



# The School Psychologist

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

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*The School Psychologist*

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*The School Psychologist* is published four times per year by the Division of School Psychology (Div. 16) of the American Psychological Association. Subscriptions are free to members of the Division. For information about subscription rates, submission of articles or advertising write:

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Issue Month/No.	Closing Date for Submission of Materials	Printing Date	Mailing Date*
Winter (1)	December 1	December 15	January 15
Spring (2)	February 1	February 15	March 15
Summer (3)	June 1	June 15	July 15
Fall (4)	September 1	September 15	October 15

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## Message from the President

Cecil R. Reynolds

Cecil R. Reynolds



Many of you may immediately be wondering why this message is coming from me and not Jean Baker. It was with great sadness that the Division 16 Executive Committee (EC) learned the week before Christmas that Jean would be unable to serve her term as your President due to health concerns. You should have a message from Jean in this issue as well. We will all have Jean in our thoughts and in our hearts over the coming year and wish her the best of outcomes, and know that you join us in this wish.

As the incoming president-elect of the Division, it falls to me to take the helm for this additional year. Under the Division 16 bylaws concerning duties of the President-elect, Bylaw LXXV reads as follows: "Assume the office of the Presidency if it is vacated. When the interim term ends, assume the Presidency for the one-year term for which the President-elect was elected." As I write this brief message, the EC is in the throes of planning its mid-year meeting, to be held later this week in San Antonio. I feel fortunate that my goals for the Division this year overlap so substantially with those Jean had determined beforehand. The help and support of the other Division EC members and Ron Palomares at APA in bringing it all together and getting me up to speed on issues is appreciated as well.

Our EC meeting this year is being held to include joint sessions with the other primarily professional child psychology divisions of the APA. These include Divisions 12, 16, 37, 43, 53, and 54. These Divisions are scheduled to meet jointly for more than 10 hours of discussion concerning our mutual goals and the futures of children. Your own EC will be meeting for an additional 15 hours on its own. It will be three exhausting days, but, I trust, fruitful ones.

As seems to be the perennial case, there is much on our plate this year and the Division seems always short on resources of all types. We will be spending a good bit of time this year setting short and long term goals for the Division, and I hope to have much to report to you in the next issue. Clear, focused strategic planning is becoming more and more necessary to our survival and our successes with children. The recertification of our profession as a professional specialty by APA is forthcoming,

and the Division must mount a leadership role in this effort. At the same time we must deal with the support of science in our discipline, the sociopolitical climate (which affects schools and subsequently children so dramatically), the internal tensions of our profession, our growing need for external relationships and support, and the practical matters of practice that face the front line school psychologists all the while keeping in the forefront, the opening sentence of the mission statement of our Division: "The Division of School Psychology exists to promote the science and practice of psychology for the public welfare." In a world and a profession of geometrically increasing complexities, it is to this end we will all be working this week.

APA has developed a growing focus on children, youth, families, and schools, and we hope to take advantage of the resources of our parent organization. In this regard such individuals at APA such as Ron Palomares and Mary Campbell will be indispensable. These and other APA staff will be joining us this week as well. We need to move forward as a collective in many ways while still recognizing the uniqueness of the discipline of School Psychology. This will be another one of our challenges.

It is my hope to come back to you in the next issue with news of the results of this week of intense work by the Division EC, to report to you on the specific goals of the Division, and plans for implementation. It will undoubtedly be necessary for the Division to call upon you for assistance. Energetic members are going to be needed more and more as we move forward with the agendas of School Psychology over the next years. Please take time out to visit the Division 16 web site and review the content there as well as our governing structure. Where you see areas in which you have special interests or expertise and have a willingness to contribute, contact me directly at [crrh@earthlink.net](mailto:crrh@earthlink.net) or contact the relevant Division Vice President. More when I return. Thanks to you all for your support.

Cecil R. Reynolds

# Message from Jean A. Baker

## Michigan State University

**D**ivision 16 is a powerful advocate for children, and I was honored to have been elected President for 2004. It is with great sadness that I must resign the presidency. I was diagnosed with breast cancer just before Christmas so my warrior physicians and I will be treating the disease aggressively over the next bit of time. Our by-laws stipulate that the President-elect assumes the presidency in such a situation; Cecil Reynolds is available and willing to serve in this capacity for the coming year. So, the Division is in very good hands. I will very much miss working on behalf of the Division this year, however, my energy is needed here. I'm in good spirits (my 16-year-old is offering to buy me medical marijuana and my 13-year-old is making jokes that the diagnosis is sort of growing on

him, so those I worry about the most seem OK, too!), but please keep my own family and my MSU family in your good thoughts over the next several months.

Best wishes,  
*Jean*



Jean Baker

“...I was honored to have been elected President for 2004.”

## Editor's Message

### Linda A. Reddy, Fairleigh Dickinson University

**A**s I begin my first of three years as the Editor of *The School Psychologist* (TSP), I would like to acknowledge those individuals who have been instrumental in my transition from Associate Editor to Editor of TSP. First and foremost, I would like to thank Dr. Vincent (“Vinny”) Alfonso for his support and significant contributions to the newsletter during the past three years. Vinny and I have worked closely on TSP and I will miss working with him. Second, I am grateful to Drs. David E. McIntosh, Elaine Clark, and Steven G. Little for their helpful suggestions and guidance during this transition period. Third, I thank the past and present editorial advisory board and graduate level editorial assistants for their hard work. Fourth, I appreciate Dr. Michelle S. Athanasiou’s willingness to serve as the new Associate Editor and look forward to working with her over the next three years. Finally, I thank Dr. Angeleque Akin-Little for continuing to edit the People and Places column for TSP. Please send submissions for People and Places to [AAkinLittle@Pacific.edu](mailto:AAkinLittle@Pacific.edu).

I invite each of you to contribute to TSP and share information about your training programs,

field-based experiences, and research with the school psychology community. Papers on timely topics, commentaries for The Commentary Section, book reviews, test reviews, task force/working group updates, and legislative and policy issues are welcomed. TSP also serves as a mechanism for the Division 16 Executive Committee to update members on their important work for Division 16. I hope you find TSP timely, informative, and enjoyable for the next three years! I look forward to hearing from you.

Happy New Year!

Sincerely,  
*Linda*

“...the Division is in very good hands.”

## Policy Forum

# Specific Learning Disability Classification in the New Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: The Danger of Good Ideas

**James B. Hale**

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## Abstract

The recently revised IDEA guidelines indicate that a Specific Learning Disability (SLD) can be identified if a child has a disorder in the basic psychological processes. The criteria in the new guidelines for identifying SLD state that: a) a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability *shall not be required*; and b) a response to intervention (RTI) *may be considered*. These criteria are ambiguous regarding how the traditional ability-achievement discrepancy approach should be applied, and they are equally ambiguous about the recently adopted failure to RTI model. Absent from these criteria is any mention that a child with SLD must have a psychological processing disorder, despite that this is a mandatory requirement according to the current and previous IDEA SLD definitions. Although comprehensive, multiple-method evaluations are still required for SLD determination, those who use a RTI model without standardized instruments must rely on inferences regarding the basic psychological processes, rather than objective measurement of these constructs. In light of recent national test results indicating deficient reading and math scores for a majority of children of color, low socioeconomic level, limited English proficiency, and special education status, removing objective individual measurement of cognitive processes may increase the likelihood of classification error, as poor academic achievement is likely related to multiple causes, not just a SLD. Regardless of arguments put forth by advocates and opponents of the discrepancy and RTI models, we strongly believe that practitioners must use standardized intellectual, cognitive, and neuropsychological assessment measures to identify process deficits as well as

integrity. Identifying a child's unique pattern of performance on standardized measures not only assures compliance with the new IDEA guidelines, but also allows for recognition of individual cognitive strengths and needs, one of the prerequisites for intervention efficacy.

## Specific Learning Disability Classification in the New Individuals With Disabilities Education Act: The Danger of Good Ideas

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) recently released the nationwide results of reading and math scores for children in fourth and eighth grades. Averaging across all students, no gains were made in reading scores from the last evaluation, but math scores reportedly improved, especially among children of color. The data were released at state, rather than local levels, yet they were encouraging. At a news conference on the NAEP release day, Education Secretary Rod Paige suggested that these results reflected a "turning point in American educational history," as test scores were narrowing between children of color and Caucasian students (Dobbs, 2003, p. 2). Paige claimed, "We have proof that all children can indeed learn, no matter the color of their skin or their ethnic heritage" (Hildebrand, 2003, p. 2). Obviously, the high standards-high accountability model is working, according to Mr. Paige, and once this model is embraced throughout the nation, all will have equal educational opportunity and progress for all children.

So how do these group data pertain to the revised Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and specific learning disability (SLD) determination? At the same time that "high stakes" group testing has become essential for determining state and even local school competency, some

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### Specific Learning Disability Classification in the New Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: The Danger of Good Ideas

individuals seek to use a failure to “respond to intervention” (RTI) model to identify children with SLD. With high stakes testing in place, all children will be provided with a free, *appropriate*, public education with high standards in each state, and all will purportedly succeed. It is accountability that results in successful outcomes, and, according to Paige, the NAEP results suggest that if teachers are held accountable, all children can learn and achieve. This is the underlying premise behind the Bush Administration’s *No Child Left Behind* educational reform measures: provide the *appropriate* curriculum, environment, and contingencies, and each child will thrive.

Before discussing the implications of the NAEP data, we want to make it clear that we support high standards and accountability, and we applaud efforts to level the “playing field” among children within and between their schools. We enthusiastically support the development of better training, better curricula, better instructional methods, and better evaluation tools. We believe that if all children are provided with a free, *appropriate*, public education, most will learn and thrive within their environments. That being said, what concerns us is this issue of *appropriate* education. Is appropriate in one school the same as another? Is the teacher in one classroom trained as well as in others? Do teachers have comparable instructional methods and classroom management techniques? Do they have the same curricular materials and school supplies? What about a child’s home environment, ethnic and cultural background, and socioeconomic status (SES)? Are these variables comparable from child to child? What about the individual child’s medical status, physical and cognitive development, and psychosocial history? How can we ensure their equivalence among children? Finally, can we say with conviction that the functional determinants of learning will be equated on a daily basis and over time for each child? These are complex questions whose answers require systematic examination and change at multiple levels. But in this high stakes world, if a child fails under the new IDEA provisions, he or she could be classified as SLD, regardless of the multiple possible causes. Intuitively, the failure to RTI model for SLD determination is an idea that needs to be fully tested before it is implemented.

Before we continue the argument, let us consider how children performed according to the recently released NAEP reading and math results

(see U.S. Department of Education, 2003). We will illustrate our points by reporting the 2003 findings for 4th graders, and ignore the “significance” testing in the report. With very large samples, trivial differences can become statistically significant even if these differences are meaningless in a practical sense (see, for example, a special journal issue devoted to this topic; Kaufman, 1998). In addition, it is important to note that the 2003 results include testing accommodations for qualified children. For reading, the national average was 218 for 4th grade reading on a 0-500 scale, representing a 1-point drop from the previous year mean. For math scores, the results were more encouraging, with scores increasing from 226 to 235 in 4th grade. This is a positive trend given our national concerns regarding math and science achievement. As stated previously, however, it is difficult to determine if these changes are meaningful, given the limited information provided; however, another set of statistics helps put these results in perspective, namely student levels of competence as defined by the U.S. Department of Education.

There are several group achievement levels for the NAEP results, but we will focus on those children identified as having *Below Basic* competency as opposed to those who have *Basic*, *Proficient*, or *Advanced* achievement levels. According to these results, 37% of 4th grade children performed in the *Below Basic* level of reading competency set forth by the government. For math, the results revealed that 23% scored at the *Below Basic* level of math competency. Taken together, these findings suggest that many children are *Below Basic* competency in reading, math, or both. While there apparently have been gains in recent years, one could argue that a substantial portion of our nation’s children are failing to benefit from the current instruction offered to them in their classrooms. For these children, their current RTI is poor.

Next we turn to several key background variables, namely SES (determined by free school lunch eligibility), ethnicity, special education status, and limited English proficiency (LEP). Not surprisingly, those who are eligible for free school lunches (classified as lower SES) have lower reading and math scores than those who are not eligible. For those eligible for free lunches, a dismal 55% scored at the *Below Basic* level of reading competency. This is contrasted with only 24% at the *Below Basic* level for those not eligible for free school lunches. For 4th

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### Specific Learning Disability Classification in the New Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: The Danger of Good Ideas

grade math, the disparity is even greater than that obtained for reading, with 58% *Below Basic* for those eligible versus 12% *Below Basic* for those not eligible. Even with such a crude measure of SES, the differences between lower and higher SES in terms of reading and math competency are striking.

Consistent with other studies that have used achievement tests to compare ethnic groups (see Roberts et al., 2001), Caucasian 4th graders had better achievement, on average, than African-American and Latino 4th graders. Twenty six percent of Caucasians were categorized as *Below Basic* in reading competence, compared to 61% of African Americans and 57% of Latinos. For 4th grade math achievement, corresponding *Below Basic* levels were 13% for Caucasians, 46% for African Americans, and 38% for Latinos. For special education status, 71% were in the *Below Basic* range for reading, and 50% were so classified in math. For children in regular education, 35% and 21% scored in the *Below Basic* level for reading and math, respectively. Students with LEP classification also had difficulty with reading and math, with 72% and 51%, respectively, falling in the *Below Basic* level. These results are contrasted with those who are not LEP, among whom only 35% were *Below Basic* in reading, and 21% were *Below Basic* in math. It seems clear that experiencing low SES, being a

person of color, receiving special education, and having LEP are all associated with a failure to benefit from current instructional practices. These variables are undoubtedly interdependent and share a great deal of variance in predicting achievement outcomes. For example, it is quite likely that ethnic differences are largely due to SES differences among ethnic groups. Unfortunately, data were not provided in the NAEP to permit any analysis of the interactions among various background variables.

