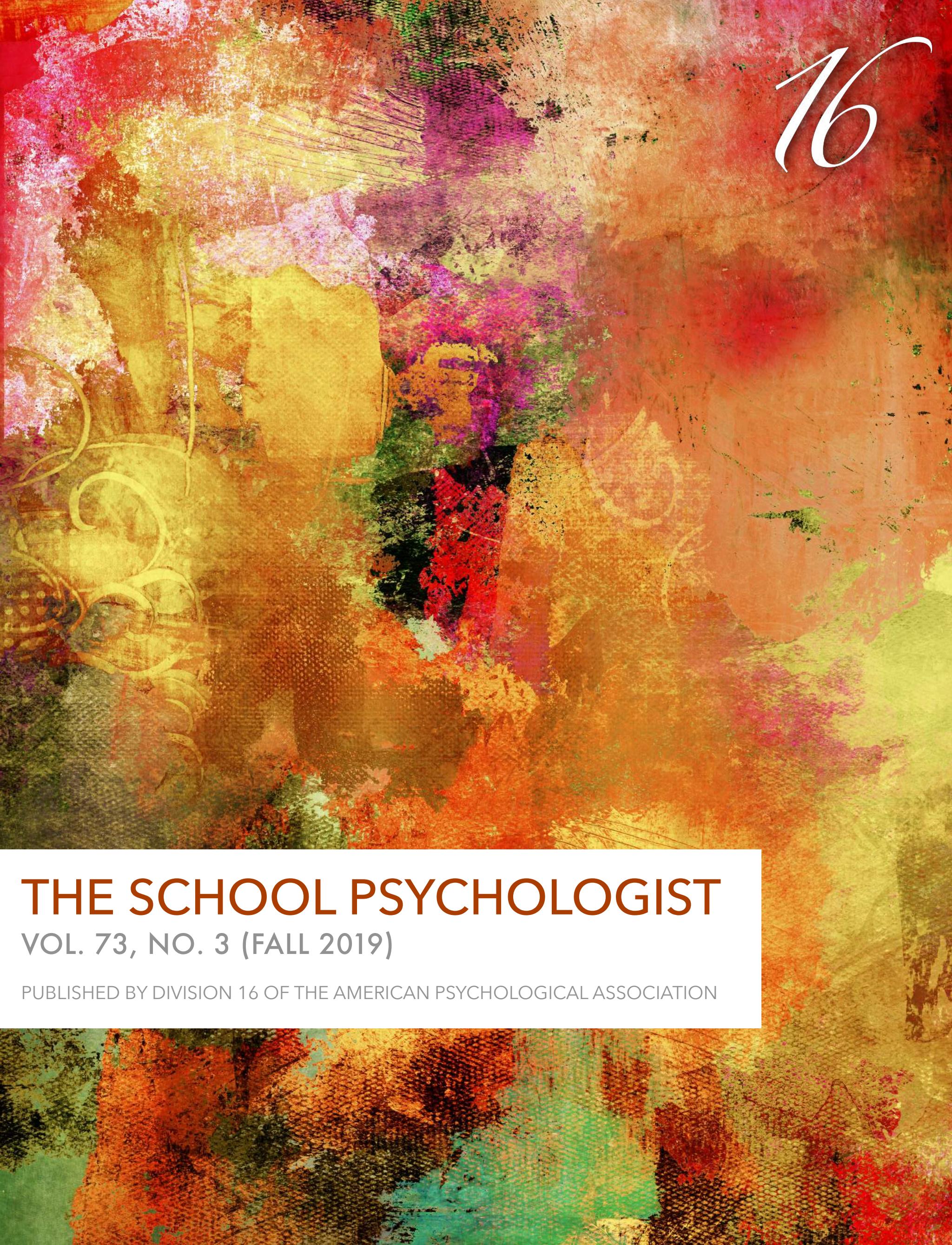


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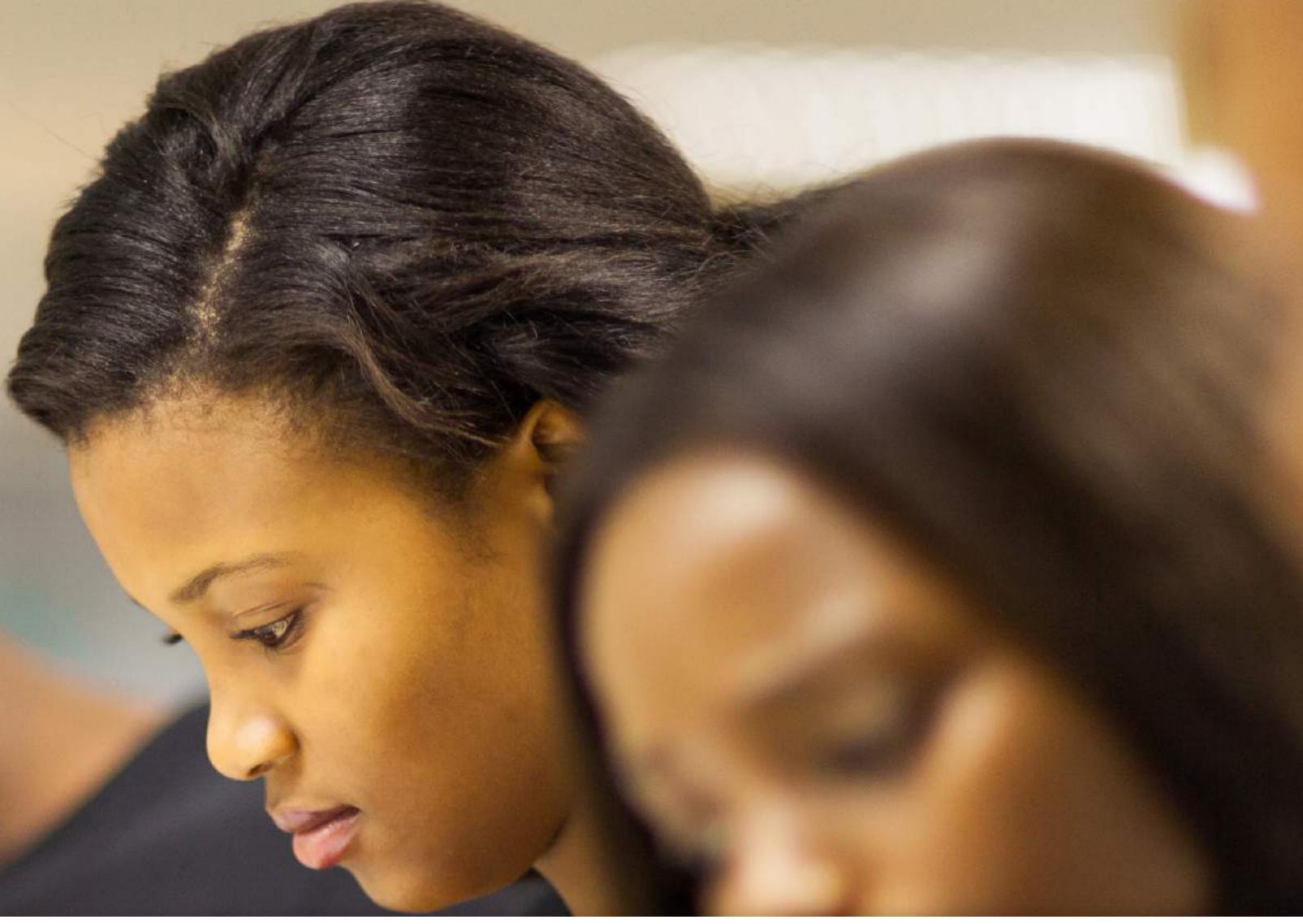
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ADVOCATING FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE STUDENTS: SUPPORTING FAMILIES OF COLOR AND THEIR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

By Eleanor C. Bold, University of Denver

The 2018 Condition of Education report showed American public schools serve roughly 50 million students (McFarland et al., 2018). Of these 50 million students, 10% are English language learners (ELLs), 27% live in mother-only households, 19% live in poverty, and 13% receive special education services (McFarland et al., 2018). These groups of students have garnered a plethora of research focused on achievement, indicating a gap between students of color and their White peers beginning at the onset of formal schooling and widening as students move through the school system. In explaining this gap, scholars support that the public-school system continues to view student development and behaviors through the lens of White, middle-class children; therefore, these are the children best served (O'Connor & Fernandez, 2006; O'Keeffe & Medina, 2016).

**Correspondence
concerning this article can
be addressed to:**

Eleanor Bold
Department of Teaching and
Learning Sciences
University of Denver
Denver, CO 80210.

Email:
ellie.bold@du.edu

Students of color are constrained in their achievement within the education system. That is, they are viewed as non-normative and their behaviors are often misperceived and judged unfairly (Cartledge & Kourea, 2008; O'Keeffe & Medina, 2016). Recent literature has focused on how these perceptions support disproportionality in both school discipline and placement in special education services, both of which negatively target students of color and interact with the other in the process (Allen & Steed, 2016; Cosier & Pearson, 2016; Simmons-Reed & Cartledge, 2014). Therefore, this paper seeks to aid school psychologists in supporting parents of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) children with disabilities in navigating the special education system to foster students' success.

Disability and race as a student in the public-school system

The intersection of identifying as a student of color and being diagnosed with a disability in the public-school system must be considered. Historical beliefs about both race and ability were based on white supremacy and have carried over into present day to negatively impact students (Annamma, Connor, & Ferri, 2013). Both race and ability are socially constructed concepts that marginalize the target population, assuming those perceived as deviating from the norm want to, or should, achieve the norm's standards (Annamma et al., 2013; Cosier & Pearson, 2016). As there is no possibility of achieving the normative identity, they are often the first to fall through the cracks in the American public-school system (Annamma et al., 2013). While racism and ableism manifest very differently and are not equitable in experience, the unique effects of this combined identity create a highly vulnerable student population.

Students with disabilities are more likely to be on the receiving end of disciplinary practices than students without disabilities regardless of race (Fenton, Ocasio-Stoutenburg, & Harry, 2017; Sullivan, Van Norman, & Klingbeil, 2014). Having any special education category other than specific learning disability or low-incidence disability has been found to increase the likelihood of a student being suspended. An emotional disturbance diagnosis increases students' likelihood of being suspended by nine times (Sullivan et al., 2014). This is of particular concern due to the representation of students of color in the special education system (Kourea, Gibson, & Werunga, 2018). While only 5% of all students served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) receive services for emotional disturbances, 7% of all Black students and 7% of all students of two or more races served under IDEA receive services for emotional disturbances (McFarland et al., 2018). Being a student of color increases the

suspension likelihood of a student in special education by more than three times, attenuating the effect of disability (Sullivan et al, 2014). While African American and Hispanic students constitute 50% of those involved in school-related arrest, African American students with disabilities are more than twice as likely to be suspended than those without disabilities, and for longer periods of time (Simmons-Reed & Cartledge, 2014).

