School Psychologists

• School psychologists are uniquely qualified members of school teams that support students' abilities to learn and teachers' abilities to teach.

• They apply expertise in mental health, learning, and behavior, to help children and youth succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally.

• School psychologists partner with families, teachers, school administrators, and other professionals to create safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments that strengthen connections among home, school, and the community.

• Their roles may involve assessment for learning disabilities, crisis work, individual and group counseling, and consultation.
Known Effects of Pandemic

- Loss of learning
- Increased stress and mental health risks, including trauma, for students and staff
- Higher risks for students with disabilities; ELL students; LGBTQ+ children and youth
- Increased family stress, instability and financial fragility affecting students and staff
- Grief and loss
- Glaring inequities in impact on communities of color
- Compounded trauma of systemic racism and violence against black communities and other people of color
- Lack of clear federal guidance for schools regarding meeting student needs, particularly with regard to special education
- Inadequate funding and staff resources
Addressing SEL and Mental Health Needs of Students and Staff

Tier I
Screening, evidence-based classroom lessons, morning meetings, advisory periods, peer-buddies

Tier II
Ind & small group counseling Consult/collaborate with community providers, teachers/staff/parents

Tier III
Wrap around support and referrals

ALL STUDENTS
SOME STUDENTS
FEW STUDENTS
Access to SMH Professionals: Recommended Ratios

School psychologists: 1:500 students
School counselors: 1:250 students
School social workers: 1:250 students
School nurses: 1:750 students

However, lack of funding and budget cuts to schools/education means that many school have much higher ratios (e.g. some Districts have 1 school psychologist to 5,000 students)
“Return-to-school” will not be a return to school norm.

Meeting the social-emotional needs of students must be priority #1.
NASP Resources

- **NASP COVID-19 Resource Center**
  

- **School Reentry Considerations: Supporting Student Social Emotional Learning and Mental Behavioral Health Amidst COVID 19 (ASCA & NASP)**
  
  [https://www.nasponline.org/x55418.xml](https://www.nasponline.org/x55418.xml)

- **Framework for Effective School Discipline**
  
  [https://www.nasponline.org/disciplineframework](https://www.nasponline.org/disciplineframework)

- **Equity Considerations During and After COVID-19 School Closures**
  
  [https://www.nasponline.org/x55210.xml](https://www.nasponline.org/x55210.xml)