To evaluate the generalizability of the relationship of background variables to achievement competence observed in the total sample, we explored differences on these variables based on the student's state or region. Consider, for example, data provided in the NAEP report for students in Connecticut, Iowa, New York, and Virginia (the states in which the four authors of this article are employed). As shown in Table 1, there are remarkable parallels in Northeastern, Southern, and Midwestern states. Regardless of the state examined, being Caucasian, English proficient, in general education, and ineligible for free school lunches appears to be less likely to be associated with a *Below Basic* rating, ranging from 8% (Caucasian and high SES for reading in Connecticut) to 31% (English proficient for reading in New York). For children from low SES backgrounds, children of

**Table 1**  
**Children Classified as Below Basic on NAEP Reading and Math Tests Separately for Four States**

	SES		Ethnicity			Spec. Educ.		LEP	
	HI	LO	CA	AA	LA	YES	NO	YES	NO
<b>Reading</b>									
<b>Connecticut</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Iowa</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>New York</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Virginia</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Math</b>									
<b>Connecticut</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Iowa</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>New York</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Virginia</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>16</b>

Note. SES = socioeconomic status; Spec. Educ. = special education status; LEP = limited English Proficient status; CA = Caucasian; AA = African American; LA = Latino. Source: U.S. Department of Education (2003). *National assessment of educational progress*. The nation's report card. Washington, D.C.: Institute of Education Sciences (NCES 2004-451/452).



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color (African American and Latino), students of special education status, and those who are LEP, the *Below Basic* percents rose dramatically, ranging from 25% (Latinos for math in Virginia) to 80% (special education students for reading in Iowa). Even in the best case scenario, approximately 10% of the population failed to meet the basic levels of academic competence, and for the worse case scenario, 4/5 of the population “failed to benefit” from their current academic instruction. Their RTI does not even result in these students performing at the basic level of academic competency, as defined by the government. It is interesting to note that the number of children in the *Below Basic* range is quite high in all these states, despite differences in geographic region and population density. In addition, Iowa seems to be struggling with the same patterns of achievement competency as other states across the country, even though the Iowa service delivery approach (see Reschly & Grimes, 1991) is often touted by reform advocates on Capital Hill as an exemplar of the RTI model.

Returning to our discussion on identification of children with SLD, we present the above data as convincing evidence that there are many children who are failing to RTI, many more than are currently being served in the special education system. Although it seems clear that these large numbers of children need additional instructional support, including remediation and/or compensatory interventions within the classroom, and system-level interventions in the community, it is unclear whether they require special education services and should be identified as having a SLD. We might conclude that some of these children have disabilities and others are low achieving, but discriminating between the two would be difficult without objective individual measurement.

Some have argued vociferously that there is no substantial difference between SLD and low-achieving populations (e.g., Siegel, 1992; also see Kaufman & Kaufman, 2001a for discussion), but should ALL of these low-achieving *Below Basic* children be labeled as SLD? Under the “new” IDEA model, SLD criteria indicate what the local educational agency “shall not be required” to do (i.e., take into consideration whether there is an ability-achievement discrepancy), and what the agency “may” do (i.e., determine if the child responds to scientific, research-based intervention). These guidelines are ambiguous regarding the criteria for diagnosing SLD, and they do not even

address a methodology for identifying the mandatory “*disorder in the basic psychological processes*” that each child diagnosed with SLD must display, according to the IDEA SLD definition. Establishing a disorder in the basic psychological processes is essential for determining SLD, as neither of these two approaches specifically mentioned (discrepancy and RTI) have adequate discriminant validity; the approaches will not allow us to accurately distinguish between low-achieving and SLD groups. We want to be clear in stating that we are neither supporting nor opposing use of the discrepancy and RTI models for identification of children with SLD. Instead, we are arguing that neither of these criteria is sufficient for determining SLD classification.

The problem-solving RTI method is one that makes a great deal of heuristic sense. Eliminate the need for costly, time-consuming evaluations, and instead practitioners can help teachers teach and children learn. If despite the teacher’s best efforts the child is still failing, then that child might merit a diagnosis of SLD. Does this model suggest that the thousands of children in the NAEP *Below Basic* range are SLD, or is it that teachers and schools are performing poorly? Without objective measurement of children, these questions will be difficult to answer. One thing to keep in mind is that this RTI model has been in place – at least legally – since PL 94-142 was passed in 1975. It is called prereferral intervention. The goal of prereferral intervention (and the current IDEA RTI identification model) is to provide systematic interventions based on the scientific literature that can be evaluated to determine intervention efficacy. If a child does not improve, then he or she should be referred for a comprehensive evaluation, but the current IDEA regulations suggest the child’s failure to RTI may be sufficient enough to warrant a SLD diagnosis, as long as the other safeguards are in place (e.g., multiple measures and team members). A basic problem with the identification process over the past 30 years is that limited attention has been paid to prereferral interventions. Although many academics have advocated for more preventative and consultative models during that time, it is still common to find school psychologists who first learn about a child’s learning problems through the testing referral sheet.

We believe that problem-solving consultation and prereferral interventions are best practice for children with learning difficulties. If you provide

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“If we put more time, resources, and energy into preventative interventions or primary care, then all will benefit.”

systematic prereferral interventions for children with learning difficulties, a majority will not require comprehensive psychoeducational evaluations or need special education services. Many systemic changes will be needed to make this a reality, but it is a worthwhile endeavor nonetheless. If we put more time, resources, and energy into preventative interventions or primary care, then all will benefit. However, we differ from those who call for the elimination of intellectual and cognitive assessment. We believe that those children who do not respond to “scientifically-valid” and “positive behavior” interventions likely need comprehensive evaluations of intellectual/cognitive, academic, and psychosocial functioning. As Hale and Fiorello (2001) have argued, “we must *intervene to assess*” reducing the number of referrals through prereferral interventions will allow us to provide more thorough and comprehensive assessments for those who truly need them. Without the comprehensive team evaluation, we will have no way of determining who could benefit from instructional accommodations or modifications that are tailored to the child’s unique needs.

Nonetheless, questions remain: Are there truly unique needs? Do any children need comprehensive evaluations? Is there any relationship between cognitive functioning and intervention? Many will answer these questions with an unequivocal and resounding “NO”. It is interesting to read recent papers written by reform advocates and find that most use citations from studies *conducted over 20 years ago*. Using these old studies for “evidence,” these authors often conclude that there is little difference between children who are low achieving and those with SLD, there is a limited relationship between cognitive functioning and classroom achievement, and the assessment tools typically used have little ecological or treatment utility. Unfortunately, these conclusions, based on the early literature, are not well supported by current literature. As Braden and Kratochwill (1997) have discussed, we cannot accept the null hypothesis regarding the relationship between cognitive functioning and intervention; we should instead attempt to understand this relationship with systematic studies at the single-subject level of analysis. In other words, we should capitalize on our understanding of cognitive processes and incorporate cognitive and behavioral methodologies when designing interventions for individual children (Hale & Fiorello, in press; Naglieri, 2003; Naglieri &

Pickering, 2003).

Much has changed in our understanding of cognitive and neuropsychological processes since those early studies, yet reform advocates seldom report this more recent evidence. These recent studies show there are meaningful differences between low achieving children and those with SLD (e.g., Kavale, 1995) and there are robust relationships between cognitive processes and individualized interventions (e.g., Naglieri, 2001, 2003). Furthermore, many of the studies cited by those who advocate elimination of standardized cognitive tests from the SLD diagnostic process operate as if the Wechsler scales are the only measures of cognitive processes, and as if *g* theory is the contemporary model of intelligence (Kaufman & Kaufman, 2001a). In fact, there is now an array of well-normed, well-validated, theory-based tests of cognitive processes, and the theories on which they are based advocate multiple processes or abilities, not a global *g* factor (Kaufman & Kaufman, 2001b).

A simple literature review highlights the dramatic changes that have taken place since the 1980s. Putting in the keywords “brain” and “reading” into *PsycINFO*, there have been over 5,026 articles, chapters, or books written about this relationship. This is just a minor sampling of the possible papers written on the relationship between brain functions and academic achievement. Instead of citing papers from over 20 years ago, longitudinal research confirms that the *delay* model is inadequate for explaining the nature of the specific *deficits* found for children with SLD (Francis, Shaywitz, Stuebing, Shaywitz, & Fletcher, 1996). Children with SLD are different from low-achieving children - we just need to get better at identifying the two groups (Sofie & Riccio, 2002). When it comes to psychopathology, we have learned in the last 20 years that many childhood disorders have biological bases. In the early 1990s it was difficult to publish papers that discussed frontal lobe functions and ADHD, as the condition was thought of as a “behavior disorder;” now a plethora of papers point out the relevance of this relationship (“frontal” and “ADHD” = 1378 citations). Twenty years is a long time in science, especially the last 20 years. It is important to acknowledge scientific advances and incorporate this knowledge in our daily practice and teachings.

Given these scientific advances, we believe that both the ability-achievement discrepancy and RTI models are not sufficient for identifying children with SLD. Many have attacked the discrepancy

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approach from multiple positions (see Aaron, 1997). A majority of the arguments against this approach point out the statistical problems associated with discrepancy models (Reynolds, 1992), whereas others point to the limitations of the assessment tools (Reschly & Grimes, 1995), their apparently unfair assessments of minority children (Fish, 2002), or the questionable interpretation of IQs as measures of ability (Fiorello, Hale, McGrath, Kelly, & Quinn, 2001). Another hotly contested area is whether clinicians should interpret global scores (Glutting et al., 1997) or factor/subtest scores when significant profile variability is found (Fiorello et al., 2001; Hale et al., 2001; Kaufman, 1994; Lichtenberger & Kaufman, 2004), with evidence building in support of the latter. It is clear that there is shared variance between ability and achievement measures, each with their associated measurement error, leading most to call for regression-based models for SLD determination (Flanagan, Ortiz, Alfonso, & Mascolo, 2002). In addition to the questionable validity of ability-achievement discrepancies, the problem has been further exacerbated by inconsistent application of discrepancy results in school settings (see Ross, 1992).

The problem-solving RTI approach is not without limitations. First, a major concern has to do with the determination of *the* scientific teaching method for reading and other academic disciplines. As there are many cognitive constructs required for academic achievement (see Hale et al., 2001; Hale, Fiorello, Bertin, & Sherman, 2003; Kaufman & Kaufman, 2001b; Naglieri, 2001), how will teachers ensure that the curriculum addresses or accommodates each? Even if curricular matters are addressed, who will ensure that all teachers are trained to competency and provided with the necessary curriculum and instructional supports? Does this approach suggest that a national testing system for teacher competency will be required? Who will design, develop, and evaluate whether the children are “responding” to the “positive behavior” interventions? Will these tools be uniform and have adequate technical characteristics, such as reliability, stability, and validity?

Even at the single-subject level, many questions remain. During the scientific positive behavior intervention, how many data points below the aimline must the trendline fall before a child is determined to have a SLD? What decision points need to be developed and evaluated for other single-subject designs (e.g., reversal, multiple baseline)?

How will we ensure that there was adequate treatment integrity within or across conditions? If you have ever conducted a curriculum-based assessment or a systematic observation, you certainly know that these issues are clearly pertinent in interpreting results. If a child's trendline falls below the aimline, it could be related to the instruction, the child, the length of time required for the intervention, or an interaction among these variables. One week gives you a steep aimline slope, one year a flatter one. Similarly, how do you know whether a target child and a control child have “different” amounts of on-task behavior, and when is this difference significant? Is it significant if the teacher and consultant achieve consensus that the behaviors are different? Is it a significant difference if the target child's behavior interferes with his academic achievement? Finally, it is important to note that the same teacher who refers a child for a problem-solving consultation will likely be the individual who will carry out the intervention that will be used to help determine whether the child has a SLD, and expectancy effects could distort results in either direction.

Frankly, the subjective nature of decision making in this “scientific” “positive behavior” RTI approach to SLD determination causes us great concern, no less than the blind application of ability-achievement discrepancy formulas for determining SLD. The new IDEA guidelines retain an important aspect of the “old” definition of SLD, namely that a child diagnosed with SLD has a disorder in one of the basic psychological processes. Even without the requirement of an ability-achievement discrepancy as part of the formal definition of SLD, the conceptual definition of SLD (based on old and new IDEA guidelines) implies a discrepancy between intact processes and those that are disordered. To measure these areas of integrity and deficit, we strongly believe that well-validated, reliable, stable, and well-normed cognitive tests need to be part of the assessment approach. These concerns brought the authors together in an ad hoc committee to express our views to the U.S. Senate, which culminated in a letter to Senators Gregg and Kennedy (see Appendix 1). In this letter we do not support or oppose either the discrepancy or RTI model for SLD determination. We realize that there are strong opinions on both sides, and merit can be found in both positions. Instead, we hope this discussion will vitalize the long-standing debate about what SLD is, how we should assess it, and

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how best to determine SLD eligibility (Kaufman & Kaufman, 2001b).

Whether a traditional ability-achievement discrepancy model, a cognitive approach as suggested by Hale et al. (2003) and Naglieri (2003), or the RTI model is adopted, we argue that the *definition* of SLD and the *method* used to identify children with SLD should be consistent. For a child to be diagnosed with SLD, the reauthorized IDEA is clear in specifying that the child must have a *disorder in one of the basic psychological processes*, which has remained at the core of SLD classification. Previously, practitioners either ignored or used the discrepancy model to address this core definitional component (Kavale, 2002). In the RTI model, psychological processes may be ignored, and one can only infer that if the child fails to RTI, then a processing deficit is likely. This is, at best, a questionable method for connecting the SLD definition with an assessment approach. Moreover, without thorough cognitive assessment, it is likely that those children who fail to RTI may do so for a myriad of reasons that may not include a processing disorder (e.g., emotional problem, poor treatment integrity), and these children could be inappropriately classified with a SLD.

In our opinion, the only way that practitioners can adhere to the requirements of the law and document deficient *psychological processes* is to administer individual cognitive and/or neuropsychological measures. These measures must be different in content from the academic area of difficulty. That is, the underlying processing disorder cannot be defined on the basis of a failure to achieve some academic criterion (e.g., reading effectively), but by a disorder of the basic psychological processes that underlie the academic failure. In addition, several measures should be used, as IDEA specifies that teams must “not use any single measure” and conduct a “full and individual evaluation” when determining whether a child has a SLD. In addition, the law specifies “use [of] technically sound instruments, [to assess] cognitive and behavioral factors” that are “valid and reliable,” and evaluate “all areas of suspected disability.” These provisions require collection of reliable and valid information about child cognitive strengths and needs. Only by conducting standardized assessments of the basic cognitive processes after prereferral attempts have failed (e.g., RTI) will the definition of SLD be united with the method for SLD identification.

