

## **Lesson n 06 : Supervision, Professional Development, and Evaluation**

### **Administrative vs. Clinical Supervision**

Supervision for school psychologists is necessary to ensure ethical, non-biased, competent best practices in the delivery of school psychology services and includes both administrative and clinical supervision.

### **Administrative Supervision**

Administrative supervision typically focuses on issues such as personnel matters, legal, contractual, or other organizational matters specific to the school district. Rather than discipline-specific skills, administrative supervision includes things such as staff assignments and performance of job-related responsibilities in accordance with labor agreements. This level of supervision is made available to the school psychologist to help solve problems related to job performance and/or conflicting personal factors.

Administrative supervision is performed by a certified school administrator who may or may not be credentialed as a school psychologist.

### **Clinical Supervision**

The primary focus of clinical supervision is the development of discipline-specific professional skills and welfare of the client (Simon & Swerdlik, 2017). It involves professional oversight with the goal of:

- promoting effective growth and exemplary professional practice across all the roles and functions of school psychologists;
- protecting the welfare of all clients;
- safeguarding the profession through monitoring and gatekeeping;
- empowering supervisees to develop self-monitoring skills;
- promoting self-care;
- preparing for the supervisee's future role as a supervisor.

Practice standards recommend that, initially, credentialed school psychologists and new hires with less than a professional level certificate be afforded direct

and/or indirect clinical supervision and/or mentoring by the district a minimum average of 1 hour per week.(1) It is common for this supervision to involve consultation, review of assessment practices and for a more experienced psychologist to review and cosign psychological reports during this time period, which can frequently last for 6 months to 1 year or more as needed. More experienced school psychologists may utilize alternative methods for ongoing supervision. For example, monthly staff meetings allow for peer-based supervision groups or communities of practice, mentoring and ongoing peer support that will ensure continued professional growth and support for complex and difficult situations. In order to ensure best practice in school psychological service delivery, every school district should allow time for their district school psychologists to participate in ongoing clinical supervision and mentoring. In smaller districts where clinical supervision in school psychology practices may not be available, school districts should both allow and encourage their school psychologists to seek supervision and/or peer support from more experienced school psychologists outside the school district through available school psychology networks. Anytime a school psychologist is working outside their previous experience or skills set (i.e., specific and/or unique student population, culture, new testing instrument), it is incumbent on the school psychologist to seek out supervision, resources and/or assisted expertise. Consistent peer mentoring is also a very effective way to provide strong professional growth and development to all school psychologists. Additionally, the Connecticut Association of School Psychologists, the National Association of School Psychologists, and the Connecticut State Department of Education school psychology consultant are available as resources.

### **Qualifications and Training of Clinical Supervisors**

The discipline-specific nature of clinical supervision requires that clinical supervisors be provided by an appropriately credentialed licensed and/or certified professional for the setting in which they are employed. (2) It is recommended that clinical supervisors also have a minimum of three years of full-time experience working as a school psychologist.(3) In their leadership role, the clinical supervisor helps to improve understanding of the roles that school psychologists employ across the district. The school psychology supervisor is a strong advocate for competent school psychology practices and can assist in

resolving disputes regarding school psychological services. The school psychology supervisor encourages staff to seek advanced knowledge and training and assists in the recruitment of new school psychology staff. School Psychology supervisors should be evaluated on their leadership skills and supervision of staff and solicit anonymous formal feedback from the school psychology staff with regard to his/her annual performance to promote effective leadership in the field of school psychology. In order to adhere to best-practices in clinical supervision, it is important that ongoing and consistent training and professional development activities also be provided for supervisors of school psychology that addresses the supervision of practices that permeate all aspects of service delivery, student-level services, and systems-level services (Simon & Swerdlik, 2017). Using the framework of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), it is recommended that professional development and training activities for clinical supervisors include the following areas:(4)

- Clinical Supervision as Leadership
- Importance of having a vision for systems change and using clinical supervision to advance a strategic plan for that vision.
- Necessity for activities across Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)—i.e., student-level and systems-level services.
- Using clinical supervision to build capacity within the district.
- Using clinical supervision to expand roles and support systems change.
- Clinical Supervision as a Developmental Process
- Clinical vs. administrative supervision.
- Clinical supervision vs. evaluation.
  - o Negotiating conflicts inherent in these roles.
- Formats for supervision (e.g., individual supervision, learning communities, peer supervision, group supervision).
- Supervision looks different depending on the developmental level of the supervisee.
  - ✓ How to offer clinical supervision in areas where the supervisee is more expert than the supervisor.
  - ✓ Supervision for the supervisor.
- Clinical Supervision of Databased Decision-Making and Accountability
- Clinical supervision of databased decision-making at each level of a MTSS.
- Clinical supervision of:

