital programs. If you haven't yet responded, you must! Then, spread the word to #MakeNCCount at <https://census.nc.gov/>.

\$40 million of Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund Approved for Additional Funding of Specialized Instructional Support Personnel

On September 3, 2020, the North Carolina State Board of Education, voted in favor of adopting the proposed expenditure plan for the \$40 million of the Governor's Emergency Education



Relief Fund dedicated to hiring more specialized instructional support personnel (SISP). Because the term 'SISP' broadly applies to many types of specialized staff, it is important to note that the funding is specifically earmarked for licensed school counselors, school nurses, school psychologists and school social workers. The only other acceptable use being for "school nurse extenders." Other important notes on this funding:

- These funds must be used in addition to pre-existing funding for these personnel and cannot supplant funding already being used for these purposes.
- These COVID Relief funds will be available for two years through September 2022.

The following related information can be found within the State Board of Education's September 3, 2020 [agenda](#) attachments:

- [Presentation slides](#)
- [Proposed allotment to each public school unit](#)
- [GEER – SISP for COVID-19 Response PRC 169 document](#)

Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (SISP) staffing plan based on recommended staffing ratios:
EXAMPLE LEA (ADM=10,000; # of schools=17)
Purpose: The example below may be used by NC Public School Systems to objectively identify prioritized SISP needs and determine short- and long-term plans for improving staffing of these school mental health providers.

	Recommended Staffing Ratio	Current Staffing Total	Actual Ratio	Disparity Total (#)	Proportionate Increase (Year 1)	Proportionate Increase (Year 2)	Proportionate Increase (Year 3)	Proportionate Increase (Year 4)	Proportionate Increase (Year 5)
School Counselors	1:250	20	1:500	20	4	4	4	4	4
School Nurses	1 per school	10	1 per 1.7 schools	7	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1
Psych	1:500	3	1:333	14-17	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3
School SW			1:2,000	35	7	7	7	7	7
Incremental Increase:				16	16	16	16	16	15



This [example district planning tool](#) is, again, offered to support objective decision making as Public School Units plan for effective and appropriate use of these additional funds. The tool was developed for districts to use as a model in their short- and long-term planning to proportionately improve staffing of their employed school mental health personnel. Questions about the tool can be directed to lynn.makor@dpi.nc.gov.



SL2020-49/SB113:

In July, Governor Cooper signed Senate Bill 113 into law. The recent changes to Part 1 of this legislation removes the requirement of NC Psychology Board licensure for DPI licensed school psychologists to engage in contracts with public school units in North Carolina. Given the current landscape of NC's 300+ public schools, and their varying degrees of operation and size, this change in legislation will allow smaller systems and trained school psychologist practitioners to engage in contractual agreements for service, based on need, rather than requiring them to serve as 'regular salaried employees'.

As active licensees (including retirees and those not currently working in NC public schools) consider supporting public schools in a contractual role, they should:

1. Review the licensure policies and statutes that apply to practice
 - a. [North Carolina Department of Public Instruction/State Board of Education](#)
 - b. [North Carolina Psychology Practice Act](#)
2. Adhere to ethical guidelines; uphold practice standards when providing services across multiple school systems
 - a. [North Carolina Code of Ethics for Professional Educators](#)
 - b. [North Carolina Professional School Psychology Standards](#)
 - c. [NASP Principles for Professional Ethics](#)
3. Consider what may be needed in terms of [professional liability insurance](#)

Additional guidance on this topic is available through the following NASP resource:
[Considerations for Contract Services in School Psychology](#)

Resource Spotlight:

Are you aware of the tools and resources available as part of the comprehensive assessment system and their intended use within the context of progress monitoring and applying decisions regarding student growth? Many of these resources are published on the [SLD webpage](#) of the [NC School Psychology website](#).



As public schools across North Carolina advance in meeting the federally mandated SLD requirements of progress monitoring to determine student response to instruction and intervention, some of the national and state compiled resources that are listed in [this section](#) of the [SLD Resources and Materials to Support Implementation](#) document may be useful. In this section, you'll find links to progress monitoring modules available through the *IRIS Center*, a host of materials from the *National Center on Intensive Intervention* and some state level archived recordings that may serve as useful learning tools.





Did you know that School Psychology Review has a [YouTube channel](#)? Check out this recent webinar, [Unlocking the Promise of MTSS for Linguistically Diverse Students](#), and subscribe to the channel!

**NCSPA Fall Conference 2020:
Comprehensive & Equitable Services for All
Children**
October 11-22, 2020 *We're going virtual!*
Register [HERE](#)



General Updates from the Exceptional Children Division:

A Message of Care and Concern

The EC Division would like to express our care and concern for the western LEAs impacted by the earthquake and its residual tremors. We know that school families, work families and our own EC Division families have been adversely impacted by the damages caused by these events. Please reach out if we can be of assistance during this time - we know that this added stress makes the complexity of reopening school buildings even more difficult.

NC Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities

The EC Division [Policy webpage](#) has been updated with the addendums for [Specific Learning Disabilities](#) and [Autism Spectrum Disorder](#), viewable as separate files.

- The combined Policies (March 2018 + 2020 ASD + 2020 SLD) will be posted by the end of this week and will be titled "Addendum August 2020".
- PLEASE NOTE: The "Addendum August 2020" will include the updated ASD/SLD policies **at the end** - the changes have not been merged into the master Policies (March 2018).
- **In other words**, to ensure you are following correct policy and procedures for ASD and SLD, find those updates at end of the August manual, or access them as separate documents on the Policy page (also linked above).

NC DPI Exceptional Children Division Parent Newsletters:

The Exceptional Children Division's Parent Liaison distributes [regular newsletters](#). If these resources are not reaching parents, encourage them to sign up for regular communications and know that you may do the same! [Directions to Sign up for the Parent Newsletter](#)

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