These rates expose biases in special education practices against students of color that are contributing to poorer academic outcomes, higher dropout rates, and the school to prison pipeline (Cosier & Pearson, 2016; Cramer & Bennett, 2015; Simmons-Reed & Cartledge, 2014). Students of color and those identified with disabilities receive more negative teacher attention, are viewed by teachers with lower expectations, and are often combating the negative effects of poverty (Cramer & Bennett, 2015). Further, the standards driving these biases are rooted in majority norms that students of color and those identified with disabilities cannot fairly meet; yet, failure to do so leads to exclusion.

Familial influences on student achievement

An integral component in supporting students of all abilities is familial involvement. In a recent review of the literature, Boonk, Gijselaers, Ritzen, and Brand-Gruwel (2018) found familial involvement in student success is historically non-operationalized, yet, the association with academic achievement is consistently positive and often found to be strongest with familial expectations and aspirations. Family beliefs and attitudes are more predictive of higher achievement than active forms of involvement (e.g., homework assistance). Further, familial expectations are associated with increases in reading, math, and grades regardless of socioeconomic status or ethnicity (Boonk, et al., 2018). These results support prior meta-analyses that report similar outcomes of familial expectations as the strongest predictor of academic achievement (Castro et al., 2015;

Wilder, 2014). However, the studies reviewed reported majority White samples (Boonk et al., 2018; Dahrenbourg & Blake, 2014; Wentzel, Russell, & Baker, 2016). Research on non-White, low-income students is rare in determining factors that impact social and academic outcomes. The few studies of non-White students support family academic expectations as central to positive academic values and grades in students (Dahrenbourg & Blake, 2014; Wentzel et al., 2016).

Family-school interactions

Familial school-based involvement has been implicated as a factor that supports adolescent mental health and academic success (Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014). However, the type of familial involvement has been shown to vary by race/ethnicity. While White American families engage in more frequent in-person school involvement, African American and Hispanic families tend to be more involved in their children's education from home, assisting with homework, overseeing projects, and discussing daily events (Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014). It has been argued that cultural beliefs and negative historical experiences with the public-school system may deter African American families from being involved in the school, while Hispanic and immigrant families are exhibiting cultural differences in what constitutes appropriate family involvement, as well as the impact of language barriers and limited understanding of the American school system (Fenton et al., 2017; Vanegas & Abdelrahim, 2016; Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014). White American families may feel more comfortable in the school setting because they are highly represented and are more likely to have had positive experiences as students (Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014). In turn, socioeconomic factors may impact families of color's ability to engage and participate due to time and resources, compounding the barriers to in-person familial involvement (Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014).



Family involvement in the special education process

While familial participation in a child's education is important for all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act mandates familial consent for participation in special education (McFarland et al., 2018). Families must take on an advocacy role to ensure their children receive the supports and services necessary. This is more difficult for families of color (Burke et al., 2018; Vanegas & Abdelrahim, 2016). While some families, particularly those from higher SES and White backgrounds, are very comfortable being an integral part of the process and structure their own interactions with the school, advocating strongly for what they feel is best for their child and seeking out information on the process, others have a more deferential attitude to this process (Fenton et al., 2017). While schools may interpret this as a lack of interest or desire to participate, it is often due to the cultural barriers reflected in overall family-school interactions, and comfort level of the families in being assertive

due to experiences wherein being assertive was interpreted as aggressive by school staff (Fenton et al., 2017; Burke et al., 2018). Lack of resources, poor health insurance coverage, and little knowledge of the special education process are additional obstacles many families of color face (Vanegas & Abdelrahim, 2016).

Despite best practices outlining family engagement as requiring trust and sensitivity to cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity, educators can be quick to assume low competence in families of color and move forward without their active participation (Fenton et al., 2017). Additionally, it has been demonstrated that educators may develop biases about families that prohibit true partnership: racial microaggressions are implied in many interactions between families and school personnel, including flippant tone of voice, dismissive facial expressions, or perception of the family's disagreement with teachers as denial or unfit parenting (Colker, 2015; Fenton et al., 2017). Educators may further these aggressions

by imposing goals for students that suit their own cultural norms, rather than eliciting goals from families that value and respect the student's culture as well (Fenton et al., 2017). This decision creates tension in the family-school partnership and might negatively impact the child in question whose home experiences and background will not be reflected in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

In practice: Recommendations from the literature

Facilitating advocacy

Recommendations to support familial involvement in the special education process often begin with advocacy. Researchers have found several programs designed to train volunteer advocates to be feasible and effective in providing these skills (Burke, 2013; Burke, Goldman, Hart, & Hodapp, 2016; Burke, Mello, & Goldman, 2016). A pilot study from Kansas reviewed the Family Employment Awareness Training (FEAT), which aimed to provide families with the cultural and social capital necessary to advocate for their children transitioning to post-school employment (Francis, Gross, Turnbull, & Family-Johnson, 2013). Results showed training raised familial expectations and knowledge for student's employment opportunities (Francis et al., 2013). The Latino Family Leadership Support Program presented a promising design, training advocates to support Spanish-speaking families of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD; Burke, Buren, Rios, Garcia, & Magana, 2018). Trainers and trainees alike spoke Spanish and met with families to explain their rights, refer them to resources, and speak over the phone (Burke et al., 2018). This program highlighted the familism culture of Latino families, and best addresses the present topic compared. However, neither of these studies assessed or evaluated child outcomes, and therefore is a major point for future research (Burke et al., 2018).

It must be noted that advocating for children with disabilities is an inherently difficult task due to the specific and specialized knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to do so (Trainor, 2010). Many successful advocacy skills found to be employed by families of children with disabilities are reported to require extensive knowledge (including legal rights and intricacies of IDEA), social networks, and financial resources (Trainor, 2010). Advocacy skills utilized by families of color are in turn reported to focus on their knowledge of the child and the disability (Trainor, 2010). School psychologists and other team members should take note of families' advocacy styles and recognize if the chosen advocacy route indicates a potential need to be further informed about the special education process, enabling families to best advocate for their children. Wherever necessary, when meeting with families, pausing to ensure the family has advocated as needed should be made routine.

Familial access to the special education process

An alternate strategy highlighted by the literature is the utilization of cultural navigators and awareness of potential cultural conflicts with students and their families (Povenmire-Kirk, Bethune, Alverson, & Kahn, 2015), calling for special educators to take the lead in acquiring interpreters for meetings and coordinating with them ahead of time (More, Hart, & Cheatham, 2013). Collaborating and discussing the content of the meeting, clarifying any terminology or concepts for the interpreter, and checking-in to ensure the correct message is being conveyed are all discussed as best practice, and can also be facilitated by school psychologists (More et al., 2013). Further, family networks at the school have been shown to support child outcomes, especially in low-income schools, and may help combat cultural barriers (Park, Stone, & Holloway, 2017). Facilitating communication and support for families experiencing similar processes can create a sense of community and better empower

families to engage. This can be done through school-sponsored meetings, family groups, online communication platforms, facilitating dialogues between families new and current to the school, as well as social events (e.g., back to school potluck).

A review of the official Special Education Procedural Safeguards given to every family of a student receiving special education services (and provided by state departments of education) was found to be written at a 16-year-old age-level, which is disproportionately above the reading level of families of students with disabilities compared to the general population (Mandic, Rudd, Hehir, & Acevedo-Garcia, 2012). Much of these documents was further found to be written at college equivalent or beyond literacy levels (Mandic et al., 2012). Therefore, it is necessary to ensure translations are being done not just adequately, but that the information being conveyed is truly understood. Taking time to check-in with families, whether in a meeting, by phone, or email when an evaluation is taking place can help ensure communication and understanding is successful.

School-based cultural competence

The American public-school environment continues to reflect dominant White culture and norms most strongly, putting students of color at risk of misinterpreting the school's culture and making familial participation challenging (Hurley, Warren, Habalow, Weber, & Tousignant, 2014; Orosco & Abdulrahim, 2017; Sleeter, 2017). Additionally, due the dominant culture's overwhelming presence, microaggressions are felt through environmental cues and invalidating communications by children and families alike, discouraging involvement (Allen, Scott, & Lewis, 2013). Yet, it shouldn't be a family's responsibility to acculturate and train to interact with the school system to ensure student success; it must be a reciprocal relationship. The literature makes a

resounding call for stronger cultural competence within the public-school system. Despite being continuously promoted as best practice, cultural dissonance remains common between students' homes and school, contributing to poor educational outcomes whether or not students have been identified with a disability (Hurley et al., 2014).

In practice, cultural competence can bridge the home-school culture gap and create culturally responsive and affirming classrooms that support students' learning and identity development (Allen & Steed, 2016; Debnam, Pas, Bottiani, Cash, & Bradshaw, 2015). CLD diverse students identified with disabilities present a highly diverse array of needs that are still in the infancy of testing, yet several recommendations have shown promise: selecting relevant curricular materials that reflects students' own heritage (e.g., discussion topics, reading materials, projects, etc.); explicit, systematic, and meaningful instruction that provides concrete examples with visual aids, teacher modeling, and immediate feedback; and peer facilitated activities that foster conversational skills and scaffold positive social interactions and support (Cramer & Bennett, 2015; Kourea et al., 2018; O'Keeffe & Medina, 2016; Ortiz & Robertson, 2018; Rivera et al., 2016). Additionally, safe educational environments that promote dignity, allow for self-advocacy and self-determination, and offer programs that are inclusive (allow all students equitable access to the same settings and activities) are required (Rivera et al., 2016).

Culturally responsive practices require the students' strengths rather than weaknesses be considered as a starting point for instruction or services (Piazza, Rao, & Protacio, 2015). These practices require strong home-school partnerships, especially for younger children, in order to understand the student's background fully and incorporate their experiences and frame of reference into instruction (Ortiz & Robertson,

2018; Piazza et al., 2015; Rivera et al., 2016). Educators must extend multiple opportunities for families to be involved and display cultural competence in these interactions (Piazza et al., 2015). Invitations to participate or communicate should not be a one-time offer; continual attempts should be made, as well as sending home notes, updates, or materials to share.

