Who are Specialized Instructional Support Personnel?

The licensed Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (SISP) included in this document are the support personnel who are available to serve all students within North Carolina public schools who employ them. These SISP are affiliated with providing school-based physical, social, emotional and mental health prevention, intervention, transition and follow-up services - school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists and school nurses. These SISP, also known as student support services, provide a collaborative continuum of services while also bringing training and expertise unique to each of their professional disciplines. Collectively, they enhance skills and address barriers related to academic, career, social-emotional, behavioral, and mental and physical health needs of PK-12 students so that all students can learn, thrive, and grow. Although each provider plays a specialized role to meet the needs of students, some supports may overlap to cultivate the overall well-being of the whole child.
Specialized Instructional Support Personnel in North Carolina

See accompanying implementation and evaluation Administrator Guides for more details on each professional discipline.

**SCHOOL COUNSELORS**

**Unique Role in School**
Support all students to be successful with a focus on academic achievement, career development, social-emotional development and mental wellness. School counselors are uniquely trained to provide a broad array of prevention and early intervention educational, counseling, and support services to all students.

**Training**
Minimum of a master’s degree in school counseling
OR
Master’s degree in another area of counseling plus the additional school counselor-specific required courses.
Licensed by the Department of Public Instruction

**Academic Support**
Provide classroom and group lessons and individual and small group counseling, advising and direct support to remove a variety of barriers to learning to help all students develop skills and behaviors critical to academic and personal success. Collaborate, consult and provide data for teachers, families, and administration to support classroom success.

**SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS**

**Unique Role in School**
Provide focused outreach for identified students in areas of social-emotional and mental and physical health needs. School social workers are uniquely trained to integrate the school, community and family context into comprehensive support services, interventions, and resource referrals to remove barriers to student success.

**Training**
Minimum of a bachelor’s degree in social work with the addition of required school social work-specific courses.
Licensed by the Department of Public Instruction

**Academic Support**
Provide schoolwide, small group and individual support to identified students to reduce barriers to learning using interventions to improve overall student functioning. Collaborate and consult with teachers, families, administration, and community service providers to address barriers to learning.

**SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS**

**Unique Role in School**
Assist school leaders in selecting/developing school-wide practice/policies to support all students. In-depth training to provide assessment (academic and behavioral) and data analysis at the individual and group level. Evaluation/identification of intensive learning and behavioral needs of students with disabilities.

**Training**
Minimum of an Advanced degree in school psychology
Licensed by the Department of Public Instruction

**Academic Support**
Develop/implement student progress monitoring plans and provide data analysis/growth trajectories at both the individual and group level to support the academic growth of students. Provide individualized evaluation services, reporting and interpretation of the instructional implications of evaluation results to parents/school staff.

**SCHOOL NURSES**

**Unique Role in School**
Assess health-related needs, provide for health care plans, and collaborate with school personnel and healthcare providers to promote student physical and mental wellness.

**Training**
Minimum of a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing (BSN)
Licensed by the NC Board of Nursing.
Certification by the National Board for Certification of School Nurses

**Academic Support**
Assess needs, complete, and oversee health care plans, and provide related instruction, support, and oversight to staff, students and families to address student health-related needs that can present barriers to learning and wellness. Assist administration with preventing and responding to communicable disease outbreaks.

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### SCHOOL COUNSELORS

**Career Support**
Provide career awareness, exploration, and preparation opportunities to assist all students through the K-12 career and college planning and readiness process. Utilize classroom lessons, small group counseling, and individual planning to assist students to form postsecondary and career goals, build a plan to meet goals, foster skill-building, assess student abilities and interests, and access post-secondary options.

**Social-Emotional, Behavioral & Mental Health Support**
Utilize a specialized, broad focus impacting all students schoolwide. Provide classroom lessons and small group and individual counseling and planning to develop student skills and behaviors needed for social-emotional growth, resilience, and wellness. Provide short-term counseling and crisis assessment and intervention. May also refer students to specialized professionals for intensive needs and long-term counseling.

**Recommended Provider-to-Individual Ratio**
1:250
Consider that school counselors work with every student in the school.

### SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS

**Career Support**
Provide schoolwide, small group, individual and family support focused on skill-building to foster resiliency and job preparedness. Provide students and parents with community linkages and resources to support successful school and work transitions.

**Social-Emotional, Behavioral & Mental Health Support**
Provide specialized small group and individual social-emotional, mental health and behavioral interventions. Conduct risk and threat assessment and provide a continuum of crisis management supports. Maximize school-based and community resources to meet student and family needs. May also refer students to receive further specialized support.

**Recommended Provider-to-Student Ratio**
1:250
Consider that school social workers work with small groups, individuals and families who have been identified in need of more direct support, and often serve more than one school.

### SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

**Career Support**
Assess student abilities and social skills to assist in career planning and postsecondary services. Provide strategies to support career and college readiness. Work with IEP teams to develop individualized transition plans for students with disabilities.

**Social-Emotional, Behavioral & Mental Health Support**
Assist in identifying system/school-wide proactive social-emotional/behavioral health practices and systemic response protocols (risk and threat assessment). Assess, identify, and provide targeted behavioral health services to individuals/groups of identified students to develop skills and behaviors critical to academic success. May also refer students to receive further specialized support.

**Recommended Provider-to-Individual Ratio**
1:500
Consider that school psychologists work with individuals and small groups, conduct extensive assessments and data analysis, and often serve more than one school.

### SCHOOL NURSES

**Career Support**
Promote healthy behaviors that support active post-secondary lifestyles and assist students with personal health care management needed to enable them to pursue post-secondary career and educational options.

**Social-Emotional, Behavioral & Mental Health Support**
Screen for potential emotional and mental health concerns. Instructs students on positive behaviors and skills that support wellness. Refer students to receive further specialized support.

**Recommended Provider-to-Individual Ratio**
Minimum 1 nurse per school
Consider that school nurses work with small groups, individuals and families who have been identified in need of more direct support, and support school personnel in health care compliance.

See accompanying implementation and evaluation Administrator Guides for more details on each professional discipline.