New approaches to measurement of basic cognitive processes are not the same as earlier ones that were dismissed as ineffective. Today we recognize that changing the focus from the content of test items (e.g., auditory, visual) to the underlying psychological processes (Reynolds, Kamphaus, Rosenthal, & Hiemenz, 1997) may be the key to understanding the true nature of brain-achievement-behavior relationships for individual children. Additionally, now that neuropsychological theory has moved beyond the simple verbal-left hemisphere/nonverbal-right hemisphere dichotomy (see Bryan & Hale, 2001) that permeated the early SLD research (e.g., Johnson & Myklebust, 1971), we can begin to better understand the underlying cognitive processes associated with academic achievement. In addition, a convergence of cognitive and neuropsychological theories has begun, providing researchers and practitioners with the impetus for renewed explorations of brain-behavior relationships in the classroom (Hale & Fiorello, in press).

As for the cultural or racial bias issue, people have argued for some time that intelligence tests have resulted in “mislabeling,” “overidentification,” and “high dropout rates” for children from different ethnic or linguistic backgrounds. Some have argued that this is just a reality of true intelligence differences among the races (Jensen, 1997), whereas others have suggested that a processing approach to intelligence may show that although the races differ on IQ tests, defining intelligence using processing tests may lead to fairer measures of intellectual functioning that reduce ethnic differences (Fagan, 2002; Naglieri, Rojahn, Aquilino, & Matto, 2003). Even though most test authors painstakingly ensure that their measures are not statistically biased, interpretation errors may result for children of color or linguistic difference (Hale & Fiorello, 2001). There are cognitive processing tools that do yield considerably smaller ethnic group differences than are seen on traditional IQ tests (e.g. Kaufman & Kaufman, 2004; Naglieri & Das, 1997), and interpretation strategies for other measures that minimize erroneous interpretation for children of ethnic, cultural, or linguistic difference (Hale & Fiorello, 2001). It remains to be seen whether the RTI model advocates will adhere to these high standards when developing, administering, and evaluating the technical adequacy of their measures.

Certainly, one could argue that all children who fall into the NAEP *Below Basic* range need “special”



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June 1, 2003

Senator Judd Gregg  
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Senator Edward Kennedy  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Gregg and Kennedy:

We are an ad-hoc interdisciplinary professional committee of educators, researchers, and practitioners in psychology and special education who have published extensively in the areas of learning disabilities and assessment of psychological processes. Our professional affiliations include the American Psychological Association, Council for Exceptional Children, International Neuropsychological Society, Learning Disability Association of America, and the National Association of School Psychologists. Recently, we met to discuss the proposed IDEA reauthorization and have some specific suggestions for your consideration.

We agree that the use of an ability-achievement discrepancy should not be the sole criterion for specific learning disabilities and agree with the definition provided in Section 602.27(A) of H.R. 1350. This definition for specific learning disabilities (SLD) includes language indicating the presence of a "disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes" involved in academic performance. Indeed, we have found that there is considerable scientific evidence that a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes must be identified in order to determine eligibility for specific learning disability and to select appropriate instructional interventions. Additionally, assessment of these basic psychological processes must be conducted using well validated, reliable, norm-referenced cognitive measures.

The evaluation procedures described in the present guidelines do not, however, include any method for identifying the processing disorder that is fundamental to the definition of SLD provided in Section 602.77 (A). To better serve the children who are evaluated for possible SLD, we believe that the definition of SLD and the evaluation procedures for identifying SLD need to be consistent with one another.

Letter to Senators Gregg and Kennedy, page 2

We therefore suggest the following statement be added to H.R. 1350 in SECTION 614(b)(6) SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES (B) ADDITIONAL AUTHORITIES:

**In determining whether a child has a specific learning disability, a local educational agency should include reliable and valid norm-referenced measures of the basic psychological processes.**

Our ad hoc committee strongly suggests that the change noted above be made to the current version of the reauthorization of H.R. 1350. This change will help ensure that children who are identified as having a specific learning disability will, indeed, demonstrate the requisite processing disorder. We will be happy to provide additional information upon request.

Sincerely,



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education, as they are not sufficiently benefiting from their current instruction. Maybe the IDEA provisions for "merit-based performance systems" will provide teachers with the incentives necessary to help these children, consistent with the beliefs of Mr. Paige. However, we hope that this paper has provided arguments that suggest the issues surrounding SLD identification and treatment are far from definitive. We admire advances and changes, but we see the need for the SLD definition to be consistent with the method used to identify these children; furthermore, the method should incorporate modern views of cognitive and neuropsychological processing. It became clear to us as we finished our weekend ad hoc committee meeting that these recommended changes are not just about teachers and children; they are about politicians legislating clinical practice based on the testimony of some well-intentioned individuals. Those individuals have good ideas, but those ideas may lead to dangerous consequences if they are not integrated with the good ideas of professionals who offer a different approach to solving the problem of SLD diagnosis.

**Please e-mail all submissions for The Commentary Section to: LReddy2271@aol.com**

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## Practice Forum

# Sexual Orientation and Risk Among Gay Youth: Concerns and Considerations for School Psychologists

**Tony D. Crespi & Katherine H. Berzinskas**  
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Looking at sexual identity globally, it is clear that GLBT youth represent a hidden minority who are misunderstood and stigmatized (Pearson, 2003). It is estimated that gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered (GLBT) youth number 2,600,000 students (McFarland, 2001). The average age of disclosure of gay identity falling in early adolescence (e.g., age 13) is down from age 20 in 1979 (Batelaan, 2000). Therefore, there is a large number of youth at risk in the schools because of their sexual orientation. One in six gay high school students is beaten so severely that they require medical assistance, and GLBT youth drop out of high school at rates which number three times the national average (Callahan, 2001). In fact, this is only a glimpse of the kind of challenges facing GLBT youth. They are also struggling with sexual identity development (Dworkin, 2001) and school-based harassment and violence (Henning-Stout, James, & Macintosh, 2000). In the Report of the Secretary's Task Force on Youth Suicide, Gibson (1989) noted that gay adolescents are two to three times more likely to attempt suicide. Hollander (2000) noted that youth who question their sexual orientation are increasingly in need of support services.

One of the challenging issues for GLBT youth involves the integration of sexual orientation and behavior. Yarhouse (2001) noted that for homosexual youth this process begins with labeling sexual attractions and includes homosexual identification, involvement in homosexual culture, and sexual redefinition of homosexuality as a viable lifestyle. Integration into a homosexual culture where acceptance is significant enhances commitment and relational success (Fitzpatrick, Jandt, Myrick, & Edgar, 1994). However, misunderstood and stigmatized (Pearson, 2003), GLBT youth do not develop sexual identity easily. Beals and Peplau (2000) indicated that the process of "coming out" can be debilitating if not effectively addressed. DeAngelis (2002) indicated, for example, that depression, substance abuse, and suicide are examples of untoward behaviors that can accompany lack of resolution. What does this mean for schools? What does it mean for children?

## The Case of Jane: A High Risk Youth with Sexual Identity Confusion

Jane L. is a 15 year old high school sophomore who was referred to the school psychologist by her mother, after finding her daughter intoxicated. A blond-haired, blue-eyed, slim teenager, she tended to dress in jeans and with a generally unkempt style. She typically wore a sweatshirt atop an untucked shirt, which served to hide the fact that she was quite emaciated.

One of three children, Jane's parents divorced when she was three. The father's whereabouts were unknown. The mother experienced difficulty holding a job, and was reported to use drugs and alcohol regularly. Jane's family included one older brother living outside the home and one younger sister living at home. Jane acknowledged an eating disorder and she was sufficiently underweight that her menstrual cycles had ceased, effectively stopping sexual identity development. Her mother reported that Jane had a drinking problem.

Jane appeared stoic when questioned about her emaciated appearance, displaying a classic adolescent shrug. On interview she displayed a flattened affect, did not smile, typically looked down at the floor, shifted uncomfortably in her chair, and was often unresponsive to queries. After an hour of interview she reluctantly acknowledged a homosexual identity, displaying great stress regarding her orientation. In fact, while speaking, she "nibbled" on her fingers until they began to bleed. She also spoke of considerable fear about informing her family of her sexual preferences, and confided that it would be easier to terminate her own life than share this revelation with her family and friends. She was gravely concerned about confidentiality.

Psychological test data indicated above average intellectual ability, poor self-esteem, depression, anxiety, as well as notable eating problems and alcoholism. In addition, her grades had dropped, her concentration was poor in class and she had withdrawn from friends and family. She reported no support system regarding her sexual identity. She

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also spoke of fear of rejection and noted that she had considered self-mutilation.

Although not identified as a special education student, the school agreed that Jane's situation warranted counseling services and agreed to have her meet with the school psychologist twice a week for individual counseling targeted toward helping her improve her self-esteem and address underlying depression. It was noted that it would be helpful to Jane to talk about her sexual identity.

### **Considerations for Schools and School Psychology**

In a fundamental way, adolescence is a time that youth deal with both basic identity development as well as sexual orientation. Mallon (1992) noted that the very mention of words including "homosexual", "lesbian", or "gay" can create great discomfort, even among mental health professionals. Many youth resort to "hiding" their sexual identity because of fear of stigmatization, and are at risk for becoming homeless because of fear and lack of support at home. With at least 1 in 5 families having a gay child, these concerns are truly notable. In effect, this suggests that 10% of the child population may be gay (Dahlmeimer & Feigal, 1991).

Fontaine and Hammond (1996) noted that school counselors are in a paramount position to help. Schools can have an important role in assisting these youth as they address key needs and problems (Hollander, 2000), and school psychologists are in a key position from which to influence the school on multiple levels, from interventions with individual students to the development of policies and practices, including teacher education workshops targeted to increasing tolerance and an understanding of diversity in multiple forms.

There are many obstacles that prevent schools and school psychologists from providing effective services for GLBT youth. School personnel may have concerns about issues related to confidentiality and the need to disclose the sexual identity of students to their parents. In a key court case, *Sterling v. Borough of Minersville* (2000), the importance of understanding legal and ethical standards of practice when working with GLBT youth was emphasized. In this case, the police threatened to disclose a youth's homosexuality to his parents. Tragically, the youngster committed suicide shortly after hearing the threat. The court ruled that the police violated the youth's rights to privacy, thus establishing disclosure of sexual orientation as a violation of the right to privacy.

Another obstacle to supportive services in the schools is related to the personal biases of school personnel. Fontaine (1998) noted there are many school psychologists who are not supportive of gay and lesbian students due to their own prejudices based on personal and religious beliefs. Fontaine found that 21% of school psychologists had biased opinions that were unsupportive of GLBT students. In one case a counselor is noted as stating "Because of my religious belief, I believe that the gay/lesbian lifestyle is a sin and is in contradiction to the Bible!" (Fontaine, 1998).

Obstacles provided a basis for treatment and training opportunities. Considerations for treatment are offered.

### **Considerations for Counseling and Psychotherapy in the Schools**

Does your school offer the following services?

- 1) Parent Education Groups For GLBT Youth. (PFLAG=Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)
- 2) Individual Counseling for GLBT Youth.
- 3) Support Groups for GLBT Youth.
- 4) Referral Resources Sensitive to GLBT Issues.
- 5) Classroom Interventions to Educate Students And Faculty.
- 6) Sensitivity Training for Faculty and Parents.
- 7) Prevention Initiatives Targetted to Age of Disclosure.
- 8) Peer Support Groups/Peer Mentoring Initiatives.
- 9) GLBT Sensitive Career and College Counseling.
- 10) Administrative Consultation regarding GLBT Issues.

There are model service delivery systems that school psychologists can use to guide their practice. The Harvey Milk High School in New York City represents a high school dedicated to GLBT youth. Named for San Francisco's first openly gay city supervisor who was assassinated in 1978 for being gay, the high school opened in 2003 as the first gay high school in the United States. Hollander (2000) indicated that this program is an excellent program. Mayor Michael Bloomberg stated: "It lets [students] get an education without having to worry" (Associated Press, 2003).

Blake et al. (2001) indicated that GLBT youth can benefit from policies and programs that promote sensitive instruction, provide interventions to personnel to reduce discrimination, and programs that foster supportive school climates. Specifically,

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“... it is vital that university faculty and practitioners become aware of the magnitude and scope of problems.”

interventions need to reduce violence, harassment, victimization, suicide, and evaluate risk behaviors. In a critical discussion of the counselor's role in helping GLBT youth, Cooley (1998) noted that school counselors should include three key points in their approach:

1. In order to provide the needed support, all school staff members must be educated regarding homosexuality; they must know the facts and be supportive. Since so much in the world is uncertain for today's youth, their educational experience should be safe and nonthreatening.
2. Students need homosexual and heterosexual sex education. Homosexuality should be included in every discussion of sexuality including dating and relationships, parenting, sexually transmitted diseases, and services available.
3. Administrative discrimination in the hiring of gay and lesbian staff members must end. These teachers and counselors should be hired and valued as positive role models for both heterosexual and homosexual students.

Morrow (1993) reported that schools, overall, are not inclined to promote tolerance nor acceptance on GLBT issues. Mallon (1992) underscored the importance of environmental acceptance for GLBT youth, indicating that feelings of inferiority can be escalated through negative environmental factors. Much needs to be done to promote a positive sense of tolerance and acceptance in public schools for GLBT youth. As Fontaine and Hammond (1996) noted, the majority of GLBT youth remain hidden – an invisible population not disclosing their sexual identity because of fear. The price, though, is steep, as this compromises identity development.

### Summary and Conclusions

GLBT youth represent a hidden minority who are misunderstood and stigmatized (Pearson, 2003). GLBT youth are at risk in the schools, and school psychological service units can help. At the same time, it is vital that university faculty and practitioners become aware of the magnitude and scope of problems. How would you rate the competencies of your colleagues? How would you evaluate your training program and/or school psychological services unit? Where do you stand?