Conclusion

The ultimate goal in education remains for every child to succeed and reach his or her potential, regardless of background or ability (DOE, 2018). Especially for CLD children with disabilities, it is important to not put a limit on success by holding low expectations for these students' success and allowing implicit biases and assumptions to guide interactions. Though the necessity of culturally affirming experiences for students and families of color are commonly discussed, the research reviewed shows low implementation of these practices in the public-school system (e.g., Cramer & Bennett, 2015; O'Keeffe & Medina, 2016; Rivera et al., 2016). Educators in all capacities must identify where the disconnect occurs, and school psychologists are in a unique position to encourage these efforts. By utilizing available training resources to support the creation of culturally affirming classrooms and engage in reciprocal partnerships with families, motivated by the recognition that families are working hard to meet them halfway, and the knowledge that positive student outcomes can follow.



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DIVISION 16'S LEGACY FUND: JOIN THE TEAM DONATING \$100

Background: Membership in Division 16 has declined over the years while some aspects of operations have continued to increase. The costs of promoting the mission statement and activities of the Division of School Psychology have also increased. At the same time, the NIH, NIMH, and other Federal agencies looking at child mental health continue to designate children as one of the top ten most underserved populations in our country. School psychology, which is truly the lifeline of public mental health for children and adolescents, has seen reductions in funding in constant dollars over the last decade, despite population growth in numbers and in need.

Solution: To ensure the survival of the APA Division of School Psychology, and its ability to advocate for children and for mental health and integrated services in the nations' schools, the Division Executive Committee (EC) has created a capital endowment Legacy fund.

Leadership: The EC also voted to establish a committee — the *Committee on Professional and Corporate Sponsorship of School Psychology* (CPCSSP) — to develop funds for use by the Division EC. Division past-president Cecil Reynolds, Ph.D. chairs the CPCSSP; commonly known as the Legacy Committee.

Stewardship: The inaugural members of the Legacy Committee have donated at least \$2,500 and serve in an advisory role (5-year term) with the goal of developing potential sources of funding opportunities. For example, Legacy Committee members are working to develop corporate giving and other charitable opportunities to support the Division. Some Legacy member profile pages can be found at: <https://apadivision16.org/committee-on-professional-and-corporate-sponsorship-of-school-psychology/> - at present the Legacy Committee has over \$40,000 in collected and pledged contributions. Legacy Committee members include, among others:

Cecil Reynolds, Ph.D. (chair)
Thomas Kehle, Ph.D.
R. Steve McCallum, Ph.D.
Kevin McGrew, Ph.D.
Sam Ortiz, Ph.D.
Daniel Reschly, Ph.D.
Frank Worrell, Ph.D.

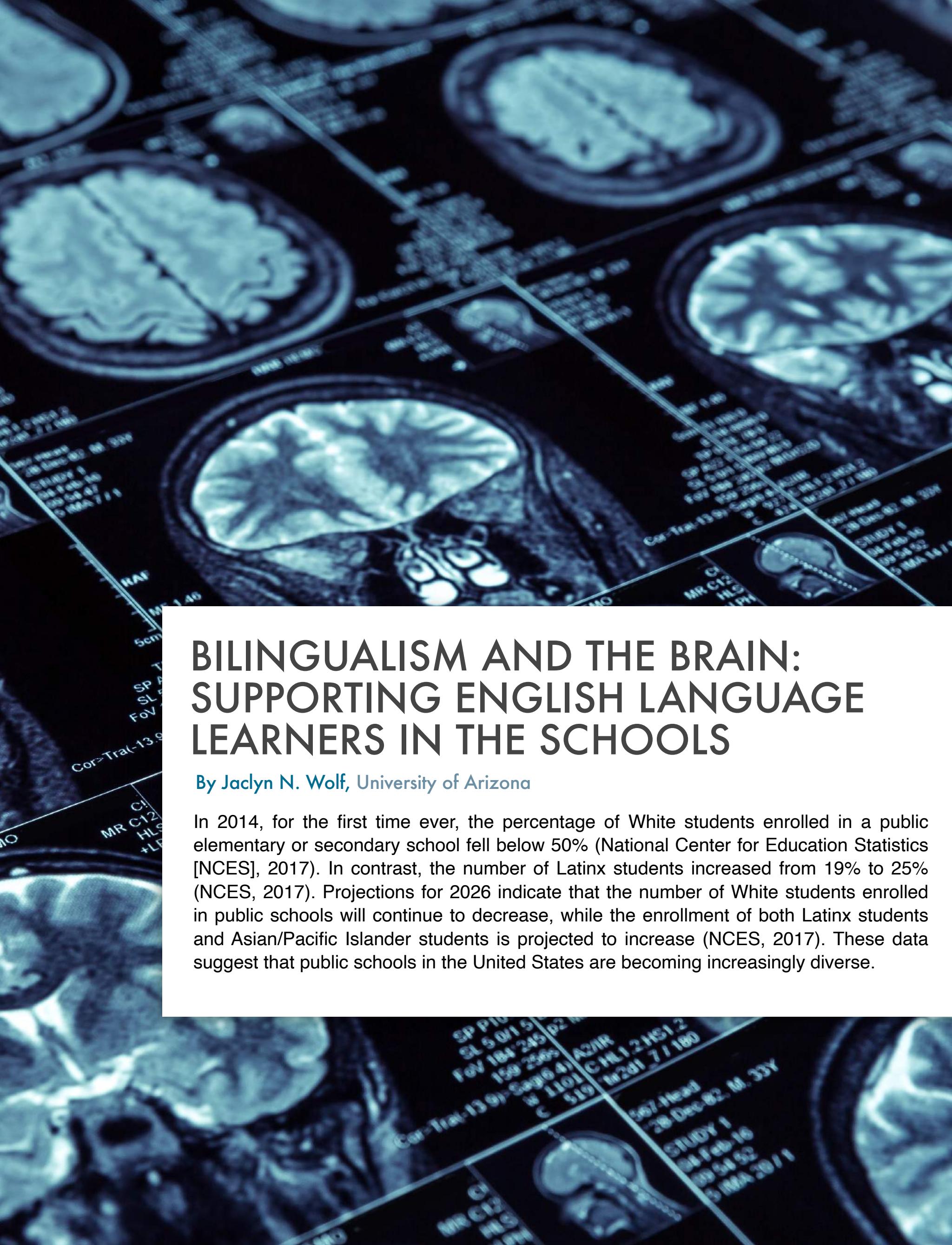
Goal: At its midwinter meeting in January, the Division EC voted to initiate the 100 at 100 campaign. Specifically, the goal is for 100% of our members to donate \$100 by the Division's 75th anniversary in 2020. These monies will go to support the mission of the Division and things like the capital endowment as a permanent funding source for school psychology—and is only \$8.50 per month for one year from each supporter. If we can make it to a \$100.00 contribution from 100% of membership, the Division will have a viable permanent Legacy Fund to carry the mission of the Division into the future.

Division 16 supporters can make direct donations year-round at:

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Ph.D., ABPP serves as the Division liaison to the Legacy Committee, she can be contacted at HughesT@duq.edu.

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BILINGUALISM AND THE BRAIN: SUPPORTING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN THE SCHOOLS

By Jaclyn N. Wolf, University of Arizona

In 2014, for the first time ever, the percentage of White students enrolled in a public elementary or secondary school fell below 50% (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2017). In contrast, the number of Latinx students increased from 19% to 25% (NCES, 2017). Projections for 2026 indicate that the number of White students enrolled in public schools will continue to decrease, while the enrollment of both Latinx students and Asian/Pacific Islander students is projected to increase (NCES, 2017). These data suggest that public schools in the United States are becoming increasingly diverse.

**Correspondence
concerning this article can
be addressed to:**

Jaclyn N. Wolf
Department of Disability and
Psychoeducational Studies
1430 E. Second Street
Education Building, Fourth
Floor
Tucson, AZ 85721.

Email:
jaclyn.wolf@arizona.edu

This increasing diversity has implications on the populations served in schools. The prevalence of English language learners (ELL) has increased steadily each year. In the 2014/15 school year, the percentage of public school students who were ELL was 9.4%, or an estimated 4.6 million students (NCES, 2017). Spanish represented the home language for 77.1% of all ELL students; while, Arabic, Chinese, and Vietnamese were the next most common home languages (NCES, 2017).

Bilingualism is typically conceptualized in two ways: simultaneous bilinguals (i.e., those who acquire both their languages from birth), and sequential bilinguals (i.e., those who were exposed to their second language from age three and beyond; Mohades et al., 2015). One's native, or home language, is typically known as L1, while one's second language is known as L2. It is important to note that, while often implied, bilingualism and/or one's status as an ELL does not necessarily mean that one is actually fluent in either L1 or L2. Proficiency encompasses listening, speaking, reading, and writing and it is certainly possible that students may evidence varying levels of fluency across all of these skills in L1 and/or L2. This is especially true as it relates to the academic language required in schools.

There are many complexities and nuances with regard to working with ELL students. When ignored, these complexities and nuances can lead to the disproportionate identification and placement of ELL students in special education and other concerning educational outcomes. Youth identified as ELLs are the fastest growing group under the umbrella of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2005; Chao & Schenkel, 2013), and most are Spanish-speaking Latinx students (NCES, 2017). Broadly speaking, CLD students evidence disparities in educational opportunities and resources as compared to their White peers (Brayboy, Castagano, & Maughan, 2007; Sullivan, 2011). More specifically, Sullivan (2011) found that, relative to White peers, ELL students were increasingly likely to be identified as having learning or intellectual disabilities, and less likely to be served in the most appropriate learning environment for their needs (i.e., the least to more restrictive). Moreover, ELL students have among the highest grade retention and dropout rates of all youth (Durán, 2008). And, finally, approximately 30% of all ELL students reside in states where English-only legislation determines the type and amount of language support available (Sullivan, 2011), which greatly limits available resources.



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Thus, the situation is dire. Fortunately, school psychologists are uniquely qualified to address many of these deleterious consequences. In its position statement for bilingual services (i.e., "The Provision of School Psychological Services to Bilingual Students"), the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) denotes school psychologists as having an integral role in addressing the achievement gap between ELL students and their monolingual peers, decreasing overrepresentation in special education, and decreasing underrepresentation in gifted education (NASP, 2015). Additionally, through strong advocacy, consultation, and collaboration, school psychologists are poised to lead systemic changes that impact the educational inequities experienced by ELL students.