- ✓ Evaluation reports.
- ✓ Ethical and legal issues.
- ✓ Use of progress monitoring data to guide interventions.
- ✓ SRBI implementation.
- Clinical Supervision of Consultation and Collaboration
- Clinical supervision of consultation and collaboration at each level of MTSS.
- Clinical supervision of:
  - ✓ Evidence-based methods of consultation and collaboration.
  - ✓ Ethical and legal issues.
  - ✓ Clinical Supervision of Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills
- Clinical supervision of instructional support at each level of MTSS.
- Clinical supervision of:
  - ✓ Use of evidence-based interventions.
  - ✓ Use of outcome data to guide interventions.
  - ✓ SRBI implementation.
  - ✓ Ethical and legal issues.
- Clinical Supervision of Interventions to Develop Social and Life Skills
- Clinical supervision of interventions and services at each level of a MTSS.
- Clinical supervision of:
  - ✓ Use of assessment and goal setting.
  - ✓ Use of evidence-based interventions.
  - ✓ Use of progress-monitoring data to guide interventions.
  - ✓ SRBI implementation.
  - ✓ Ethical and legal issues.
  - ✓ Personal issues impacting counseling and supervision.

## **Professional Development**

The aim of professional development (PD) is to afford opportunities for school psychologists to participate in continuous discipline-specific learning activities that support excellence in the delivery of school psychological services. It is important that district leadership collaborate with both the school psychologist(s) to develop procedures that standardize school psychology practices for their district and will develop a PD plan annually. The school psychology supervisor in conjunction with district leadership helps identify needs and coordinate activities aligned with district priorities for psychological

services. PD involves much more than training and activities and typically falls within three broad categories but with differing focus: standardized, school-centered and individual or self-directed.<sup>24</sup> Standardized PD focuses on rapid dissemination of information. This type of PD is most often done by attending workshops or training sessions conducted by a presenter either face-to-face or through other media presentation. School-centered professional development is a locally facilitated process focusing on longer-term change and meant to solve problems experienced during implementation of new skills. The focus of individual or self-directed PD is self-guided, self-directed learning. Although there is little formal structure, this approach allows the individual to pursue an identified area of study at their own pace.

Like all professional educators, it is essential for school psychologists to engage in a variety of PD activities, either standardized, school-centered, or self-directed aligned with their professional standards of practice. Examples of relevant PD activities include participation in communities of practice, planned conferences, department meetings and select local, state, or national committees all of which afford school psychologists opportunity to exercise their leadership skills. Taken together, these types of activities encourage school psychologists to remain current with trends in both research and practice to the benefit of the school community as a whole.

Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-220a subsection (b) requires that school districts establish a professional development and evaluation committee (PDEC). The PDEC participates in the development or adoption of the educator evaluation and support plan, as well as the development, evaluation and annual updating of a comprehensive professional development plan for certified educators in the district. School psychologists are encouraged to let the PDEC be aware of their professional development needs and are eligible to be members of the PDEC.

### **Evaluation :**

C.G.S. Section 10-151b subsection (a) requires, in part, that school districts continuously evaluate or cause to be evaluated each teacher, in accordance with guidelines established by the State Board of Education...<sup>25</sup> In

most districts, school psychologists are included with teachers under the collective bargaining agreement, and therefore, would be evaluated accordingly. As there is a significant difference between administrative supervision and clinical supervision of the practice of school psychology, it is best practice but not required that the supervisor conducting the evaluation be a certified school psychologist.<sup>26</sup> Evaluation systems that succeed over time involve the professionals within a discipline in the creation of the performance appraisal systems by which these individuals are judged (Danielson, 2011). School psychologists are well qualified to contribute to the design of their performance evaluations. In addition to their knowledge of school psychology preparation and practice, they have expertise in measurement theory, databased decision-making, and knowledge of a variety of applicable evaluation methods (e.g., direct observation, rating scales, surveys)

Personnel evaluations are most meaningful when relevant feedback is provided and both the evaluator and those being evaluated have opportunities for input. Furthermore, personnel evaluations can serve to reward exemplary practice as well as to identify specific areas and personnel in need of improvement.

When evaluation systems are aligned with job descriptions, accountability is enhanced and clear expectations for practice are reinforced.

According to the Personnel Evaluation Standards compiled by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (Gullickson & Howard, 2009), a variety of data gathering methods (observation checklists, interviews, products) and tools should be used to help ensure comprehensive and consistent indicators of performance. Four key elements are identified as critical to a credible performance evaluation system:

- (a) the use of multiple measures, including at least one measure of impact on student outcomes;
- (b) reliability and validity, with validity anchored to the NASP Standards for Professional Practice; <sup>27</sup>
- (c) utility for distinguishing different levels of proficiency; and

(d) linked to professional development and improvement. As a result, performance measures that are limited to high-stakes test scores or that simply count activities performed by school psychologists are strongly discouraged.