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## THE COMMENTARY SECTION

**This section functions similar to that of the *American Psychologist* and presents members' thoughts and critiques of articles published in *TSP* or other journals, current events, or discussions sent on the various school psychology listservs. It is our hope that this section will serve as a platform for thoughtful scholarly debate and discussion. Below is a critique of one *TSP* article. Volume 57, Number 3 (Summer, 2003): "Specialization in Neuropsychology: Contemporary Concerns and Considerations for School Psychology" by Tony D. Crespi, University of Hartford and D. Tighe Cooke, Worcester State College (MA) & Poudre Schools (CO)**

# The Application of Neuropsychology in the Schools Should Not be Called School Neuropsychology: A Rejoinder to Crespi and Cooke

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**T**. Crespi and D. T. Cooke raised many important questions in their recent article in the Summer 2003 *TSP* article "Specialization in Neuropsychology: Contemporary concerns and considerations for school psychology." The primary issue posed in this article is "What constitutes appropriate education and training for the school psychologist interested in practicing as a neuropsychologist?" (Crespi & Cooke). We would like to address several of their questions, add some additional comments, and reframe the issue in a new way.

School psychologists have an exceptional foundation of knowledge in development, behavior, assessment, consultation, and educational systems that makes them well suited to pursue additional training in the area of child neuropsychology. Crespi and Cooke convincingly demonstrated the utility of neuropsychological theory and methods for school-related issues. In most NASP-approved programs, and in all APA-accredited doctoral level psychology programs, students are required to take at least one course in the biological foundations of behavior, which serves as an excellent starting point for learning about neuropsychological principles and the organization of the nervous system. In 1999, Walker,

Boling, and Cobb surveyed training opportunities in neuropsychology and traumatic brain injury across 86 school psychology training programs. They determined, however, that only very few programs offered any specific training in neuropsychology. One primary reason for this was the dearth of school psychology faculty members who had any neuropsychology expertise, as well as a longstanding view that neuropsychology was not a content area that was important to the curriculum (a view that seems at odds with the realities of today's school-based practice). Another reason for not including neuropsychology as a core component of school psychology training was the sheer amount of other curriculum that must be covered in a very short amount of time, particularly in the specialist/master's-level programs. In a 2- to 3-year program, specialist-level students must complete a very comprehensive curriculum (often taking course overloads), complete adequate practicum experience, then complete a 1,200-hour internship. There is somewhat more leeway in terms of a minor course of study or specialized electives at the doctoral level, although curricular requirements remain high. Yet, the increasing demand for post-graduate training opportunities such as those

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described by Crespi and Cooke suggests that curricular offerings in many training programs may warrant re-examination.

It is our view that all school psychologists should have exposure to neuropsychological theories and methods to the extent feasible in their training program. Even a brief course would serve to increase awareness regarding neuropsychological issues and would emphasize the breadth of further training required to practice appropriately in the field. However, neither a single brief course, nor even a series of courses should entitle one to claim to practice neuropsychology or use the title of "neuropsychologist."

**FORMAL TRAINING IN THE SPECIALTY  
OF CLINICAL NEUROPSYCHOLOGY**

Clinical neuropsychology was recognized by the American Board of Professional Psychology in 1983 as a doctoral level specialty. As Crespi and Cooke noted, there are a number of avenues that can be pursued to obtain training in neuropsychology. However, these do not represent equivalent models of training, nor produce practitioners with comparable levels of expertise. In 1997, the Houston Conference issued guidelines for specialty training in neuropsychology; graduate level coursework, as well as pre-doctoral internships and post-doctoral fellowships were all deemed requisite for practice as a neuropsychologist (Hannay et al., 1998). Not only are there numerous internships and fellowships that offer training consistent with the Houston Conference standards, but it is also the authors' opinion that these programs are becoming increasingly accepting of doctoral-level school psychology applicants (Cripe, 1995; Boake, Yeates, & Donders, 2002).

These programs offer a sharp contrast to some of the alternate paths described by Crespi and Cooke. They noted, for example, that the 1-year program offered nationally by The Texas Woman's University consists of only a brief summer institute, monthly supervision, and a 750-hour practicum. Regional programs offered by the Fielding Graduate Institute at least require more field-based training; nonetheless, the 200 hours of case supervision and 1,000 hours of practicum training still fall far short of the Houston conference guidelines.

Obviously, completion of a doctoral program with specialization in neuropsychology and a 2-year, full-time post-doctoral fellowship is not equivalent to

completion of a 1- or 2-year part-time training program, even with the inclusion of group supervision. We are not saying that there is no value to such programs. They fill a need for the provision of supplemental training for school based-practitioners, and they offer superior instruction to brief workshops and introductory training sessions such as those offered at professional meetings. However, our concern is that the formal certification and inappropriate titling of individuals, trained through programs that provide some preparation, does not meet the accepted standard in the specialty of neuropsychology, and thus conveys an endorsement of professional practice in areas for which one is actually inadequately prepared.

**Neuropsychological Tests:  
The Stick in the Sandbox**

Longer and more comprehensive programs teach a variety of theoretical and scientific approaches, as well as information regarding a number of specific classes of disorders. Such programs clearly impart a more thorough grounding in neuropsychological theory than brief courses that simply teach the administration of neuropsychological tests. It appears that practitioners are beginning to understand that neuropsychology is not simply the administration of tests that are termed neuropsychological tests. Just because one can administer the NEPSY, for example, does not mean that one is now practicing as a neuropsychologist. That is, a test itself is not inherently neuropsychological; rather, it is the training and knowledge used by the examiner in the interpretation of the test results that make a test a neuropsychological test. Learning how to administer and score a given instrument is not sufficient training to provide comprehensive neuropsychological evaluations and assessment, without additional training in neurodevelopment, functional neuroanatomy, neurological disorders, and developmental disorders. There are numerous assessment tools and batteries used by neuropsychologists in an evaluation, but none that are quite specific to the practice of neuropsychology, regardless of the label on the box. With a thorough understanding of the developmental acquisition of neuropsychological functions, one could even use a stick in a sandbox as part of a neuropsychological evaluation.

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### **CURRENT TRENDS**

#### **Supply and Demand**

Due to the increasing numbers of children with severe and unusual neurological disorders who now require school-based services and must often be evaluated by school psychologists, it is in the best interest of the students and school personnel that the school psychologists be well trained and capable of understanding the diverse needs of these children. This is a vitally important issue, and the case examples presented by Crespi and Cooke reveal the complexity of issues seen in common referrals within a typical school system.

Unfortunately, and concomitant to increasing numbers of children with complex needs, there are increasing references to shortages of school psychologists (see, for example, Miller, 2003). Increasing caseloads among those psychologists who remain in schools make the provision of comprehensive services difficult at best. While neuropsychological assessments may provide more comprehensive and useful information regarding a given student, it is important to recognize that proper administration and interpretation of a neuropsychological evaluation may take more time than a standard psychoeducational assessment. Given the large caseloads and demands on the school psychologist's time, the ability to provide such comprehensive assessments may be quite limited.

#### **IDEA Reauthorization and Expanded Assessment**

The upcoming changes in IDEA are likely to result in a diminished role for discrepancy-based criteria in determining eligibility for special education services, as well as an increased demand for expanded or more comprehensive assessment. Such changes would support the need for additional training for both experienced and novice school psychologists who may have been trained with a focus on the use of the discrepancy model and a gatekeeper role. Many states are currently moving toward a problem-solving model for pre-referral consultation in which the role of the school psychologist will be focused more on curricular consultation and intervention than on eligibility determination. Nonetheless, we believe that the provision of comprehensive evaluations that encompass a wide variety of domains of functioning will remain quite helpful – if not absolutely necessary – for many students in light of upcoming

and current legislation; however, we do not believe that these evaluations should necessarily be called “neuropsychological.”

#### **Limitations on Services Outside of Schools**

Due to the present environment in insurance and mental health care arenas, not all children with conditions that warrant an evaluation will receive comprehensive services from an appropriately trained clinician. Many may not receive any services at all outside of the school. While school psychologist numbers are dwindling, there are clearly far fewer pediatric neuropsychologists in this country than there are school psychologists. As such, we agree whole-heartedly that school psychologists should have expanded knowledge and training in neuropsychologically-based assessment and intervention models. Although every school psychologist may not need to have such training, or the same level of training in this area, it would be very beneficial (if not essential) if relevant training and practice standards could be developed to ensure that children with significant needs are seen by practitioners who have received training that is appropriate for the services provided.

#### **Limited Usefulness of Neuropsychological Reports**

Whereas the field of clinical neuropsychology first emerged as a “pin the tail on the lesion” specialty prior to the advent of modern neuroimaging, the current practice of pediatric neuropsychology focuses less on localization, and more on prescriptive recommendations regarding learning, educational, and behavioral interventions. Even so, we are aware of the limited usefulness of many neuropsychological reports within the school setting. Historically, the majority of child neuropsychologists have come from a background of clinical or counseling psychology programs, not from school psychology programs. Thus, in many cases, clinical neuropsychologists are well trained in providing specific information regarding a child's tests data and behavior, but have more difficulty translating that data into information that is useful for school teachers and staff. This is an area that we believe is in much need of attention! In these situations it is particularly invaluable when school psychologists have the training to serve as a link between the consulting neuropsychologist and the school staff. With knowledge and understanding of

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the evaluation results presented by the neuropsychologist, and a comprehensive grasp of the school environment, the school psychologist is in a key role to work with the child, family, and educational team. The school psychologist can assist them in developing an appropriate educational plan and translating the neuropsychological evaluation results into appropriate school-based interventions for the student. Ideally, neuropsychological reports would not need to be translated for public consumption, but would be written in a manner that is useful for schools, medical professionals, families, and students alike.

Crespi and Cooke reported that evaluations provided by neuropsychologists outside of school system “can be financially expensive, and result in inappropriate, costly recommendations for local boards of education. As such, it can be advantageous to have school-based professionals with appropriate training in the specialty” (pp. 97-98). As no outside professional can dictate what interventions and recommendation are accepted and applied within any school system, we are not sure that this argument is completely relevant. Placement and eligibility decisions are made by multidisciplinary teams comprised of parents and school personnel, as well as outside professionals. While the recommendations of outside professionals will be considered, it is the responsibility of the school staff to make a determination regarding the appropriateness and need for the implementation of any requested services.

#### **The Practice of Neuropsychology in the Schools**

In 1981, *The School Psychologist* and *School Psychology Review* featured a number of manuscripts touting the benefits of neuropsychology for school-related problems (see, for example, Gaddes, 1981; Hynd, 1981a, 1981b; Hynd & Obrzut, 1981; Obrzut, 1981); in the two decades since these series of articles first appeared, there has been a shift from questioning the value of neuropsychology altogether, to a greater acceptance of and appreciation for the application of neuropsychological theories and principles within school settings (Crespi & Cooke; D’Amato, 1990). Yet, (and perhaps not surprisingly), the development of credentialing and training standards seems to have lagged behind applied practice.

Rourke (1991) aptly foresaw the present situation, as he predicted early on that that

professionals who were not fully trained as neuropsychologists would be calling themselves “neuropsychologists” following training to administer “neuropsychological” tests. Although appropriate training and practice standards have been developed and accepted by the professional neuropsychology associations, a vocal minority, operating independently from all professional organizations in neuropsychology and school psychology, assert otherwise.

#### **School Neuropsychology??**

Rourke’s predictions are typified by the term “school neuropsychology.” We object to the promulgation of such a title that seems to attempt to describe two areas of specialty at once, without necessarily providing appropriate training in either specialty. It is not endorsed or accepted by any organization within the field of school psychology or neuropsychology, but has been advocated by one credentialing board created specifically to promote training in this area by their affiliated program that operates independently from all professional organizations in school psychology and clinical neuropsychology.

We believe that the use of the title “school neuropsychologist” can only serve to diminish the practice of school psychologists and neuropsychologists alike. If a practitioner does not have the proper training to be called a neuropsychologist, as determined by the major organizations in the field of neuropsychology (i.e., INS/NAN/Div. 40), then one should not use the label of “school *neuropsychologist*.” Similarly, school psychologists would not be expected to accept cross training by neuropsychologists in practice who have completed this program to call themselves “school neuropsychologists.” School psychologists are ethically obligated to represent their training titles, and practice fairly and clearly to the public (APA, 2002; NASP, 2000). We believe that the use of this title is not clear, nor fair, and can easily be misconstrued by the lay public.

#### **Board Certification and Titles**

Crespi and Cooke also discussed the American Board of Clinical Neuropsychology (ABCN) as a time honored board representing the field of neuropsychology. They went on to report that the American Board of School Neuropsychology (ABSNP) is a ‘fledgling’ board offering certification to doctoral and non-doctoral practitioners alike. We



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have significant issues with the creation of a title and certification designed to promote a 'specialty area' that has not been endorsed by NASP, the APA Divisions of School Psychology or Clinical Neuropsychology, the National Academy of Neuropsychology, or the International Neuropsychological Society. There is a problem when it is possible for any individual who so desires to simply create his or her own Board because the existing Boards do not meet his or her needs. The issue becomes even more troublesome when the same people who run the training programs that prepare students for a given Board certification also run the Board certification process and profit monetarily from both parts of the process, as appears to be true of the ABSNP. The independent nature of the process is lost and a serious conflict of interest exists. Yet, in the absence of specialty guidelines for training and credentialing within school psychology and at the specialist and doctoral levels, who or what is there to challenge the legitimacy of opportunistic organizations like the ABSNP?

Those promoting this certification and title seem to present the issue as a "turf battle" between school psychologists and neuropsychologists (American Board of School Neuropsychology, n.d.); however, we (the authors) clearly have training and practice on both sides of the "turf," and we do not view the issue in this manner. Turning this into a turf battle only creates acrimony between two groups of professionals who need to work together, is misleading and confusing to the public, and can only serve to diminish the public's respect for both professions.

We can all cite examples of colleagues in either profession who have provided less than useful services to parents and children. Turning the discussion to case examples of the 'bad apples' will not serve to move the field forward. There are many school psychologists and neuropsychologists who are providing competent services to children and families across both fields, and both in and out of schools.