One way school psychologists may foster change is by helping educators, policy makers, and other key stakeholders recognize that the differences between ELL students and their monolingual peers extend beyond cultural and linguistic differences. This means acknowledging the ways in which the monolingual and bilingual brain differ, and considering the resulting functional differences. Understanding structural differences between the monolingual and bilingual brain, highlighting the subsequent functional differences, can help with advocacy efforts and appropriate assessment practices. Knowledge of strategies for educating and engaging ELL students can help with consultation and collaboration practices. To shed light on these

differences and assist school psychologists with their efforts, the present paper will first discuss the structural and functional differences between the monolingual and bilingual brain. Following, strategies for educating ELL students and addressing their unique needs in the classroom will be presented. Finally, implications and recommendations for supporting ELL students in the schools will be provided.

Structural and Functional Differences

It has been well established that structural differences exist in the brains of monolinguals and bilinguals (e.g., Kuhl et al., 2016; Lehtonen et al., 2009; Mohades et al., 2015; Wang, Kuhl, Chen, & Dong, 2009); and, perhaps one of the most studied areas is the difference in white matter. White matter is responsible for the connectivity of different brain regions, and has been implicated in sensory, motor, and cognitive functioning, information processing, learning, memory, and performance (Fields, 2010). A study conducted by Mohades et al. (2015) found that language pathways were different between bilingual and monolingual elementary school children using diffusion tensor imaging (DTI) to characterize changes in white matter structure. Children were separated by simultaneous bilinguals, sequential bilinguals, and monolinguals. Sequential bilinguals showed the highest degree of change among the three groups, indicating that structural differences are more pronounced when a second language is not learned in parallel with one's first. Thus, the authors concluded "not only speaking more than one language, but also the age of L2 acquisition affects maturational differences and changes in the white matter pathways involved in language processing" (Mohades et al., 2015, p. 11).

A study by Kuhl et al. (2016) also used DTI to examine white matter structure between monolinguals and bilinguals. In both groups, differences in white matter were seen in both

hemispheres of the brain, and were widespread; however, structural and regional differences emerged between groups. Language immersion (i.e., listening to English as compared to speaking English) was examined as a possible explanation for the structural differences. Interestingly, for bilinguals, immersive experience characterized by listening to English was correlated with decreases in radial and mean diffusivity white matter regions, and affected regions associated with motor production most; experience characterized by speaking English was correlated with increases in white matter regions and those associated with language comprehension (Kuhl et al., 2016). These results suggest that learning a language results in white matter changes that may enhance sensory-motor connections (Kuhl et al., 2016). Thus, in addition to age, one's qualitative experiences in acquisition of L2 may also affect different brain regions and structural features.

Differential brain activation patterns have also been well established. For example, Wang, Kuhl, Chen, and Dong (2009) found that language control accounted for differential activation patterns in the brain between monolinguals and bilinguals. Interestingly, these differences in the brain may be further complicated when structural differences in language are taken into account, as some research has demonstrated that structural variations in the brain may exist due to qualitative or structural differences in one's native language. For example, Cao, Young Kim, Liu, and Liu (2014) examined the relationship between brain activation and reading in Chinese students who were ELLs. English pseudoword rhyming was compared to a Chinese word rhyming task. Brain activation analyses revealed that both tasks evidenced a similar activation network with the exception of greater involvement of the right middle occipital gyrus when asked to process Chinese characters. The authors attributed this to the "greater holistic visuospatial processing of Chinese characters" (Cao et al., p.

275). Similar results were found in speakers of Finnish and Swedish. Lehtonen et al. (2009) asked Finnish-Swedish bilinguals to complete a lexical decision task with inflected Finnish nouns (i.e., more morphologically complex words) and monomorphemic Swedish nouns while measuring their brain activation using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). Inflectional processing costs resulting in activation increases were evident in Finnish, but not in Swedish, suggesting a language-specific processing difference in the brain possibly related to structural differences between the two languages (Lehtonen et al., 2009). Broadly, processing costs refer to the mental labor required to process information. When applied to inflections, this refers to processing changes in grammatical information such as tense or agreement (Anderson, 2018).

As related to the findings of Mohades et al. (2015), age of acquisition may also lead to structural or activation differences. For example, Berken et al. (2015) used fMRI to investigate neural activation in reading aloud in bilinguals who differed in age of acquisition for L2. Results indicated that simultaneous bilinguals activated similar brain regions when reading in both languages; however, sequential bilinguals evidenced stronger activation in areas related to speech-motor control and orthographic and phonological mapping when reading aloud in L2 versus L1 (Berken et al., 2015). The activity in these regions also showed a significant positive correlation with the age of acquisition, suggesting that there is greater brain activation when speaking in late-acquired L2 (Berken et al., 2015). Similarly, Liu and Cao (2016) conducted a meta-analysis of neuroimaging studies involving bilingual processes, paying particular attention to the role that age of acquisition plays in the similarities and difference between L1 and L2 activation networks. The authors found that, in comparison to early bilinguals, L2 processing involved additional activation regions than L1 for

late bilinguals; this suggests that L2 processing is more demanding for those acquiring it later.

How do these structural differences affect brain functioning between bilinguals and monolinguals? One area of difference is executive functioning; research suggests being bilingual leads to advantages in executive functions. For example, Yang, Hartano, and Yang (2016) examined the conversational exchanges of bilinguals, hypothesizing that switching between both languages in the same context would be more cognitively taxing (i.e., higher processing costs) than using one single language, or mixing elements of both languages in the same utterance; however, findings suggested that the opposite was true. Those who switched between both languages in the same context evidenced smaller processing costs, suggesting bilingual advantages in specific aspects of executive functioning. Moreover, research has shown that bilinguals outperform their monolingual peers on a wide variety of executive function tasks (e.g., Barac, Bialystok, Castro, & Sanchez, 2014). Grundy and Keyvani Chahi (2017) asked bilingual and monolingual children to perform a task-switching experiment with both conflict and non-conflict tasks. Results indicated that the effects of the conflict tasks persisted for monolinguals, but not for bilinguals; thus, bilingual children were faster able to disengage and move between tasks.

Another functional difference may be in the area of working memory, though it appears to be linked to executive functioning. Morales, Calvo, and Bialystok (2013) compared working memory between monolingual and bilingual children. Working memory demands were measured by comparing conditions based on tasks with two-rules, four-rules, and conflict tasks; thus, executive function demands were also measured. Bilinguals responded faster than monolinguals on all tasks, and more accurately responded to conflict trials, indicating an advantage in

"These differences likely result in real implications for academic skill acquisition and performance, and even mental health."

executive functioning. According to the authors, the results "show an advantage for bilingual children in working memory that is especially evident when the task contains additional executive function demands" (Morales et al., 2013, p. 187). Together, the results of all of these studies are promising. However, it should be noted that the hypothesis that being bilingual leads to advantages in executive functioning, though widely researched, is not necessarily always supported. For example, to further explore the relationship between bilingualism and executive functioning, Dick et al. (2019) conducted a study of over 4,500 9- to 10-year-olds in the U.S. The authors found little evidence to support executive function benefits in bilinguals.

In summary, there is clear empirical evidence to support differences in the brains of bilinguals and monolinguals. These include changes in white matter, differential activation networks, language control centers, and differences in cognitive skills. These differences likely result in real implications for academic skill acquisition and performance, and even mental health. A salient example of this is evident in a study conducted by Mei Lin (2015), which used questionnaires and in-depth interviews to explore the writing performance of ELL students. Participants originated from China, Taiwan, Saudi Arabia, Angola, Cameroon, Thailand, and Korea. Mei Lin (2015) adopts an interesting perspective, positing that ELL writers must acquire English writing skills as part of direct



instruction versus deriving them directly from their own language and culture; subsequently, ELL writing samples may have more surface-level errors in grammar, spelling, mechanics, vocabulary and other linguistic features than native English-speaking writers. While Mei Lin raises an important point, it should be noted that this may be more ambiguous in practice. For example, one consideration may be the similarities between a student's native language and English. If the languages are similarly based (e.g., alphabetic) versus categorically different (e.g., syllabic-based) it would be reasonable to expect variable outcomes in skill development and writing achievement. The native language of many of the participants in Mei Lin's study was syllabic-based (e.g., Korean).

Still, rhetorical styles, organization, and expression of ideas may also be impacted by an ELL student's primary language and culture (Mei Lin, 2015). Findings indicated that word choice was the chief writing difficulty, which was further complicated when students attempted to mitigate this difficulty by consulting a bilingual dictionary (i.e., translations were jumbled and unclear). Adjusting to American thought and rhetorical patterns, and the act of switching between thinking in L1 but being required to write in L2, also emerged as a difficulty. Writing fluency was another area of difficulty, with participants expressing frustration about the amount of time it took to think about what they wanted to write. Recognizing the differences between academic writing, idioms, and colloquialisms was also an area of difficulty. Finally, many participants expressed anxiety and low self-confidence in relation to having to write in English. These results suggest that writing may be an area of marked difficulty for bilingual students, especially when their native language differs structurally from English; clearly, these students have learning needs that are ELL-specific. Perhaps most concerning is the psychological implications this difficulty appears to evidence. Mei Lin's study

is just one example of the important implications for how ELL students are served in the schools; the knowledge gleaned from studies such as this must then be used to inform curriculum, and policies and practices at the local and district levels.

Effective Strategies for Teaching ELL Students

In their responsibility to support students' learning, school psychologists are often expected to engage in consultation with teachers and other educational personnel regarding academic interventions. School psychologists should provide consultation services that are sensitive to the needs of ELL students by using strategies that incorporate language and culture (NASP, 2015). This should include the recognition of structural and functional differences in the brains of bilinguals and monolinguals, and providing evidence-based strategies to address these differences is crucial. To this end, Lombardi (2010) outlined ways in which teachers could implement brain-based research when teaching ELL students. Specifically, Lombardi (2010) recommends interactive activities, graphic organizers, tapping into prior knowledge, and encouraging student participation as strategies to effectively attend to neurodevelopmental differences, and motivate ELL students. Lombardi (2010) provides an example:

Receptive and expressive language skills are developed through read-alouds, vocabulary explorations, reader's theater, pair-shares, and use of kinesthetic activities and audiovisuals to stimulate discussion. Rhythmic games, songs, and oral rehearsal may reinforce sequential ordering skills, whereas use of manipulative and graphic organizers can help ELLs with spatial arrangement. (p. 220)

Lastly, and importantly, Lombardi (2010) outlines

that students feeling welcomed, supported, and as though their learning environment is non-threatening is imperative when acquiring new language skills.