Research supports that performance assessment systems are most reliable when evaluators utilize multiple measures for the evaluation of professional performance as opposed to narrow indicators such as single-shot student standardized test scores. Other measures such as visual observation, student progress monitoring data, psychological reports, and student work samples before and after interventions, and surveys of interactions with families, community, peers, and staff, contribute to a more reliable measure for professional performance. When services are primarily delivered collaboratively, a team's assessment of student progress should be considered as a component of the multi-faceted personnel performance evaluation.

When determining the impact of the school psychologists' performance on student, school, and/or district outcomes, standardized test score gains and value-added models (VAM) are discouraged. While test score gains and VAM are components of numerous evaluation systems, their use for the evaluation of school psychologists and all other personnel where the use of these scores in personnel evaluation has not been validated is strongly discouraged. 28 To date, there is no empirical evidence that applying student standardized academic testing scores to the individual performance evaluations of school psychologists is a valid or reliable method for personnel appraisal. School psychologists, in large part, are providers of both direct and indirect services to children and often provide these services to multiple schools, grade levels, and populations. Therefore, outcome measures should be sensitive to the overall growth of students and stakeholder benefits as a result of receiving these direct and indirect services. For example, improvement in social-emotional functioning, behavior, academic engagement, and family involvement are areas correlated with student learning outcomes that can and should be monitored for growth in response to services delivered by the school psychologist.

Because areas of service delivery vary (due to non-classroom based psychological services), review of professional practice can serve as an acceptable substitute for direct observation. 29 Thus, advocacy for this area has long-centered on greater flexibility and innovation with regard to how the professional

evaluation process is applied to the direct provision of psychological services across the field of school psychology. The Connecticut State Department of Education has given latitude to school districts to select between state and locally developed rubrics. Either way, it is important to give deference to the

Connecticut Evidence Guide for School Psychologists as a resource. 30 The professional evaluation of school psychologists should accurately reflect the school psychologists varied roles across the school district in an effort to encourage equity in the evaluation process. It is also advisable that school psychologists, in collaboration with district leadership, review the delivery of school psychological services as a whole across the school district.



## REFERENCES :

1. <https://www.nasponline.org/x26834.xml>
2. Appropriately credentialed licensed and/or certified professional means an individual holding certification by the Connecticut State Department of Education (070), national certification as a school psychologist (NCSP), or board certification in school psychology (ABSP).
3. <https://www.nasponline.org/x26834.xml>
4. Falender, C.S. & Shafranske, E.P. (2004). Clinical Supervision: A Competency-Based Approach. American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C. 59-80.
5. [https://www.infodev.org/infodev-files/resource/InfodevDocuments\\_294.pdf](https://www.infodev.org/infodev-files/resource/InfodevDocuments_294.pdf)
6. [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Press-Room/Press-Releases/2012/Adopted\\_PEAC\\_Guidelines.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Press-Room/Press-Releases/2012/Adopted_PEAC_Guidelines.pdf)
7. Although not required, it is permissible to appoint a complementary evaluator who is a certified school psychologist to inform the evaluation process. The complimentary evaluator can be part of the observation process to provide input to the final summative report submitted by the designated district administrator.
8. [https://www.nasponline.org/Documents/Standards%20and%20Certification/Standards/V4IN3\\_Aframeworkfortheper\\_sonnelEvaluation.pdf](https://www.nasponline.org/Documents/Standards%20and%20Certification/Standards/V4IN3_Aframeworkfortheper_sonnelEvaluation.pdf)
9. <https://www.nasponline.org/standards-and-certification/nasp-practice-model/nasp-practice-model-implementationguide/section-iv-evaluating-school-psychological-services-utilizing-the-nasp-practice-model/part-1-individual-levelembedding-the-nasp-practice-model-in-personnel-evaluation>
10. [https://portal.ct.gov//media/SDE/SEED/Evidence\\_Guides/school\\_psychologist.pdf?la=en](https://portal.ct.gov//media/SDE/SEED/Evidence_Guides/school_psychologist.pdf?la=en)
11. In either case, the Connecticut Evidence Guide for School Psychologists is a valuable resource for professional development and growth as well as guiding observations ([https://portal.ct.gov//media/SDE/SEED/Evidence\\_Guides/school\\_psychologist.pdf?la=e](https://portal.ct.gov//media/SDE/SEED/Evidence_Guides/school_psychologist.pdf?la=e))
12. Administrators, faculty teachers, special education teachers, student support services personnel, parents and stakeholders may provide input to this process through survey or other forms of direct or indirect feedback.