As practitioners who have our feet in both camps, we find it as offensive to hear neuropsychologists state that school psychologists cannot use a particular test because it is "a neuropsychological test," as we do to hear school psychologists argue that neuropsychologists should not be allowed to practice in the schools or cannot make recommendations for use in the schools. Our

goal is not to limit the practices of school psychologists or neuropsychologists, but to expand the ability of both groups of professionals to practice effectively and to work collaboratively with the other. While some may view this as a "guild" issue, we view it as an issue related to the protection of the public and the training and regulation of the profession at large.

### **PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC**

#### **Professional Misrepresentation**

On several occasions, Crespi and Cooke raised questions regarding concerns or dangers to the public. We believe that the concerns in this area are great. The disputes within the field of psychology regarding these issues, and professionals' failure to agree upon appropriate standards, does nothing to develop trust and respect in the eyes of the public. The issue of protecting the public should be paramount. When titles are applied and presented that are easily misunderstood, we believe that the public is being misled. While the "school neuropsychologist" may know that he or she is not formally trained as a "neuropsychologist" like the one at the hospital down the street, a parent is far less likely to recognize that distinction. Many parents we have worked with do not know the difference between a psychiatrist, psychologist, or a school psychologist; adding the use of one more title – especially a title that is not endorsed by any major professional organization in either field – is deceptive and misleading.

#### **Imagined Conspiracies**

Whereas our primary concerns pertain to the protection of the public and professional training/practice standards, the ABSNP literature casts a more negative light: "As a result of these issues, a national movement is now afoot to organize pediatric or developmental neuropsychologists in hopes of targeting school systems which are proclaiming that the traditional school psychologists are not capable of performing adequate assessment of TBI, seizure disorders, complicated learning disabilities, autism, MR, CP, and a host of other educationally relevant handicaps as defined by federal law" (American Board of School Neuropsychology, n.d.,).

Rather, we perceive that there are increasing numbers of children who need to be seen, and a diminishing number of providers available in the schools, concomitant with diminished resources

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outside of the schools, and we concur that the schools are a central place for children to receive evaluations and services. However, we would like to see the services provided by appropriately trained providers who are using suitable titles that adequately represent their training and credentials.

### **Putting the Shoe on the Other Foot**

Given our concerns regarding appropriate training for school personnel, we would find it equally troubling to find clinical neuropsychologists, with no training in school psychology, may be employed by public schools to provide psychological or neuropsychological services in the schools. It is a scenario with which many of us are quite familiar. Given trends in managed care and the state of our economy, school systems and school psychology training programs nationwide have been fielding inquiries from non-school psychology trained neuropsychologists regarding working in the public schools as a school psychologist. We have also observed pediatric neuropsychologists who work with children outside of school settings, and whose unfamiliarity with such topics as school climate, educational law, curriculum, and behavior management become impediments to effective service delivery. It is the confluence of the increasing prevalence of pediatric neuropsychologists seeking school-based employment or consultative opportunities, and school psychologists seeking increased training in neuropsychological theory and methods, that presents our fields with unique opportunities for working collaboratively to establish standards for specialty training and practice.

### **FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION**

We have found that this issue engenders tremendous anger and frustration among both those with appropriate training and those without. The debates often focus on negative aspects of one profession or the other, or examples of incompetent service by a provider in one field or the other. We all have our own horror stories, which should be left unstated. Such a focus will not serve to improve the situation. While we believe strongly that this topic merits collegial discussion, we need to move beyond acrimonious debates and address how neuropsychologists and school psychologists can best work together to meet the needs of the children we all seek to serve. Both specialties have important

knowledge and skills to bring to the table, which suggests multiple avenues for professional collaboration.

Rather than specifically address the questions posed by Crespi and Cooke at the end of their article, we would like to reframe the questions: How can both groups of professionals work together effectively? How can school psychologists get the training and knowledge they desire? How can neuropsychologists learn more about working with children in the context of their school issues, and with school personnel to most effectively meet children's needs? How do we meet the demand of the increasing numbers of children who need to be served, especially given the diminishing numbers of available providers – without promulgating the use of misleading titles or professional practice outside the limits of one's professional competence? How do we determine what those limits even are in this case?

### **Examples of Innovative Practice**

While Crespi and Cook made the comment that "integration of appropriately training school psychologists that meet the guidelines and standards [of the INS] can be challenging," (p. 99) we have found it possible to meet the training guidelines required by both INS and NASP/State Departments of Education. Having successfully obtained comprehensive dual training to meet the requirements of both specialties during our doctoral training programs at three different universities, we do not view this as unreasonable at all. However, we also do not believe that all school psychologists need to take the same route. Specifically, there are some states that have developed innovative training programs that are designed to provide additional training for school psychologists working with children with a variety of neurological and neurodevelopmental disorders. The North Carolina model described below is an example of an innovative public-private partnership developed to provide additional training and supervision to school-based practitioners.

### **The North Carolina TBI training initiative**

In 1991, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, in cooperation with pediatric neuropsychologists and school psychologists in the state, developed a formal inservice training program for school psychologists working with students with Traumatic Brain Injury (Hooper, Walker, & Howard,

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2001). The training addresses the knowledge base, assessment skills, and intervention skills of school psychologists and related school-based personnel. The first portion of training consists of a series of approximately 42 hours of course instruction (typically divided over three multi-day workshops), and the second portion includes 30 hours of case supervision under the guidance of an approved supervising child neuropsychologist. Approved supervisors were screened by a state DPI/TBI subcommittee to determine whether their credentials met existing professional standards for training in child neuropsychology. However, in 2001, only 13 Registry-approved supervising neuropsychologists were available to provide this supervision for the entire state, which remains a key area of need, particularly in more rural areas of the state. Currently, about 240 of North Carolina's school psychologists are on the Registry of Approved Providers for TBI services, meaning that they have completed this training, including the didactic workshops and the case supervision, with many more (557 of 675 total) having completed at least part of the training program (Hooper, Walker, & Howard, 2001).

The NC Department of Public Instruction (DPI) has also coordinated its legislation to support this training initiative in two separate ways. First, there are two portals to entry into eligibility for services under the TBI category: medical documentation that a TBI has occurred, and/or using a comprehensive neuropsychological evaluation to address residual cognitive effects of a TBI. It is important to note that this evaluation is completed by an appropriately trained licensed psychologist who is appropriately practicing in the specialty of clinical neuropsychology, not by a school psychologist on the registry. Second, the state regulations ensure that a school psychologist providing assessment or intervention services for a child identified as having had a TBI must be on the DPI's Registry of Approved Providers stating that they have completed the training program. Most of the costs of providing the training have been covered by DPI, individual school systems, and participants themselves; however, the goal is to eventually have the didactic material integrated into the curricula of the five school psychology training programs in North Carolina, so that the workshops would become a pre-service component.

The key feature of North Carolina's training program is that much caution is taken throughout

the program to avoid the impression that it prepares one to practice independently as a "neuropsychologist." The NC guidelines describe such an evaluation as a "psychological evaluation for traumatic brain injury," not as a "neuropsychological assessment." Individuals who complete the training program are added to the "Registry of Approved Providers" and are given a certificate that states:

This is to verify that NAME has successfully completed the training and supervision requirements to conduct psychological assessments for children and youth with Traumatic Brain Injury in North Carolina public schools and is listed on the Department of Public Instruction Registry of Approved Providers-Traumatic Brain Injury Psychological Assessment.

#### **Final Comments**

We would hope that other states – via state departments of education or school psychology training programs – would follow the NC lead in developing innovative training opportunities in this area. We wholeheartedly support the provision of training opportunities for school psychologists in the field of neuropsychology, as well as other areas of interest. However, we believe it imperative that training programs be very specific in the level of training that will be provided and the qualifications that one will earn and, when publicly promoted, held to objective and generally accepted standards for professional practice. Specifically, if one is not a "neuropsychologist" one should not be a "school neuropsychologist" nor a "certified school neuropsychologist." Conversely, any pediatric neuropsychologist from a non-school psychology background should not claim a similar title after having read the state special education regulations and having sat through a few IEP meetings. Finally, through this process, we need to remember that the goal of our work, both as school psychologists and as neuropsychologists, is to promote the well-being of the children we serve.

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#### **Author Note**

*The authors are all licensed psychologists and certified school psychologists with comprehensive pre- and post-doctoral training in developmental/pediatric neuropsychology.*

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*The authors wish to thank Keith Yeates for his comments on an earlier draft of this article.*

**Please e-mail all submissions for The Commentary Section to: LReddy2271@aol.com**



# First School Psychology ABPP, Virginia Bennett, Dies\*

**Tom Fagan, Division 16 Historian**

Long-time contributor to school psychology, Dr. Virginia Dakin Cliver Bennett died of congestive heart failure on July 14, 2003 in Worcester, PA at age 87. She was born on March 28, 1916 in Asbury Park, NJ to Samuel Leon Cliver, a salesman, and Ella Mae Dakin Cliver, a homemaker. Virginia attended elementary school in Asbury Park and graduated from Asbury Park High School in 1933. In her junior year she served as editor of the school's publication, *The Beacon*, a task that prepared her for future responsibilities in school psychology. She was proud of New Jersey's contributions to the history of school psychology, and claimed her grandfather's great grandfather was born there in 1749 (Bennett, 1985). Dr. Bennett lived in New Brunswick, NJ for 35 years before moving to Worcester two years ago where she lived in the independent living section of the Meadowood Retirement Community.

In 1941 she married H. Malcolm Bennett and they had two children: Elizabeth Gilbreath, a postal clerk in Stockton, NJ, and H. Malcolm Bennett Jr., a gas station owner in Lansdale, PA. Virginia and her husband divorced in 1965, and he died in 1982. Dr. Bennett is survived by her 2 children, a sister, 8 grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren. During her retirement she had a close companion who was an electrical engineer. He was very helpful in designing electronic items to assist her with her vision loss, and often accompanied her to psychology conventions. He died in the early 1990s.

## Education and Employment

Dr. Bennett received a registered nursing degree from the Ann May School of Nursing (Neptune, NJ) in 1940 and practiced for a few years with an OBGYN who later delivered her two children. She raised her children for several years before continuing her education. At Rutgers University she received her B.S.Ed. (1956), M.Ed. in educational psychology (1961), and her Ed.D. in school psychology (1963). Before entering the school psychology program she taught kindergarten in the Wall Township Public Schools (1951-1960), an experience which kindled her interest in school psychology. Virginia was not only a graduate, but



*Virginia Bennett in the early 1980s*

also a faculty member of Rutgers. She was an assistant professor from 1963 to 1967, then an associate from 1967 till her promotion to full professor in 1971, and was awarded emeritus status in 1984. She served as chair of the School Psychology

Department (1976-1984), and Acting Associate Dean of the Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology (1974-1975). She was licensed as a clinical psychologist in NJ, at one time worked at the Long Branch, Central Region Junior-Senior High School (NJ), and served as a consultant to the Tewksbury Township Public Schools (1967-1976). During her retirement she continued her professional service and consulted with the Rutgers school psychology program through Jean Balinky.

## ABEPP and Service Contributions

A close friend of Jack Bardon (1925-1993), first as a student, then as a colleague, the two authored a widely used text on school psychology (Bardon & Bennett, 1974), including a Spanish edition published in 1975. She may be best known for that book. However, in 1968 Bennett was the first person to be approved by the American Board of Examiners in Professional Psychology (ABEPP) for its credential in the field of school psychology, bringing to fruition a process that had been considered as early as 1953. Her willingness to sit as one of two "Guinea pigs" for the trial examinations in the process of gaining approval to give the ABPP in school psychology is historically significant. Bardon (1985) stated, "She subjected herself to full board review including trying to show that it was proper for a school psychologist to present a tape and transcript of consultation with a school administrator, rather than a tape of a therapy session, as evidence for professional competence. Of the two test subjects, one passed—Virginia. School psychology, based on her competence and

**First School Psychology ABPP, Virginia Bennett, Dies\***

ability to show that it could be different from clinical psychology, achieved status nationally that it had not had (p. 25-26)".

According to Perkins (1967-1968), Division 16's proposal that was approved by ABEPP was developed by 15-20 Division Fellows, and the Division was to select 5 or 6 of its members as an "experimental group" for the trial administrations. The Division and ABEPP understood that "the techniques and content to be tapped by the examination may vary with the preparation and functions of the School Psychologists to be examined (p. 3)." This understanding seems to have opened the door for Bennett's use of a consultation tape and transcript. Apparently, the Division later chose to have only two members subjected to the first ABEPP review. Another less known contribution was a film on school psychology made by Bennett, Bardon, and Hyman around 1970 for a half-hour NBC television program in Philadelphia.

Virginia was less involved in empirical research and writing for publication. Instead, she directed her efforts to professional service in Division 16, APA, and the New Jersey Psychological Association (NJPA). She was encouraged and groomed for this by Bardon. Both served as Division 16 presidents, and as representatives to the Board of the Association for the Advancement of Psychology. She joined the APA in 1964 and became a Fellow in Division 16 in 1972. She was President of the APA Division of School Psychology in 1974-1975. Her presidential messages in the newsletter revealed the initial impact of P.L. 93-380 (Bennett, 1975a) and the hectic hour-to-hour convention schedule of the president (Bennett, 1975b). She also served Division 16 as a Member-at-Large to the Executive Committee (1969-1972) and Representative to APA Council (1972-73, 1977-79). She served for many years as a site visitor for APA accreditation and was active on many other committees, including APA's Board of Professional Affairs which she chaired in 1977. Virginia served as NJPA President in 1972-1973. She was a NASP member from 1973 to 1989, but was not involved in its governance activities. According to *The Star Ledger* (Newark, NJ) she was also a member of the NJEA, AERA, NEA, American Orthopsychiatric Association, and the Society of Projective Techniques and Personality Assessment. Virginia received Division 16's Distinguished Service Award (1977), NYU's Dorothy H. Hughes Award (1980), the Psychologist of the Year Award from the NJPA (1981) and a Presidential Citation from Rutgers University (1983).