In line with NASP's (2015) position, research suggests that ELL students learn best when curriculum includes an infusion of culture and language. Johnson, Bolshakova, and Waldron (2014) examined this as it related to science instruction, arguing that "many teachers of underrepresented students are not prepared to enact strategies that infuse culture and language, resulting in poor performance of linguistic minority students who fail to gain a connection with science" (p. 477). The authors implemented an intervention known as transformative professional development (TPD), an educational system for students from various ethnic/racial, and cultural backgrounds via culturally relevant pedagogy (Johnson et al., 2014). Its purpose was to transform science teacher quality and learning of science for Latinx ELL students. Teachers in the TPD program attended professional development sessions, enrolled in conversational Spanish courses, and utilized science modules. Teachers in the program were better able to deliver new strategies, curriculum, content, and reform-based practices, and gained expertise in the integration of culture and language (Johnson et al., 2014). Despite district policies presenting many challenges related to implementation and fidelity, ELL students evidenced growth in performance on state assessments as compared to both their control peers, and the overall population of students within the intervention schools (Johnson et al., 2014). These findings are valuable because they underscore the importance of culturally competent stakeholders, as well as the impact of curriculum that considers students' language and culture. Though systems-level policies have not historically been amenable to modification, and occasionally a deterrent to the implementation of best practices, this study instills optimism that actions at local levels can

still impart meaningful change.

The activation of multiple brain areas suggests that multidimensional instructional approaches may be best for bilingual students. Rodriguez-Valls (2012) presented a model of interdisciplinary teaching (i.e., building a cognitive bridge between subject areas) to increase students' language proficiency and academic performance. The model combined methods and academic language from mathematic, language arts, science, social studies, art, and music to enhance ELL students' critical thinking across subject areas (Rodriguez-Valls, 2012). Results indicated that the approach created a sense of confidence among students, which translated into higher test scores in all language arts and mathematics domains, even when compared to other students both at the district level, and statewide (Rodriguez-Valls, 2012). Similarly, York-Barr, Ghere, and Sommerness (2007) examined a coteaching instructional model to support ELL students, which involves two or more teachers collaboratively designing and then providing instruction to diverse groups of students in a shared space (Friend, 2005; as cited in York-Barr et al., 2007). Essentially, diverse areas of expertise are used to differentiate instruction (York-Barr et al., 2007). After a three-year implementation of coteaching at an elementary school, ELL student achievement increased substantially (York-Barr et al., 2007).

Implications and Conclusion

In conclusion, the differences between ELL students and their monolingual peers are incredibly complex, with myriad factors that, when not taken into account, lead to many ELL students facing grim consequences. As demonstrated, there is much room for reform at all levels in order to best serve these students; however, as with all things aspirational, this is likely a task easier said than done. For example,



at the curriculum-level, qualitative and structural differences in the properties of one's native language (e.g., Chinese) may make identifying a curriculum that serves all ELL students a complex and daunting charge. Moreover, while successful, many of the interventions outlined in this paper require additional training, and both teacher and administrative buy-in.

Though it may seem formidable, school psychologists can and should use their expertise in consultation, collaboration, and advocacy to address these needs. At the general level, this must first include school psychologists partaking in ongoing learning experiences that illuminate the ways in which current service models, beliefs, skills, and practices impact student outcomes and support educational equity for all students within their school(s) (King, Artiles, & Kozleski, 2009; Kozleski, 2005; as cited in NASP, 2015). This could encompass professional development such as trainings and workshops, reviewing school data (e.g., retention rates, evaluation referrals), and cultivating relationships with ELL

students to better understand their experiences. Information gleaned should be used to inform school- and district-wide training, professional development, and practice, as the NASP Practice Model (2010) instructs school psychologists to ensure that psychological services for ELL students consider a student's entire school experience, meaning that supports are intermixed into all levels. A multitiered system of supports is recommended to meet this consideration; however, linguistic and cultural factors, such as the impact of limited English proficiency and language acquisition on achievement, must be considered to ensure that instructions and interventions are accessible for and supportive of ELL students (Rabinowitz, 2008; as cited in NASP, 2015).

When consulting with teachers and other stakeholders, school psychologists may find referencing the information contained in the present paper useful. If, for example, a teacher raises concerns about an ELL student's academic performance, it may be advantageous

to further assess how the teacher is engaging with the student. Probing questions may center on teaching strategies, classroom expectations, specific academic demands, the student's native language, and their process of language acquisition (e.g., age). Highlighting how these may interact with brain differences and possibly affect performance, and encouraging practices based on the recommendations of many of the authors cited here (e.g., Johnson et al., 2014; Lombardi, 2010) may be helpful for both the stakeholder and the ELL student. Additionally, for those interested, directing stakeholders to supplementary resources may be efficacious in furthering their professional development. One example is *The ELL Teacher's Toolbox* (Ferlazzo & Hull Sypnieski, 2018), a handbook with practical ways to support ELL students in the classroom. Strategies like these empower school psychologists to better advocate for ELL students by accounting for their unique needs.

Many school psychologists are also acting as the mental health professional in their school(s), allowing them to address the possible psychological effects of being an ELL student (e.g., anxiety, low self-esteem; Mei Lin, 2015). Advocating for best teaching practices may be one way to address these effects; Mei Lin's (2015) study suggests that anxiety and low self-esteem may be attributed to perceived poor performance. Thus, if ELL students feel engaged and supported in the classroom, psychological effects may be mitigated. Additionally, as outlined by NASP (2015), cultivating relationships with ELL students may be useful in this regard as well. In their book *Creating Safe and Supportive Schools and Fostering Students' Mental Health*, Sulkowski and Lazarus (2016) provide strategies for addressing the mental health needs of all students, but school psychologists may find many of them useful in their work with ELL students specifically (e.g., adaptive academic mindsets, providing praise for process instead of performance, mindfulness interventions for anxiousness).

Though beyond the scope of this paper, appropriate assessment practices are also crucial when working with ELL students. More relevant is the role of cultural and linguistic competency in both evaluating the validity of a referral, and conducting an appropriate evaluation. This requires knowledge of the language acquisition process (see Cummins, 1979), and reliable and valid assessment tools. NASP (2015) recommends that bilingual students be assessed in their native language when it is suspected that this will produce the most valid data for informing interventions. Though many well-meaning professionals assume that nonverbal assessment tools yield valid data for ELL students, NASP (2015) cautions that these measures may be as culturally loaded as verbal tests. These considerations must be kept in mind to actually mitigate discriminatory evaluation and assessment practices.

Regardless of the challenges that lay ahead, the onus is on educators, policymakers, and other key stakeholders to ensure that ELL students are being treated fairly, respectfully, and given every opportunity possible to access the curriculum in the same way as their monolingual peers. School psychologists' multifaceted scope of practice positions them to be at the front lines of this. Without supports, ELL students will likely face a variety of problems, such as: low self-esteem (Mei Lin, 2015; Rodriguez-Valls, 2012), psychological problems (Mei Lin, 2015), academic difficulties (Mei Lin, 2015), inappropriate identification and placement in special education (Sullivan, 2011), and dropout (Durán, 2008). As demonstrated in the present paper, perhaps one explanation for these phenomena is the lack of recognition that the differences between ELL students and their monolingual peers extend beyond culture and language. Arming school psychologists and other stakeholders with the understanding of structural differences between the monolingual and bilingual brain, highlighting the subsequent functional differences, and knowledge of

strategies for educating and engaging ELL students, can help mitigate these phenomena by positively impacting advocacy efforts, and assessment, consultation, and collaboration practices.

Currently, the unique strengths of ELL students may not be recognized (e.g., working memory, executive functioning; Morales et al., 2013). Moreover, the academic gains evidenced when ELLs receive appropriate instruction (e.g., Johnson et al., 2014; Rodriguez-Valls, 2012) suggest that there is room for improvement in current teaching practices. Thus, changing the narrative to extend beyond cultural and linguistic differences might help lead the endeavor; by acknowledging the implications of structural and functional differences in the brains of these students, school psychologists can help educators, policymakers, and other key stakeholders realize the need for sweeping reform.

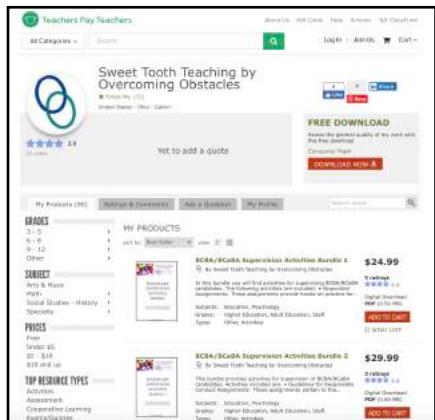
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THE EARLY CAREER PROFESSIONAL WORKGROUP PRESENTS TEACHING FOR EARLY CAREER SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

By [Rachel Stein](#), University of Colorado Denver

Many early career school psychologists engage in teaching, whether as a full-time job or in addition to their full-time jobs. Although always demanding, teaching as an early career professional poses some unique challenges (Korn & Sikorski, 2010). First, early career professionals may not have much experience teaching the courses they are assigned (or much teaching experience at all). Second, teaching itself may pose some additional considerations for early career professionals, such as their perceived credibility. Finally, honing one's teaching skills takes time and effort, which is a challenge for many early career professionals who may be simultaneously refining skills in other areas (e.g., practice and research).



**Correspondence
concerning this article
can be addressed to:**

Rachel Stein
University of Colorado
Denver

Email:
rachel.m.stein@ucdenver.edu

For those setting out to teach, it is common to wonder what makes someone a great teacher. A lot of great scholarly work has looked at this question and studied the characteristics and practices of master teachers (e.g., Baioccio & DeWaters, 1998). Some consistently cited traits and features of expert teachers include enthusiasm, friendliness, organization, optimism, expertise, using active learning techniques, and willingness to listen to student ideas (Baiocco & DeWaters, 1998; Richmond, Boysen, Gurung, 2016). Keeley and colleagues (2010) translated these ideas into the Teacher Behavior Checklist, which provides a list of specific behaviors of good instructors and offers an excellent starting place for self-evaluation for early career instructors.

This article presents a brief primer that is meant to be useful for early career or new course instructors. Teaching is a vast topic, with a growing empirical base that is far beyond what can be covered in one article. Rather, this piece addresses common concerns and considerations for early career instructors. Specifically, it offers guidance for new instructors in three main areas: preparing to teach, entering the classroom, and honing your teaching skills.

Preparing to Teach

Getting Started

Preparing to teach, or “getting started,” is always a daunting task when faced with a new course. This may be especially challenging for early career or less experienced instructors. When asked to teach a new course, instructors often are given a course description and perhaps a syllabus, but little else. There are many ways to approach course planning, but it is common for new instructors to focus on what they need to do to prepare to teach (e.g., what assignments to give, what content to cover; Bain, 2004). However, research on teaching and learning suggests that a better place to start is by establishing what students should learn from the course, rather than what the instructor should teach (Bain, 2004).

One approach to addressing what students should learn is backwards design (Bowen, 2017). At its most basic level, backwards design refers to course development that begins by determining what students should learn from the course and then developing activities and assignments that will best accomplish those goals (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). Not only is backwards design a research-based pedagogical technique, but it also can offer a helpful framework for course planning (Bowen, 2017). There are numerous places for early career instructors to seek information about backward design, including Vanderbilt University’s



Center for Teaching (Bowen, 2017) and Wiggins and McTighe's (2005) book *Understanding by Design*.

The Syllabus Matters

Syllabi are often a starting point for course planning, perhaps with good reason. First, a syllabus might be the one course planning tool (other than a course description) that is provided to instructors when preparing to teach a course. Second, syllabi are often considered a contract between the instructor and the students (Richmond et al., 2016), and many universities have required language or sections that instructors must include in their syllabi. Lastly, syllabi are often the first contact a student has with a course, and there is evidence that the structure and content of these documents can impact the course as a whole (Hess & Whittington, 2013). Hess and Whittington (2013) offer a primer on what to include in an effective syllabus. They also emphasize that syllabi are important tools for establishing the tone of the

course and subsequent learning; ultimately, students tend to have better associations with instructors who create clear and positive syllabi (Richmond et al., 2016). As an example, Project Syllabus has explored learning-centered syllabi (e.g., those that demonstrate rapport, caring, and helpfulness) and has concluded that learner-centered syllabi impact students' perceptions of their instructor (Richmond, Morgan, Slatterly, Mitchell, & Cooper, 2019). Richmond and colleagues (2016) offer a Self-Assessment of the Model Syllabus Teaching Criteria as a helpful tool for assessing and evaluating syllabi. For instance, model syllabi demonstrate community through the language used in the course syllabus, provide expectations for instructors as well as students, and clearly explain the rationale for assignments (Richmond et al., 2019).

Utilizing Available Internal and External Resources

Early career instructors may feel pressure to generate new and exciting material and activities

for their courses. Yet, in many cases, other instructors (inside or outside the university) have already designed courses on the target subject. Often, a web search for similar course titles will turn up materials that others have used to teach, and open-source teaching materials are becoming increasingly available on websites such as *Open Educational Resources Commons* and *Merlot*. This is not to say that early career teachers should not work towards developing their own teaching materials and activities; however, this time-consuming process is not always feasible when developing a new course or multiple new courses. At the very least, the aforementioned resources can provide a useful and time-efficient starting point for early career teachers.

Entering the Classroom

Imposter Syndrome and Authenticity

The Imposter Syndrome, or the feeling that one does not belong in one's current role, has been documented within academia (Parkman, 2016). Early career professionals, especially women and individuals from racial and ethnic minoritized backgrounds, often receive unwarranted messages (both overt and covert) from students and colleagues that they are unqualified for their positions, which may cause them to feel out of place (Garvis, 2014). Imposter syndrome occurs across many levels of training and professional work but can be heightened for younger instructors, who may be close in age to their students or who may find others questioning their credibility (Garvis, 2014).

When entering the classroom, it is natural for early career teachers to fall back on what they know—that is, to teach in ways that are similar to how they were taught. At times, this can be a successful strategy; however, it may also result in instructors deviating from best practices in teaching or relying on methods that feel

unauthentic or uncomfortable to them. At its core, teaching has elements that are learned and others that are an art form (i.e., that rely on individual talent; Richmond et al, 2016). In other words, some individuals happen to be naturally gifted teachers. Nevertheless, there are many teaching skills that can be learned or refined with practice (e.g., subject area expertise, pedagogical knowledge, effective communication, technological competence; Richmond et al., 2016). For instance, pedagogical knowledge can be obtained through attending conferences on teaching or seeking books on the subject. Similarly, technological competence can be improved through attending workshops and viewing tutorials related to the technology platforms that are used within the institution where you are teaching.

Learn About Teaching

Graduate courses on pedagogy and learning are offered in many doctoral psychology programs (Boysen, 2011), yet many instructors enter the classroom with no formal pedagogical instruction. Further, even though information about teaching is plentiful and accessible, it is also dynamic and ever-changing. Although many course instructors tend to fall back on what they know (i.e., what they experienced during their own education), the literature indicates that the most successful university teachers understand the learning process and incorporate best practices in pedagogy in their classrooms (e.g., active learning strategies, triggering productive discussion, reflective learning; Richmond et al., 2016). Therefore, taking the time to learn about pedagogy itself is a worthwhile endeavor for early career instructors. In addition to information covered in books on higher education teaching, the National Educational Association Higher Education Best Practices offer helpful primers for understanding the intricacies of teaching and learning.

Honing Teaching Skills

Refinement Takes Time

For many high-achieving individuals who find themselves in university positions, there is a desire to achieve mastery in one's professional duties, including in teaching. Yet, becoming a truly excellent teacher takes practice, self-reflection, and time (Richmond et al., 2016). Indeed, master teachers spend time thinking about their own teaching and working to understand the scholarship of teaching and learning, or the empirical literature focused specifically on how people teach and learn (Richmond et al., 2016). Over time, instructors should focus on three main areas as they work toward becoming master teachers: 1) understanding student learning; 2) acquiring current knowledge of effective pedagogy; and 3) developing subject area expertise.

Learn from master teachers

Learning from master teachers is a wonderful way to improve teaching skills, and such individuals may be readily available to early career professionals in academic environments. Typically, asking colleagues about which teachers on campus are particularly excellent will yield a list of individuals. It can also be helpful to look at lists of recipients of university teaching awards to identify those who have been recognized for excellence in this area. Often, these individuals are happy to sit and talk about teaching and their own trajectories as instructors. In addition, early career professionals can ask to visit a master teacher's classroom or invite him or her to provide feedback on their own teaching.

Seek support

Even though early career teachers are often given lots of latitude and little guidance when they begin teaching, there are plenty of supportive resources available. Many higher

education campuses have programs or offices that support faculty development in teaching. Within the field of psychology, there are professional organizations (e.g., APA's Society for the Teaching of Psychology) and teaching focused conferences (e.g., The Conference on Higher Education Teaching Pedagogy). In addition, the library and Internet offer a plethora of ways to learn more about teaching. For those who wish to continue to learn about teaching, the reference list for this article offers a number of resources with further information.

Conclusions

Early career course instructors may face a number of challenges as they begin to teach. In particular, finding time to develop their skills may feel impossible, especially as they navigate other new responsibilities. However, over time there are steps that early career professionals can take to improve their teaching, and many resources are available to support professional development in this area. For most university instructors, becoming a skilled teacher is a process. Ultimately, early career instructors must remember that, with time and effort, they too can work toward becoming skilled university instructors.

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SASP STUDENT CORNER

HOW TO MAXIMIZE PRACTICUM TO MEET YOUR PROFESSIONAL GOALS: QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS FROM A GRADUATE STUDENT

By [Andrea Wierzchowski](#), Texas Woman's University

If graduate students are able to conceptualize and strategize their professional goals when seeking practicum experiences, then they will be well-equipped to form a broader perspective toward securing an internship that aligns with their professional goals. Information from this article comes from the perspective of a fourth-year school psychology doctoral student who, at the time this article was written, was actively engaged in completing interviews at American Psychological Association (APA)-



**Correspondence
concerning this article
can be addressed to:**

**Andrea Wierzchowski
Texas Woman's University**

Email:
awierzchowski@twu.edu

accredited internship sites. The qualitative insights provided stem from the gained understanding, learned lessons, and hypothesized reasoning that occurred throughout the APA internship application and interview processes. The information shared in this article in no way guarantees that one will land the internship they are seeking; however, it serves as a guide to help graduate students take a step in the right direction toward meeting their professional goals.

Orientation When Starting a Doctoral Program

Starting a doctoral program in school psychology is all in one, exciting, overwhelming, and confusing. As a first-year graduate student, one might have the question of “how early should someone start seeking out direct, face-to-face, *in vivo* practicum experiences?” The answer to this question is as soon as possible. Even if this means working as a volunteer with a population that you are interested in working with, or as a data collector on a research project, all of these additional experiences can be highlighted in essays, cover letters, and elaborated upon in interviews. The idea of being creative when locating and engaging in practicum experiences is important, because some programs do not allow students to begin traditional practicums until certain coursework is met and before you know it, it is time to apply for internship.

Where to Begin

When seeking greater insight on tailoring your practicum experiences, it can be extremely helpful to look at what internship sites are seeking in candidates when it comes to qualifications and previous training. Oftentimes, the internship committees at APA-accredited sites annually review hundreds of applications and become well-versed in distinguishing applicants who might be a ‘good fit’ from those who are not. So, graduate students should prioritize aligning their experiences and training to what is expected from the internship sites they plan to apply to.

If you have an idea about what setting you may want to work in, the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) Directory is a great resource provided to applicants. The APPIC Directory does a thorough job of providing an overview of the expectations, requirements, and general information about each internship site. There are links to the training site’s websites and brochures that outline clearly what they are looking for in a candidate. As a member of SASP, you also have access to a directory that specifies which internship sites graduate students from a school

psychology program can apply to.

The following sections break down examples of different professional goals school psychology graduate students might take interest in. The focus of these sections is on how practicum experiences can be tailored to maximize graduate training, so that internship year serves as filling in any gaps in training before becoming an early career professional. While the author is aware that there are other settings that may better align with a graduate student's professional goals, the aim of the selected examples was to adequately cover the breadth of potential settings one could work in as a school psychology intern.

Professional Goal Example #1: Community Mental Health Setting

There are a wide variety of options and opportunities when it comes to community mental health because these organizations serve the community at large. Depending on the funding, the organization may be a government agency or nonprofit. Some of the settings that constitute a community mental health agency may be a non-public school, residential treatment, out-patient clinics, day treatment, shelters (e.g., domestic violence/homeless), psychiatric hospitals/treatment centers, advocacy centers, religious affiliated services, university/school clinics, etc.