**Division 16 Editorial Service**

She served as associate editor (1966-1968), then editor (1968-1971) of Division 16's newsletter, *The School Psychologist*. Under Keith Perkins' (1907-1987) editorship from 1965 to 1968, the newsletter was given its title, *The School Psychologist*, and a journal-like format which Bennett continued. The publication served as the primary vehicle for division news, state association information, content articles and special topics (e.g., internships, testing Black children), and papers from the APA Annual Convention and the Division 16 Annual Institute. The issue discussing the testing of Black children was not only a bold stroke for the times but among the earliest such discussions in the school psychology literature. The new format was lengthy and not easy to produce; one issue was 70 pages. The format received mixed reviews, and continued production with the assistance of the Devereux Foundation was not possible. Thus, Bennett recommended future changes (Bennett, 1969), and the publication shifted to a smaller, more "newsy" format under the editorship of Irwin Hyman in 1971. In her last editorial, Bennett (1971) indicated that the Division's Executive Committee also decided to supplement the newsletter with a monograph series which began in 1973. Dr. Bennett often signed her work with her full name or initials because at one time there were two Virginia Bennetts in her hometown.

**Personal Recollections**

Irwin Hyman recalled Ginny's days as a graduate student at Rutgers when he too was working on his Ed.D. (personal communication, November 19, 2003). According to Hyman, her dissertation on children's projective drawings found no significant relationship between the size of figure drawn and a child's self-esteem, a widely used hypothesis at that time. She was "One of the boys" so to speak at a time when most of the students were male, and when she was several years older than them. Bardon (1985) referred to her as a "mature" student. She was well liked and vivacious, said Hyman, and he recalled how she drove around in a sporty Carmen Ghia. Another Rutgers student, Dave Reilly (personal communication, November 25, 2003) was impressed with the wealth of experience Ginny brought to the classes they took together in the early 1960s that she was an outspoken leader, "very smart and way ahead of everybody." Paul Nelson, Deputy Executive Director for the APA Education Directorate, recalled Ginny as being very

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**First School Psychology ABPP, Virginia Bennett, Dies\***

active in accreditation site visits, “a very gracious and Renaissance person” (Personal communication, November 25, 2003). I recall her as a great listener and conversationalist, with a wry sense of humor. We all recalled how beautifully her hair was always set and that she had a wonderful smile. Her photo in *The School Psychologist* (1971, Vol. 25, No. 3) is a lasting reminder.

Don Peterson, former Dean of GSAPP at Rutgers, recalled how students loved her (Personal communication, December 10, 2003). “For a considerable time after she had retired and lost her central vision, she came back to the school for weekly sessions with students, guiding their professional work, helping them with their dissertations, and spreading the warmth and enthusiasm of her spirit to everyone she touched.”

Her daughter remembered her as a strong willed, highly intelligent person, very liberal in her political convictions, and a spiritual person though not affiliated with any particular church; Virginia and her husband and her parents had Methodist Church affiliations (Personal communication, December 1, and December 9, 2003). Her mother enjoyed her grandchildren but was not a doting grandmother. Following Virginia’s divorce she lived in an apartment not far from the Rutgers’ campus in New Brunswick. Her health waned in the late 1980s when she began to lose her sight as a result of macular degeneration. Her daughter recalled how Jack Bardon corresponded with Ginny through audiotapes after he moved to North Carolina. She became legally blind in the late 1980s. Her daughter was amazed at her mother’s adaptability to the retirement facility. During her stay at the Meadowood Retirement Community, she participated in a Sunday evening philosophy reading group, and her contributions were much appreciated. According to her daughter, Virginia’s health, except for macular degeneration, was very good until the last two years when congestive heart failure caused shortness of breath and reduced her participation in active pursuits (e.g., she enjoyed bicycling and could pedal through a nearby park because she was familiar with the trails). Her mother also enjoyed and was knowledgeable of instrumental classical music. She thought her mother would want to be remembered as a caring, giving, and concerned person, who could contribute something to society, her profession, and to any of the lives she touched.

At the 1984 NASP Convention in Philadelphia, Ginny and I were participants in a symposium on

the history of school psychology. Others on the panel were Allen Cohen, Liam Grimley, Jack Bardon, Gil Trachtman, and Joe French (see Grimley, 1985 for a description, panel photo, and the papers presented). I also had the pleasure of serving with her as members of the APA-NASP Task Force; Ginny served 1981 to 1986. We attended a transition dinner in 1983 at the Maison Blanche in Washington, DC when NASP’s incoming and outgoing representatives to the Task Force met together. It was among the more lavish events I recall of those days and was attended by Douglas Brown, Bill Farling, Barbara Thomas, Janet Liston, Carolyn Myrick, and Mary St. Cyr from NASP, and David Reilly, Nadine Lambert, Virginia Bennett, Paul Nelson, and Dick Kilbourn from APA. We spent about \$500 for dinner and about half was for wine! The Maison Blanche is closed now and Ginny is gone. What I’d give for a replay of that evening.

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*\*Appreciation is expressed to Elizabeth Gilbreath, Rosa Hagin, Irwin Hyman, Paul Nelson, Don Peterson, Dave Reilly, and my research assistant, Natasha Reeves for assistance in gathering this information. A separate obituary article will appear in the American Psychologist prepared by Stanley Moldawsky.*

# School and Child Clinical Task Forces Meet in Chicago: Evidenced-based Practice Meeting at Catalyst Ranch

**O**n September 29th and 30th, 2003 members of the American Psychological Association (APA) Division 16, Society for the Study of School Psychology (SSSP), and National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Task Force on Evidence-Based Interventions in School Psychology met with members of the APA Division 53 Evidence-Based Practice Task Force at Catalyst Ranch in Chicago. Twelve individuals participated in the two-day session that focused on issues surrounding how to engage practitioners and trainers in the evidence-based intervention and practice movement. Members in attendance representing the School Psychology group included: Susan Forman, Kimberly Hoagwood, Thomas Kratochwill, Diane Smallwood and Sandi Thompson. Specifically, members of the School Psychology Task Force Committee on Evidence-Based Practice (Co-Chaired by Susan Forman and Sandi Thompson) met with a group of child clinical psychologists and members of their Task Force (Chaired by Marc Atkins) and formulated some agendas for future work and collaboration. The group identified three common agendas that will be the focus of future work. First, members will review the status of evidence-based interventions (EBIs) for low-income children. The group discussed methods to examine the existing databases relevant to identifying effective programs for low-income children. The School Psychology Task Force objectives and resource allocation from Division 53 will support this project with the expectation that it will lead to one or more published papers for the psychological and educational community. Second, the group will review the status of EBIs specific to the problem of bullying. Third, methods for dissemination of EBIs and practices to practitioners and graduate trainers were also discussed. There was also a discussion of some practical ways to strengthen collaboration among members of the two task forces. The group will continue to dialogue through ongoing conference calls.

The Evidence-Based Practice Committee met separately at the end of the conference and focused

on strategies for engaging practitioners in School Psychology Task Force goals related to implementing EBIs under real world constraints. Moreover, the group focused on methods to gain input from training directors and practitioners to facilitate the general goals. Specifically, the Committee will examine current methods of assessing EBIs in school environments and revise, modify and/or develop a protocol to assess barriers to implementation of EBIs in school settings. Based on the work of Mark Hurlbut and Greg Aarons the group will also adapt some measures relevant to school settings. Thereafter, the group will select some school-based EBIs that will subsequently be evaluated by school psychologists, teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders. The group discussed some potential venues in which to reach educators, and it was decided that engaging focus groups through state associations would be a reasonable way to proceed. Further updates will be provided early next year.





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## Specific Learning Disability Classification in the New Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: The Danger of Good Ideas

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## Nominee for President David McIntosh

# Nominee



**David McIntosh**

### Statement

Division 16 has made significant progress over the last three years. The Division has increased its membership, gained an additional seat on the APA Council of Representatives, and has continued to work toward alleviating the shortage of school psychologists. In addition, a position statement and task force was created to help address the shortage of practicing and academic school psychologists and there was a renewed focus on increasing the Division's collaboration with other child specialty divisions. Also, there was an increased emphasis on working with other professional school psychology associations with the goal of enhancing the mental health services to children and their families. The Division also has increased its visibility (e.g., Division 16 booth at NASP, participation in the Futures Conference) within APA and with its members. All of these goals and activities were attained through the hard work of the D16 Executive Committee, Elaine Clark, and Steve Little.

For the first time in the history of school psychology, *Psychology in the Schools* (PITS), *School Psychology Review* (SPR), *School Psychology Quarterly* (SPQ), and the *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation* (JEPC) are collaborating to offer our field extensive coverage of the recently held School Psychology Futures conference. Rik D'Amato, the current editor of *School Psychology Quarterly*, conducted this amazing coordination of four school psychology journals. The goal is to provide a continuing discussion on a variety of topics relevant to the professional practice of school psychology following the Futures conference.

In short, now is not the time to change direction. Instead, the focus should be on building upon our past and current successes and following through to completion. As president my goal would be to help navigate the Division toward meeting these goals. Specifically, the Division needs to continue to develop stronger relationships with other child and family divisions. This can be done by developing joint task forces with specific agendas, pursuing joint programming during the APA convention, and developing formal liaisons with the other division executive committees. These

types of activities will help increase the likelihood of shaping APA's agenda to more fully address the needs of children and youth and the provision of psychological services in the schools.

While Division 16 has worked closely over the years with NASP and will continue to do so, we need to procure stronger relationships with other professional school psychology associations. The Trainers of School Psychologists, the American Board of School Psychology (ABSP), the American Academy of School Psychology (AASP), the Council of Directors of School Psychology Programs (CDSPP), and the International Association of School Psychologists are other associations that are actively addressing many of the same issues as Division 16. Therefore, their perspectives, input, and collaboration should be welcomed and pursued. As the Vice-President of Publications, Communications and Convention Affairs I worked hard to include the ABSP and AASP when planning convention activities. Specifically, the AASP sponsored a workshop and sponsored the EC business meeting during the last convention. My goal will be to continue to encourage and increase collaboration between Division 16 and other associations.

Meeting the needs of Division members also is at the top of my list. Planning, scheduling, and implementing a Division 16 Convention Program that is innovative, comprehensive, and reflective of emerging models of service delivery within the schools is essential to meeting member needs. As mentioned above, we should continue to pursue collaborative opportunities with other divisions within APA when developing the Division 16 convention program. Therefore, innovative programming would increase the opportunities for Division members to interact with members from other child specialty divisions.

Although Division 16 is one of the largest divisions within APA, there is a need for the Division to maintain its prominence among other divisions and within the APA governance system. One of the most successful Division ventures has been the development of the Hospitality Suite. Over the years, the Hospitality Suite has provided an informal setting for Division 16 governance, affiliated

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**Nominee for President - David McIntosh**

organizations (e.g., American Board of Professional School Psychology, Trainer's of School Psychologists, Journal Editor's), and the Student Affiliates in School Psychology to conduct meetings. As President, I will continue to expand our funding base for the Hospitality Suite and look to increase the use of the Hospitality Suite to meet member needs.

Division publications should be continually reviewed, improved, and updated to meet emerging technology for the benefit of Division members. Continuing to expand the topics and role of the Conversation Series and on maintaining the quality of the books published through the Division 16 Book Series should be objectives. Lastly, publishing a quality Division journal and newsletter (*School Psychology Quarterly* and *The School Psychologist*, respectively) will always be an objective of the Division.

Mentoring students who have an interest in governance and providing opportunities for their involvement should continue to be a high priority. Specifically, we should continue to support the Student Affiliates of School Psychology (SASP). SASP has become more active over the last 5-6 years and has grown in membership. They have developed a conference to coincide with the APA convention and have increased opportunities to support student research and travel. As a Division, we should do what we can to support SASP. In addition, providing opportunities for individuals and pursuing individuals who can fill openings within the Division and APA also should be a high priority. It is projected that the profession of school psychology will have to address the shortage of practicing and academic school psychologists for the next 20 to 30 years. As a profession and as a Division we already have begun to take steps to address this problem. However, we have a long way to go. After recently guest editing a special issue of *Psychology in the Schools* focused on addressing the shortage of school psychologists, it was clear that we are still in the formative stage of addressing this problem. Although all the authors who contributed to the special issue focused on the continued need to provide quality mental health services to children within the school setting while addressing growing personnel shortages in the coming years, it was clear that legislative mandates could not be ignored and that a major paradigm shift needs to occur in school psychology. There also was recognition that other mental health professionals have a role in providing mental health services in the school setting. Most importantly, there was an overall

sense of urgency and that school psychology as a profession must act quickly if it is to continue to provide high quality mental health services within the school setting. Therefore, as President I would advocate that we move beyond the formative stage of addressing the shortage problem and begin implementing an active agenda with measurable outcomes.

In summary, it truly is an honor to be nominated and I would work hard to fulfill the responsibilities of the President's office. Again, my goal as President would not be to change direction in mid-stream but to build upon our accomplishments and strive for innovative ways to meet our goals and objectives. I look forward to serving the Division and welcome your support.

**Background**

David McIntosh is a professor in the School Psychology Program in the Department of Educational Psychology at Ball State University. He also serves as the Director of the School Psychology Clinic and Director of Internships. After receiving his doctorate in 1990, David became an assistant professor and Director of the School Psychology Program at Oklahoma State University. In 1994, he became the Director of Training in School Psychology at the University of Missouri-Columbia and served in that position for three years. David then joined the faculty of the University at Albany-SUNY as an associate professor (1997 - 1999). He also is a licensed psychologist and is board certified in school psychology by the American Board of Professional Psychology. David maintains a private practice specializing in working with children with disruptive behavior disorders and their families.

**Professional Service**

David is honored to be nominated as a candidate for the office of Division 16 President-Elect. David's service to Division 16 as Vice-President of Publications, Communications, and Convention Affairs (VP-PCCA; 2001-2004), Chair of the Publications Committee (2000-2001), Co-Chair and Chair of the Division's Convention Program (1998-1999), Co-chair of the Division 16 Hospitality Suite (1999-2000), Cluster D Representative (2003), and Coordinator of the Conversation Series (1999-2001) has prepared him well for this position. As the VP-PCCA, he was a member of the search committee for the Newsletter Editor for *The School Psychologist*, member of the search committee for the Book Series Editor, and Chaired the search

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## Nominee for President

**Gary Stoner, Ph.D.**  
**University of Massachusetts - Amherst**

*Nominee*



**Gary Stoner, Ph.D.**

Serving the members of Division 16 as President would be a privilege and a challenge. A privilege because the responsibilities are numerous and important to the continuing development of the Division and its relationships within APA and with other organizations concerned with school psychology. And, a challenge because the field of school psychology and its professionals are continuously changing as a function of contemporary perspectives on: (a) what is known about the foundations and practices of psychology and education, (b) the demographics and other characteristics of those we serve, and (c) the cultural imperatives that accompany formal schooling in the United States. At the same time, we need to be cognizant of the history of the field, both to avoid previous mistakes and to capitalize on existing knowledge and relationships.