There is generally a balance between psychotherapy, counseling/coaching (e.g., parent training), and assessment to meet the needs of a wide range of clientele. The clients can be quite diverse (e.g., varying ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic status, age, diagnosis, and cognitive ability) which requires flexibility as well as being able to approach treatment from a plethora of modalities, theories, and techniques. Evidence based practices such as behavioral and cognitive-behavioral techniques are utilized regularly, as are expressive arts and play therapy techniques.

Working on a multidisciplinary treatment team is generally a crucial component to working in a community mental health setting because communication is ongoing across agencies and professionals (e.g., schools, probation officers, medical care team, specialists-speech therapists, occupational therapists, physical therapists). As a practicum student with intentions of working in a community mental health setting, tailoring experiences to these types of agencies where they provide a balance of therapy and assessment will be key to success when applying for internship.

Professional Goal Example #2: Forensic Setting

Forensic psychology stems from the application of clinical specialties for individuals who come in contact with the legal system. Working with children in this setting generally shifts toward providing services in juvenile detention centers, court-ordered treatment facilities, or private practices. Licensed psychologists working in this setting apply clinical skills such as assessment, therapy, counseling, and evaluation. Focusing on developing skills such as clinical assessment, interviewing, report writing, strong verbal communication (especially if subpoenaed to court), and case presentation are all very important in setting the foundation for working in forensics.

Students can prepare for an internship within this setting by beginning to get exposure to assessments typically used in schools, child custody evaluations, competency evaluations of criminal defendants and/or of the elderly, counseling services to victims of crime as well as perpetrators, death notification procedures, screening and selection of law enforcement applicants, any level of crisis intervention, the assessment of trauma-related disorders and personality, and the delivery and program evaluation of intervention and treatment programs for juveniles, etc.



"Since these are likely to be issues that come up during consults, having additional practicum experiences as well as longer-term clients is a nice way to enhance the consult/liaison experience."

Professional Goal Example #3: General Pediatric Health Setting

Individuals who desire to work in a general pediatric health setting should strive to gain experience in hospital settings alongside clinical psychologists assigned to various specialty clinics (e.g., complex care, burn unit, GI/feeding) as well as standard clinics such as, Hematology/Oncology, Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, Pulmonary, Gastroenterology, Neurology, NICU/PICU, Cardiology, and General Medicine.

To balance consult/liaison work, consideration should also be given to working in outpatient clinics providing therapy to children and adolescents who may experience difficulties related to chronic illness, chronic pain, functional disorders, behavioral problems, adherence issues, or family challenges. Since these are likely to be issues that come up during consults, having additional practicum experiences as well as longer-term clients is a nice way to enhance the consult/liaison experience. In this setting, conducting psychological assessments will also be extremely important. When working in a general pediatric health setting, the assessments may range in need, so one should be

equipped with skills to evaluate development, pre/post-surgery, neuropsychological functioning, psycho-social, and social-emotional functioning for children with a wide range of health conditions.

Professional Goal Example #4: Neuropsychology Setting

It is not uncommon for school psychologists to head down this route given our strength in assessment. If you are thinking that you may want to become board certified in neuropsychology, this will ultimately require a 1-year APA-accredited internship (in any placement) and a 2-year postdoctoral fellowship through APA's Division 40 Society for Clinical Neuropsychology, and ultimately applying for board certification through the American Board of Professional Psychology.

There is a misconception that you have to land a neuropsychology internship in order to get a Division 40 postdoctoral fellowship, that is not necessarily the case, but it does not hurt your chances if you do. The difficult part is that when going after an internship experience like this, the other candidates often come from a track within their clinical psychology program that is specific to neuropsychology. This does not make it impossible to land a neuropsychology internship, but your practicum experiences become all the more important.

Therefore, it would behoove students interested in working in this setting to complete assessments, even if they are not specific to neuropsychology, in the medical setting. This is because the majority of neuropsychologists work in medical settings to establish neurocognitive functioning secondary to a medical condition (e.g., chronic medical illnesses, neuropsychiatric disorders, pre- and post-surgical evaluations, and other neurological or systemic medical conditions). Common pairings for therapy/intervention for neuropsychology tracks tends to be more in the form of consult/liaison, direct behavior intervention, behavior management, parent training, short-term therapy

focusing on depression, anxiety, etc. This means that along with conducting assessments, getting experience in counseling/brief psychotherapy is also important. These experiences can be sought by engaging in consult/liaison practicums, working at any clinic under a neuropsychologist and asking for additional experiences in therapy and intervention (e.g., developmental behavioral clinic, TBI clinic, cognitive rehabilitation clinic, private practice).

Professional Goal Example #5: School Setting

Working within a school setting has many benefits as it affords the opportunity to work with a diverse group of students and staff. Every school district runs differently depending on the state and geographic area, and even then, every school has its own culture. As a graduate student who comes from a school psychology program, it is often expected that your internship site will include some rotation in the school setting.

Generally, there are systems put in place to provide preschool, autism, and psychoeducational assessment, consultation with teachers/other staff/parents/outside agencies, therapy/counseling, and crisis intervention. To be successful in the school setting, it is important to have knowledge of the state's as well as the federal legal standards for special education. In addition, gaining exposure to the development of 504 plans, Individual Education Plans, Comprehensive Individual Evaluations, Student Supports, and Behavior Intervention Plans will prove useful. The best way to plan for a career in this setting is to begin working in schools and structuring practicums around specified interests (e.g., running groups in the schools with specific populations, having individual therapy clients with various needs).

Final Thoughts from the Author

As graduate students, our time is precious and there is only so much of it before it is time to apply

for internship. This article strives to provide insight and purpose toward the planning of practicum experiences so that when it is time to apply for internship, the process is linear and focused. Therefore, graduate students should ensure that their practicum placements are tailored around their future training and professional goals.

While the author did not have a clear trajectory of the desired setting she wanted to work in upon entering a doctoral program in school psychology, she was successful in securing an APA-accredited internship in the community mental health setting that caters to the special education

population as well as offers a wide range of mental health services. However, it took exploring various settings throughout the years of practicums to identify what felt like a good fit.

Some individuals may have a clear path and have their intentions and goals outlined from the beginning of their programs, while others may still be exploring and trying to figure out what path to go down and what type of school psychologist they want to become. Regardless of how clear the path is, it is important to be purposeful throughout your graduate training so that you pursue a well-rounded internship that aligns with your professional goals.



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BOOK REVIEW

SOUNDING THE ALARM IN THE SCHOOLHOUSE: SAFETY, SECURITY, AND STUDENT WELL-BEING

BY NICHOLAS D. YOUNG, CHRISTINE N. MICHAEL, & JENNIFER A. SMOLINSKI

**Review by Sydney R. Nelson, Michigan State University
& John S. Carlson, Michigan State University**

In 2018, there was an average of one school shooting every week in the United States (Young, Michael, & Smolinski, 2019). These instances of school violence have been broadcasted across the nation, causing mass concern for the safety of our schools. While societal trends seem to be shifting toward target hardening approaches, *Sounding the Alarm in the Schoolhouse* is a refreshing approach to discussing school safety. This book reminds school professionals how influential relationships, connectedness, and positivity are when cultivating a safe, peaceful school environment. *Sounding the Alarm in the Schoolhouse* guides practitioners toward best

**Correspondence
concerning this article
can be addressed to:**

Sydney R. Nelson
Michigan State University

Email:
saidoosy@msu.edu

practices related to school safety by introducing various topics, such as violence, mental health, trauma, and evidence-based practices. Overall, this book provides multiple avenues to address school safety while maintaining the underlying objective of creating a positive, safe environment for all.

The authors begin by discussing the trends of school violence and safety in the United States. Violence within schools has persisted throughout the decades, but has transformed from acts of truancy (1930s & 1940s) and gang activity (1960s & 1970s) to school shootings in recent years. The authors also highlight the increase in mental health concerns among school-aged youth, but note that this is more commonly linked to intrapersonal violence (i.e., suicide, self-harm) rather than interpersonal violence (i.e., violence toward others). However, there are likely warning signs associated with violent trends in the school. Social isolation, social rejection, a history of violence, anger problems, and poor social skills (e.g., anger, lack of empathy, lack of conflict resolution skills) may be linked to school violence. Thus, it is suggested to consider social-emotional factors when establishing school security as students tend to feel most safe when they are protected, connected, and welcomed within their school. Social-emotional-behavioral screening, early identification, and progress monitoring is essential, much like is done with curriculum-based assessment approaches.

The authors proceed to discuss different categories and forms of violence that can occur within the school. Violence can be self-directed (i.e., suicide, self-injury), collective (i.e., group violence), or interpersonal (i.e., partner or family violence). There has been an increase in self-directed violence, specifically suicides, among school-age youth. This may be due to various risk factors (e.g., family stressors, abuse), cyberbullying, or living in a culture of affluence. Interpersonal violence can be experienced as child maltreatment, domestic violence, intimate partner violence, targeted violence, sexual violence, or youth violence. Violence within schools can also come in many forms, such as homicides, gangs, fighting, bullying, or use of weapons. Other forms of violence identified by the authors are microaggressions (underlying causes of violence), xenophobia (violence toward ethnically diverse groups), and homophobia (violence toward sexually diverse groups). Finally, the authors state that girls, refugees, immigrants, students of color, and the LGBTQ community are at the greatest risk to experience violence. Schools must find a way to provide extra supports to at-risk populations.



The third chapter discusses mental health concerns that are being identified in schools. The most common concerns are Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Anxiety, Depression, Autism, Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD), Conduct Disorder (CD), Tourette Syndrome, Eating Disorders, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Mental health concerns can be influenced by individual, family, and community risk and protective factors, but most conditions stem from sociocultural and economic problems. Thus, the authors state that preventative measures, social-emotional curriculums, trauma-informed practices, and the multi-tiered systems of supports could be beneficial for students. While most mental health services could be provided in the school, many are not equipped to do so as resources tend to be allocated to hardening forms of safety, rather than employing mental health professionals. In addition to mental health concerns, trauma and stress are also influential factors that can affect students' perception of safety. Stress can be experienced as positive, tolerable, or toxic

depending on the severity of the event, proximity of the event, caregivers' reactions, prior history of trauma, and family/community factors. The authors recommend the following strategies to address stress and mental health concerns within the school: implement mental health screenings, provide training and support, build student resilience, focus on prevention, actively engage and build relationships with students, and focus on integrated care across systems of care.

Chapter four explores effective interventions to cultivate safe schools. The authors introduce strategies to develop a safe climate, such as implementing need assessments, crisis response plans and mental health services in schools. Professionals can also use cross collaboration and systematic response to threats guided by models such as Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) or PREPaRE in order to facilitate physical and psychological safety. In order to implement these processes, schools need professionals (e.g., principals, school psychologists, social workers) to adopt

leadership roles. These professionals should help ensure prevention programs work closely with students to ensure buy-in and that there is a balance between physical security and prevention programs.

The fifth chapter focuses on teaching positive skills to students in response to violence, rather than using punitive approaches. The authors present multiple evidence-based programs that encourage this mission, such as Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATH), Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP), and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). However, schools need to consider their own social-ecological framework prior to implementing programs. When selecting a program, successful interventions provide clear expectations for students and include ongoing monitoring. It is important for schools to continually collect data, monitor programs, and share information with stakeholders in order to ensure programs are positively and effectively promoting school safety.

The final chapter provides key ingredients needed to create a positive, peaceful school environment. This environment should focus on including, recognizing, nurturing and supporting the unique needs of each student, which would ultimately assist adults in monitoring behaviors that may warrant additional support. The authors mention many ways to cultivate this school environment, such as implementing positive discipline strategies, restorative justice practices, social-emotional education programs and clubs that empower students to have a voice against violence (e.g., Students Against Violence Everywhere, Sandy Hook Promise). Other forms of discipline, such as mindfulness, yoga, and meditation can also be used. Overall, it is critical to be cognizant of gender roles (consistent expectations for males and females), engage all students, and form close student-teacher-home

connections in order to promote a safe school environment for all.

This book is recommended for school professionals seeking additional information about best practices to support safety in schools. While practitioners should understand the unique history, needs, and practices as they relate to maintaining safety within their school, *Sounding the Alarm in the Schoolhouse* offers a framework that can guide professionals. The authors continually reiterate the importance of using positive, evidence-based approaches to cultivate connections, relationships, and safety in the schoolhouse for all.

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IN MEMORIAM

REMEMBERING LEADELLE PHELPS

1951-2019

By Tom Fagan, The University of Memphis
& Jasric Bland, The University of Memphis

LeAdelle Phelps was born on December 24, 1951 in Montpelier, Idaho, and died at age 67 on September 18, 2019 in Jackson, Idaho. She was the daughter of Grove Martin and Roma Clark Phelps who managed a cattle ranch and wheat farm; LeAdelle was the fifth of their nine children.

Education and Employment: She attended A. J. Winters Elementary School and in 1970 graduated from Bear Lake High School. At Brigham Young University, she completed her B.S. degree in psychology with a minor in English in two years (1970-1972) and received

her MA degree in school psychology in 1974. She completed her PhD in school psychology at the University of Utah in 1977 (at age 25). While pursuing her doctoral degree she worked as a school psychologist for the Jordan (UT) School District (1974-1977).

Before starting her career as a university trainer at the University of Missouri-Columbia she was Director of the Behavioral Adjustment Unit for the Davis (UT) School District (1978-1982). After serving as an Assistant and Associate Professor at Missouri (1982-1989) she served as an Associate and then Full Professor at the University of Buffalo (SUNY) until she retired in 2014 as an emeritus professor after 25 years (1989-2014) and moved to Jackson, Idaho. At Buffalo she also served as Director of the Counseling Psychology/School Psychology Program; Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in the Graduate School of Education; Chair of the Department of Counseling, School, and Educational Psychology; and chair of the President's Review Board 2011-2014. With her Buffalo colleagues she developed its combined counseling/school psychology doctoral program that was APA accredited in 1999.

Professional Service and Contributions: LeAdelle served as an APA site visitor and associate chair of the APA Committee on Accreditation (CoA), the 1st time a school psychologist held such a position. She published 3 books related to health and the practice of psychology; tests including her *Kindergarten Readiness Scale* (three editions); more than two dozen chapters, at least 60 journal articles, and she authored several grants totaling more than 5 million dollars. She was a frequent presenter at national conferences. She often published with former students and had 49 former students as coauthors.

She served as editor of *Psychology in the Schools* (1999-2006) after 5 years as an



Dr. LeAdelle Phelps

associate editor. She also guest edited special issues of the *School Psychology Quarterly* (2008), and *School Psychology Review* (1995). She served on the editorial boards of *SPQ*, *SPR*, *JSP*, *PITS*, and the *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*.

She has been a NASP member since 1979 and APA member since 1986, and held Fellowship in Division 16 since 1997. She was also a member of the National Academy of Neuropsychology. She was an active member of trainers groups, twice serving as CDSPP Chair (1997-1998 and 2004-2005). LeAdelle maintained a private practice since 1979 and was a licensed psychologist in Utah, Missouri, and New York State.



Awards and Remembrances: In recognition of her many contributions she received the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Faculty Service and the APA Division 16 Jack Bardon Distinguished Service Award (2006). In 2010 she was the fourth recipient of the TSP Outstanding Contributions to Training Award. In receiving the TSP award, it was noted that she chaired the 1999 APA Division 16 task force that wrote the training standards for doctoral school psychology programs; contributed to the growth and reputation of the Buffalo training program and took a real and meaningful interest in her students and their development; and had an impact on policy development, training standards, and a sustained program of research that contributed to effective training and practice in school psychology. A 1997 article in *School Psychology International* noted she was then the most frequently published female in school psychology. In 2015 she was the CDSPP honoree in recognition of her long service to that organization.

Soon after learning of her death, several

colleagues commented on her career and personal life:

Mark Swerdlik, Illinois State U. I had worked with her on several projects over the years including one in which she chaired an APA site visit for our program. She was a real class act, bright, friendly, and funny.

Diana Joyce-Beaulieu, University of Florida. I would like to express my keen appreciation for LeAdelle's mentorship and contributions to our field. She served as Chair on my first APA accreditation site visit. I will always remember her preparedness, respect for program faculty and students alike, her fairness in reviewing the program's self-study, and her commitment to excellence. Each time I serve as a site visit Chair, I am reminded of the model she provided and aspire to demonstrate those same characteristics.

Laura Anderson, University of Buffalo School of Nursing. Most of all, LeAdelle was a stellar human being who enjoyed life, nature, world

travel, and adventure. She was a mentor and friend like no other. She was truly like a mother to me, a beautiful, unconditional, loving soul.

Bill Strein, University of Maryland. LeAdelle grew up on a Mormon ranch. Although she left Mormonism, per se, she often spoke highly to me of what a remarkable thing Mormons had done making that Utah desert bloom. I regard LeAdelle Phelps as one of the outstanding organizational leaders in school psychology of her (and my) era. She helped lead CDSPP to develop its Mid-Winter Meeting, which continues annually to this day. After a hiatus of two years she returned to the CDSPP Executive Committee when I was chair and was her usual, delightful self. LeAdelle was also my formal, assigned mentor when I began my first year on the then APA Committee on Accreditation. No one could have been a kinder or more effective mentor. She loved the organizational work and inspired me to do so likewise.

Steven Pfeiffer, Florida State U. I worked with LeAdelle for a few years on the Combined-Integrated Programs' Consortium. I always enjoyed her humor and creative ideas and passion. I had lost track of her these last 6-7 years, and it appears that she was ill and had left Buffalo for her home in Idaho.

Sandra M. Chafouleas, University of Connecticut. Chris Riley-Tillman and I had our career paths deeply influenced by LeAdelle's early guidance. Even though we had not worked with her during our graduate careers, she took the time to be an amazing mentor during our early years in academia. I remember our first meeting at the CDSPP Winter Meetings, which became the step to connections with advice about collaborations, publications, grants – you name it! Around that time, she also was editor of *Psychology in the Schools*, and was highly encouraging of our pitch to dedicate an annual special issue focused on practitioner interests. Along with other pre-tenure colleagues, we

worked together over multiple years on those issues. As new faculty members, we remember being in awe of all the service that she dedicated to ensuring a positive trajectory for our field.

Tom Fagan, University of Memphis. I learned of her situation and reached out to her in early September, mentioning how I had planned on getting personal reflections from Ed Shapiro and Tom Kehle but their deaths came too quickly. I hoped to receive some personal reflections from LeAdelle and shared my 2010 TSP Award comments with her; and told her "My life and many others are better because I knew you. I hope you can stay in touch." On September 8, she wrote back, "I would be most appreciative of your writing down some thoughts about my career. My family would enjoy that so much." Like Ed and Tom, that was the last I heard from her.

Personal Life: LeAdelle enjoyed boating and kayaking on the Snake River and cycling in the summer, and cross country skiing and snowmobiling in the winter. Her husband was a pilot and they built a plane that they would fly for meetings in DC, often using the airport in College Park, MD. They travelled extensively and her son would often treat them to trips including a cruise to Antarctica.

In February 2017 she was diagnosed with stage IV metastatic melanoma which she fought for more than two years. Her final weeks were with hospice care, dying in her home in the company of friends and family. She is survived by her husband David Weston whom she married in March 1978, and children, Bruce Weston, Lisa Peck, Rick Weston, and LuAnn Leavitt, 11 grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Authors: Tom Fagan is Professor of Psychology and Director of the MA/EdS School Psychology Program at the University of Memphis. Jasric Bland is a research assistant in the School Psychology Program.

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Division 16 of the American Psychological Association publishes *The School Psychologist* as a service to the membership. Three PDF issues are published annually. The purpose of TSP is to provide a vehicle for the rapid dissemination of news and recent advances in practice, policy, and research in the field of school psychology.

Article submissions of 12 double-spaced manuscript pages are preferred. Content of submissions should have a strong applied theme. Empirical pieces conducted in school settings and that highlight practical treatment effects will be prioritized. Other empirical pieces should have a strong research-to-practice linkage. Non-empirical pieces will also be reviewed for possible publication, but are expected to have a strong applied element to them as well. Briefer (up to 5 pages) applied articles, test reviews, and book reviews will also be considered. All submissions should be double-spaced in Times New Roman 12-point font and e-mailed to the Editor. The manuscript should follow APA format and should identify organizational affiliations for all authors on the title page as well as provide contact information for the corresponding author. Authors submitting materials to *The School Psychologist* do so with the understanding that the copyright of published materials shall be assigned exclusively to APA Division 16.



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Andy Pham, PhD
School of Education & Human Development
Florida International University, ZEB 360B
avpham@fiu.edu

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