If elected I would devote myself to activities and initiatives consistent with the Division's Goals and Objectives. Also, I would strive to build on the work of the Division's past and present leaders. For example, there is a continuing need to support the agenda of the recent conference on The Future of School Psychology, with its emphases on the education and healthy development of children, on parents and families, on diversity in our society and in our field, and on prevention and intervention. There also is a need to explore potential ways for Division 16 to build on the recent APA sponsored Education Leadership Conference with its emphases on assessment, accountability, and advocacy within psychology. Finally in this arena, I am certain the early 2004 inter-divisional (Division 12-Society of Clinical Psychology, Division of School Psychology, Division 37-Child, Youth, and Family Services, Division 43-Family Psychology, Division 53- Clinical Child Psychology, Division 54-Pediatric Psychology) mid-winter meeting with its focus on children will yield relationships, networks, and ideas for our Division to work on.

Also in need of our attention is the continuing shortage of school psychologists both practitioners and faculty. I believe it is important for Division 16 to play a significant role in assessing this problem and developing strategies to address it. At the least it seems we need to be more proactive in our

approach to recruitment and retention of professionals in our field. That is, for the most part, as a profession we take a passive and reactive approach to persons interested in pursuing professional training in school psychology. We prepare materials, websites, brochures, and so on, to have them available to persons who happen to become interested in school psychology. Instead, we need a major investment in proactive recruitment and public relations regarding our field.

Accompanying activities might include development of funding sources to support graduate education, mechanisms to insure that the public (including high school and undergraduate students) is aware of and has an accurate understanding of the profession and its career opportunities, and improved options for professional training in school psychology for those individuals already holding graduate degrees in education and/or psychology. In a related manner, it is important that we build on existing efforts to meaningfully involve graduate students in the Division's activities.

Certainly, a shortage of professionals can be addressed directly through recruitment and retention activities in the long run. For the present time, however, an emphasis on professional activities involving prevention may serve to alleviate pressures caused by personnel shortages. In fact, contemporary conditions in education and school psychology demand we increase our attention and commitment to prevention as a primary emphasis in research, training, and practice. For example, we must strive to develop an effective blend of empirically grounded practices that integrate prevention, intervention, and assessment activities. In this manner, school psychologists may be better able to serve all children in their buildings, districts, and beyond. In addition, adoption of a public health approach to thinking about outcomes may be useful, where the focus is on incidence and prevalence rates of problems and their reduction, and/or on improving quality of life indicators. For example, as professionals we might take as our goal to increase the prevalence of school success for children in our buildings and districts. For our profession, then, the challenge is to support research and practices that contribute to such goals. As a result of these beliefs,



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**Nominee for President - Gary Stoner, Ph.D.**

if elected, I would strive to integrate a prevention emphasis into my leadership agenda.

In each of the areas noted above, it will be important to emphasize the integration of research and practice. The so-called "research-to-practice" gap could be considered the heart of many problems in education and school psychology today. The discrepancy between "what we know" and "what we do" is significant, by any measure. And, contributing to the reduction of that discrepancy should be an important focus for our profession and Division 16 as we pursue our goals.

In summary, Division 16 and the profession of school psychology have important roles to play in addressing the contemporary needs of children, schools, and families. My professional background, experiences, and interests have prepared me well to serve Division 16 and its members in a leadership role. I look forward to this possibility.

**Background:**

Gary Stoner is a Professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where he serves as the Director of its APA-accredited, NASP-approved School Psychology Program. Gary has a BA in Psychology from Kent State University, and a Ph.D. in Psychology with a specialization in School Psychology from the University of Rhode Island. In addition, he completed a Postdoctoral Fellowship in applied behavior analysis, developmental disabilities, and behavioral pediatrics at the Kennedy

Institute for Handicapped Children/Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. He also completed a Senior Postdoctoral Fellowship in applied behavior analysis and developmental disabilities at the University of Massachusetts. Gary was a faculty member with the School Psychology Program at the University of Oregon from 1987 through 1996, before moving to the University of Massachusetts.

Gary has served the profession of school psychology in a number of roles, including previous service on the editorial boards of *School Psychology Quarterly* and *School Psychology Review*. He was an invited participant in The Future of School Psychology Conference, and participated in the 2003 APA Education Leadership Conference as a representative of the Council of Directors of School Psychology Programs (CDSPP). He currently serves on the Executive Committee of CDSPP. His professional research and teaching interests are centered on professional school psychology, interventions for achievement and behavior problems, and children with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. He is the co-author, with George J. DuPaul, of *ADHD in the Schools: Assessment and Intervention Strategies*, and co-editor, with Mark R. Shinn and Hill M. Walker, of *Interventions for Achievement and Behavior Problems: Preventive and Remedial Approaches*.

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**Nominee for President - David McIntosh**

committee for the new Editor of *School Psychology Quarterly*. Over the past three years, he has gained valuable experience by serving on the D16 Executive Committee.

David has been active in professional school psychology associations at the state and national level. David is currently representing the American Board of School Psychology as a Trustee for the American Board of Professional Psychology (2002-2004). He also was recently elected to serve on the American Board of Professional School Psychology (2003-2005). David also is active as an examiner and mentor for candidates pursuing diplomate status in school psychology. From 1997 to 2000, David was a member of the Executive Board for the Trainers of School Psychologists and served as their Newsletter

Editor for the *Trainer's Forum: Periodical of the Trainers of School Psychologists* (1999-2002). David also was elected as President for the Oklahoma School Psychological Association and served as Editor (1995-1997) of the Newsletter for the Missouri Association of School Psychologists.

David has served as an Associate Editor for *Psychology in the Schools* for the past six years and is currently on the editorial boards for *School Psychology Quarterly* (since 2002) and the *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment* (since 1997). He has over 40 refereed journal publications and has over 80 national, regional, and state presentations.

## Nominee for Vice President of Education, Training & Scientific Affairs

### Dan E. Olympia

*Nominee*



**Dan E. Olympia**

The Vice President for Education, Training and Scientific Affairs (VP-ETSA) has the responsibility for monitoring educational and training activities which involve school psychology and all activities within school psychology as a scientific discipline within psychology. Specific activities include consultation with Division 16 leadership and with a variety of committees within APA and across the broader community of psychology, as well as maintaining standing committee(s) to recognize scientific merit in a variety of areas. As a practitioner in school psychology for over 20 years and a university trainer for the last 5 years, the importance of education, training and the science of school psychology has been a central theme in my professional development and career. The continuing importance and value of these activities to our field cannot be overstated and must be promoted with the utmost diligence and care. If elected VP-ETSA, I will dedicate myself to this effort.

An important goal for any association is the ability to maintain continuity in pursuit of long term goals and objectives set out by and for the membership and the profession. Division 16 has historically addressed several important issues which have implications for practitioners, the research community and training programs. For example, an agenda for school psychology was recently created through a major collaborative effort across nine national professional associations, including Division 16 and NASP. This was the 2002 Futures Conference. Several priority goals which have major implications for training and practice in the schools include training related to 1) universal early prevention and intervention programs and the application of a public health model of mental health services in schools, 2) use of evidence-based models of family-school partnerships, 3) data-based problem solving models to implement evidence based instruction and interventions, and 4) components of effective instruction for all learners, including evidence based approaches for early identification and remediation of learning problems. Clearly, Division 16 needs to maintain its leadership position in these areas. As the VP-ETSA, I am committed to continue work to facilitate these goals through

ongoing collaboration within, and outside, school psychology organizations. The Division has invaluable resources that I plan to continue relying on in order to support school psychology's agenda. This includes my working closely with the Office of Policy and Advocacy in the Schools in the Practice Directorate, the Center for Psychology in Schools and Education in the Education Directorate, and APA's Coalition for Psychology in Schools and Education. I also intend to investigate more how Division 16 can make use of new technology-facilitated "platforms" for education and training. The reliability of technology-facilitated training has vastly improved in the last several years and we as a division of APA need to consider how to best use this.

The educational community is also currently involved in major reform efforts through the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation and IDEA reauthorization. Many of the issues generated through these activities have major implications for school psychologists at the grass roots level. A key objective for Division 16 for the future is to maintain its anticipatory and responsive posture to current demands. I will work hard to keep track of any anticipated changes that may impact school psychology practice and training. As a profession, we understand the classroom context well. We have the needed consultation skills to work with administrators, parents and educators as well as an understanding of various barriers to learning, school system policies and culture and most importantly, regular access to teachers, parents, and students. While our specialty is very clearly tied to schools and children's achievement, our in-service and graduate preparation programs may need to address a predominant assessment paradigm that is not entirely consistent with NCLB and IDEA reauthorization efforts. Alternatives to more "traditional" assessment practice means finding and disseminating empirically supported ways to make assessments more applicable to standards based outcomes and instructional relevance. I want to ensure that school psychology remains informed and has a place at the table so that we can promote dissemination of research-based practices to those currently practicing in schools and other settings, as

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**Nominee for Vice President of Education, Training & Scientific Affairs - Dan E. Olympia**

well as to training programs that are preparing future school psychologists.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to be considered for the position of Vice President for Education, Training and Scientific Affairs at a time that offers the profession so many possibilities. I recognize that the position will require considerable time and focused attention, and I am prepared to offer that to the Division. If elected, you can be sure that I will serve Division 16 and School Psychology's interests to the best of my ability.

**Background Information:**

I received my PhD. in School Psychology at the University of Utah, an APA-accredited program located in Salt Lake City. My career in school psychology actually started several years prior, having initially worked for Head Start programs in rural North Dakota and eventually completing a Masters/Specialist degree in School Psychology at Moorhead State University (now the University of Minnesota at Moorhead). I worked for several years in rural Minnesota and "urban" North Dakota as a practicing school psychologist. I was active in the Minnesota School Psychology Association, attended the Olympia Conference and helped facilitate collaborative education ventures supporting school psychologists in North Dakota and Minnesota. I returned to higher education to pursue a doctoral degree in school psychology in 1986 at the University of Utah, where I was able to follow interests in autism, applied behavior analysis, parent training, consultation and school-based interventions. Upon completion of my dissertation and an APA-accredited internship in a pediatric medical setting in 1991, I was employed in a large urban school district with the scientist-practitioner model of training. This served as a good match to the demands of working with high risk adolescents, children with autism in inclusive settings and students with emotional and behavior problems.

In 1999, I was hired for a tenure track position as Assistant Professor at the University of Utah (School Psychology Program). In addition to student advisement, supervising

student research activities and other departmental responsibilities, I teach courses in professional issues and ethics, cognitive assessment, and consultation. My current research interests include interventions for academic and behavioral problems, inclusion, consultation and collaboration, school-wide interventions, parent/school mediation, parent and social skills training, and meta-analytic studies on treatment of autism. I have also remained active in the Utah Association of School Psychologists (UASP), in fact, since arriving in Utah in 1987 I have served as president, legislative committee member and chair, and newsletter editor. I have also served as a site visitor for APA's Committee on Accreditation, been a member of the Division 16's convention program committee and dissertation award committee, and served on the Multicultural Affairs Committee of NASP.

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## Nominee for Vice President of Education, Training & Scientific Affairs

Judy Oehler-Stinnett

*Nominee*



Judy Oehler-Stinnett

### Goal Statement

As Past-President of the Oklahoma School Psychologists Association, one of my next goals is to participate more fully in school psychology service at the national level. This office is a great opportunity for me, and my experience and interests fit well with the job. School psychology as a discipline continues to offer great opportunities for compassionate yet scientific delivery of services to children, youth and families. We do need to address perceived threats such as our role within the reauthorization of IDEA, shortages that compromise service delivery, and interest by other specialties in delivering services in the schools without an appreciation of the training of doctoral level school psychologists. However, we ourselves have the opportunity to continue our work in developing basic services in rural regions and other areas where there is great need, as well as to envision a new level of training and service delivery in line with the progress being made in the larger APA and science in general. This vision must include not only application of empirically-validated treatments as we currently know them in applied settings, we must also embrace new technology such as neuro-imaging that can map brain response to medication, which allows for detailed titration. We must continue to advance our knowledge of what works for whom, in strategic ways, at the individual, group and system level, and place greater emphasis on family and community functioning.

School psychology trainers and practitioners have the opportunity to modify training programs, as well as to educate other psychologists and professionals, regarding our ability to affect these kinds of changes. The No Child Left Behind legislation affords us the perfect opportunity to assist educators and families in implementing prevention and intervention activities designed to indeed provide all children with the opportunity for success. Involvement in regular as well as special education service delivery should focus on children who are, to quote 504, "otherwise qualified" to live lives as productive citizens, including for example gifted children who have ADHD or learning disabilities. We should think back to the Sputnik era in which our country was very focused on providing

opportunities to our best and brightest. Services focused on reaching potential instead of preventing failure could allow not only individual children, but our country, to move forward in important ways as we determine our goals for the 21st century. Tertiary prevention for children and youth in hospital and residential treatment centers is also necessary as we attempt to reduce the devastating effects and costs of mental illness for those whose difficulties follow them into young adulthood. Oklahoma State University's program model and philosophy, Science-Based Child/Learner Success, embraces this philosophy, as does the explosion of research and practice in positive psychology. These concepts should be clearly integrated into APA training and practice standards.

Graduates trained in a success model should then also be encouraged to apply for university faculty positions so that they may influence larger numbers of practitioners. Preparing Future Faculty programs, and programs such as the Women in School Psychology mentoring program, should continue in order to maintain and expand the profession of school psychology. We should also be mindful of ways, such as forgiveness of student loans, to encourage graduates to secure employment in critical shortage and high risk areas in great need of mental health service delivery. Having worked in these types of settings for most of my career, I am keenly aware of the difficulties of providing quality services under less than ideal conditions, and feel I have a useful perspective for those wishing to continue in this endeavor. We should also continue our efforts to liaison with other mental health professionals and other psychologists in provision of comprehensive, wrap-around services that highlight the unique ability of school psychologists to coordinate across mental health, family and educational service delivery. I am excited about the potential for discussing such issues at a national level, as well as participating in strategic planning to help us reach our goals.

### Background Information

Judy Oehler-Stinnett received her doctoral degree from University of Southern Mississippi and has practice and training experience in five states.



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### Nominee for Vice President of Education, Training & Scientific Affairs - Judy Oehler-Stinnett

Until this year, she was training director of the program at Oklahoma State University, where she still teaches. Her interests include social-emotional needs of gifted students, motivation, ADHD, PTSD and ethical decision-making. She has developed assessment instruments in motivation and in childhood PTSD, and a model of ethical decision-making for school psychologists. She serves on the editorial board of *Psychology in the Schools*. Rural service delivery, as well as service delivery and training in areas where there are not strong school psychology inroads, such as in Oklahoma where OSU has the only APA and NASP approved programs. She worked extensively to develop the program curriculum and evaluation system. She also helped to facilitate the OSU distance site for the school psychology Futures Conference.

Judy has served on the Division 16 Committee on Children, Youth and Families; as consultant to the Oklahoma State Department of Education and the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation

for training and credentialing standards. She has served several roles in the Oklahoma School Psychologists Association, most recently as President. She currently serves as a member of the Research Division of the Oklahoma Psychological Association.

In regard to current goals of the APA Education Directorate consistent with the nominated position, she has interests and experience in gifted education and psychology applied to the schools in the area of motivation. She also currently serves as the school psychology representative to the newly formed Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) program being implemented at OSU under the direction of Dr. Paul Nelson in conjunction with her school head, Dr. Sue Jacobs.

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## Nominee of Publications, Communications, and Convention Affairs

Vincent C. Alfonso, Ph.D.

Fordham University



Vincent C. Alfonso, Ph.D.

I am very flattered and of course pleased to be selected as a candidate for the Vice President of Publications, Communications, and Convention Affairs (VP-PCCA) of Division 16. I believe that the most relevant experience I have had to prepare me for this diverse position has been my combined six-year term as Associate Editor and Editor of *The School Psychologist*. I learned much about publishing during that time period and believe that, with the help of many other individuals, we have produced one of the highest quality newsletters within the American Psychological Association (APA). In addition to this experience, I have been a member of the editorial board of *School Psychology Review* and the *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment* as well as an author of many peer-refereed journal articles and book chapters. Finally, as former Coordinator of the school psychology programs at Fordham University and Executive Director of two University-based assessment centers, I believe that I have the leadership skills to be an active, valuable member of the Executive Board of Division 16.

As VP-PCCA I know that, in addition to having involvement with all the publications of the division, I will have to work closely with the Executive Board in planning, scheduling, and executing the Division convention program each year which many have told me is no easy task. I will depend greatly on the former vice presidents to mentor me through the process since convention programming has changed rather dramatically over the past few years. I realize that the responsibilities of the VP-PCCA do not stop with the convention program, but continue with playing an active role in the Division 16 Conversation Series, one of the most important Division products. Although I admit that I do not know much about making such a product, I will seek as much assistance as necessary in order to continue providing the high quality videos and/or DVDs that so many others have done for years.

If someone were to ask me for one major goal that I would have as VP-PCCA, I would say to make Division 16 the most visible division within the APA. The Division has so much to offer through its newsletter, journal, videos, executive board, council of representatives, and general membership that I

would do my best to “get the word out” about everything we do that has a positive, healthy influence on children of all ages, races, cultures, and religious affiliations.

In sum, I am honored to be a candidate for VP-PCCA of Division 16 and will work with due diligence to fulfill my responsibilities. I look forward to working with individuals such as Linda Reddy and Rik Carl D’Amato, Editors of *The School Psychologist* and *School Psychology Quarterly*, respectively as well as the entire Executive Board of the Division. I welcome your support!

### Background Information

Vincent C. Alfonso, Ph.D. received his doctoral degree from the combined program in clinical/school psychology at Hofstra University in 1990. After graduating, he spent several years in the field as a school psychologist in the Carle Place school district on Long Island and in several special education preschools. At the same time, he worked as an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Hofstra and at St. John’s University. Additionally, he has worked in an outpatient clinic with minority individuals and as a consultant to a local Head Start program.

Currently, Vinny is Associate Professor and former Coordinator of the specialist and doctoral level School Psychology Programs at Fordham University in New York City. In the winter of 2000, he assumed the position of editor of *The School Psychologist*, the newsletter of Division 16 and recently completed his three-year term. His research interests include psychoeducational assessment, early childhood assessment, training issues, and psychometrics. He has published his work in journals such as *School Psychology Review*, *The Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, and *Psychology in the Schools*. He is co-author of a recent book with Dawn Flanagan, Sam Ortiz, and Jennifer Mascolo entitled *The Achievement Test Desk Reference (ATDR): Comprehensive Assessment and Learning Disabilities*. In November 2003 Vinny received the Leadership in School Psychology Award from the New York Association of School Psychologists.

Vinny has also been the Executive Director of the Rosa A. Hagin School Consultation Center and the Early Childhood Center located at Fordham for

## Nominee of Publications, Communications, and Convention Affairs

### Tammy Hughes

*Nominee*

I am honored to be selected by the nominations committee as candidate for the office of Division 16 Vice President for Publications, Communications, and Convention Affairs. My prior and current service to the Division as the Convention Program Chair and Hospitality Suite Chair, and excellent mentoring I have received by the current Vice President of Publications, Communications, and Convention Affairs has prepared me for this position. Also, my experience as Guest Editor for *Psychology in the Schools*, Associate Editor of the *Trainer's Forum*, Webmaster for the Trainers of School Psychologist and service on editorial review boards has informed me for this position.

As Vice President of Publications, Communications, and Convention Affairs, I plan to continue to work closely with Executive Board in planning and implementing a Division 16 Convention Program that is comprehensive, consistent with emergent trends in the field and committed to high standards of rigor. I would continue to work collaboratively with other divisions to develop the Division 16 Convention Program to address the multidisciplinary needs of division members and common goals of the division. I would also continue to develop the funding and use of the Hospitality Suite. Over the years, the hospitality suite has provided an informal location for the Division 16 governance and constituent organizations to meet. In addition, the Division 16 Hospitality Suite has hosted the Student Affiliates in School Psychology (SASP) mini-convention, the School Psychology Conversation Series as well as provided space for affiliated groups (e.g., School Psychology Synarchy, Society for the Study of School Psychology, American Board of Professional School Psychology, among others) to meet and conduct business. I will continue the traditions developed in the Hospitality Suite and continue to expand the use of the Suite to meet the needs of the Division.

As Vice President of Publications, Communications, and Convention Affairs, I would look forward to the continued development of the Division 16 Book Series. I would look for authors who could significantly contribute to the literature base through the Book Series. Interdisciplinary

books that are mindful of school psychology practice and special education law are needed. The Book Series should reflect the breadth and diversity of the field. Potential contributions to the Book Series should address the difficulties children experience from an interdisciplinary developmental perspective.

The Conversation Series videos are routinely best sellers at the Division 16 conference booth at NASP and APA. These videos provide an up close and personal interview with leaders in the field and are excellent supplements for courses and formal presentations. As Vice President of Publications, Communications, and Convention Affairs, I will continue to add to the collection of videos in the Conversation Series and promote their use. I will look for new ways technology allows the Conversation Series to meet the needs of Division members such as, video clips on the Division web pages. Also, I will explore how to reach wider audiences.

Finally, it would be a great opportunity to work closely with the Editors of *School Psychology Quarterly* and *The School Psychologist*. The Division journals are one of the most important forms of communication with members. I plan to support the editors in developing and meeting the goals of their journals.

In summary, I am truly honored to be nominated and would work hard to fulfill the responsibilities of this office. I look forward to this service role and welcome your support.

#### **Background:**

Tammy L. Hughes, Ph.D., is an assistant professor in the School Psychology Program in the Department of Counseling, Psychology and Special Education at Duquesne University. Tammy has been active in professional associations at the national level. Within the Division, Tammy is 2004 Convention Chair and, 2003 Convention Co-Chair, for the Division 16 program at the American Psychological Association annual convention. She received an award for outstanding service in 2003 for her work in Chairing the Hospitality Suite (2002, 2003). She is the 2003-2004 president of the Trainers of School Psychologist (TSP), where she also serves



**Tammy Hughes**

## Nominee for Treasurer Bonnie K. Nastasi

# Nominee

### Personal Statement:

I am honored to be selected by the Nominations Committee as a candidate for the position of Treasurer and member of the Executive Board of Division 16. I have been active in the leadership of School Psychology since the early 1980s, and bring to the position a range of experiences in research, teaching, administration, and service.



Bonnie K. Nastasi

I have a strong commitment to the role of School Psychology in promoting the well-being of children, families, and communities at local, national, and international levels; and welcome the opportunity to help shape the future of the profession. My research and applied work has taken me beyond the boundaries of the profession and the United States through opportunities to work with other professionals in anthropology, sociology, medicine, and public health, and community members in developing countries. My experiences have taught me the benefits of collaboration with a diverse group of partners not only for enhancing the lives of others but also for advancing my own knowledge. These experiences also have enhanced my awareness of the unique strengths and limitless potential of school psychologists.

Consistent with the recommendations of the Future of School Psychology Invitational Conference (Indianapolis, November 2002), I am committed to the need for systemic change in schools and cultural reform in school psychology, and think that Division 16 can play a key role in these efforts. I think this can be best accomplished through active efforts to collaborate with professionals in other disciplines (e.g., education, public health, medicine, and other social sciences), key stakeholders at the grassroots level (e.g., community members, parents, students, teachers, school administrators), and policy makers (at local and national levels). I think that continual efforts to link theory, research, practice, and policy through participatory approaches can help us to enhance the adoption of evidence-based practices, advance theory, and foster research that makes a difference in the lives of children and families. Furthermore, I think the interaction with other disciplines can extend our theoretical foundations and research methodology. For example, there is an

increasing use of qualitative research methods in psychology. The consistency of these methods with assessment practices of school psychologists (e.g., observation, interview, records review) places us in a position to not only improve our applied methods but also to address the challenge of integrating qualitative and quantitative methods to achieve reliable and valid results.

Since I entered the field of School Psychology in the late 1970s, I have continued to be troubled by the limited role of school psychology despite efforts to expand practice. As professionals, we have unique expertise in assessment and intervention that can affect change at individual, organizational, and cultural levels. I welcome the opportunity to explore the ways in which the Division can increase the application of that expertise in schools and communities. As I have conducted work in Asia, I have been dismayed by the lack of mental health services, absence of applied psychology in schools and communities, and limited opportunities for professional preparation of school psychologists. As a member of the Executive Board, I welcome the opportunity to explore the ways in which Division 16 could work to expand school psychology internationally. Furthermore, my active involvement in multiple organizations that represent our field "APA, NASP, SSSP, CDSPP, ISPA" attests to my commitment to inter-organizational efforts to maximize the influence of the profession.

In the role of Treasurer, I expect to have responsibilities related to handling financial matters, detailing financial transactions, and reporting regularly to the board and the membership on the financial status of the Division. I bring to the position my experiences as Treasurer of the Society for the Study of School Psychology (SSSP) since 1999. I pledge to manage the financial resources of the Division in a responsible and prudent manner. I look forward to the opportunity collaboratively with other members of the Executive Board in facilitating the contributions of the Division to the profession and to the well-being of children, families, and communities.

### Background Information

Bonnie K. Nastasi, PhD (Kent State University,



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**Nominee of Publications, Communications, and Convention Affairs -  
Vincent C. Alfonso, Ph.D.**

the past seven years. These assessment centers serve Fordham University and the surrounding community by providing training to students, conducting psychoeducational evaluations of individuals from birth to adulthood, and offering psychological and educational consultation to parents and professionals. Vinny is a certified school psychologist and licensed psychologist in New York State. He has provided psychoeducational services to individuals across the lifespan for more than

fourteen years and is considered an expert in early childhood and learning disability assessment.

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**Nominee for Treasurer - Bonnie Nastasi**

1986) is Associate Director of Interventions at the Institute for Community Research, an interdisciplinary non-profit research organization located in Hartford, Connecticut. She is former Director and Associate Professor of School Psychology at University at Albany, NY, and has served on the school psychology faculty at Illinois State University and University of Connecticut. She worked for several years as a school psychologist and administrator in the New Orleans Public Schools. She also served as Treasurer and President of the Louisiana School Psychological Association. Dr. Nastasi is currently serving her second term as Treasurer of the Study of School Psychologists (SSSP), and is co-chair of the Interdisciplinary Qualitative Research Subcommittee of the Empirically Supported Interventions in School Psychology jointly sponsored by SSSP and Division 16. She served as a member of the Executive Board of the Council for Directors of School Psychology Programs (CDSPP), co-chaired the Committee on Women in School Psychology for Division 16, co-chaired the Children's Services Committee of NASP, and has been a member of numerous committees of professional organizations in psychology and education at national and state levels.

Dr. Nastasi has conducted applied research and published chapters and journal articles on mental health and health risk (including substance abuse and sexual risk) among school-age and adult populations in the United States and Asia. Her interests include mental health promotion, health risk prevention, use of qualitative research methods in psychology, and promoting school psychology

internationally. Her new book, *School-Based Mental Health Programs: Creating Comprehensive and Culturally Specific Mental Health Programs* (co-authors, Rachel Bernstein Moore & Kristen Varjas), was released for publication by the American Psychological Association in December 2003. She also has co-authored a book entitled *School Interventions for Children of Alcoholics* (with Denise DeZolt; Guilford Press, 1994) and three editions of *Exemplary Mental Health Programs: School Psychologists as Mental Health Service Providers* (with Kathy Pluymert, R. Bernstein, & K. Varjas; NASP, 1997, 1998, 2002). Dr. Nastasi is currently an Associate Editor of *School Psychology Review*, and has served as Associate Editor of *School Psychology Quarterly* and editorial board member on several other journals in psychology and education (e.g., *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, *Journal of School Psychology*, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *Journal of Applied School Psychology*).

## Nominee for Treasurer

### Lea Theodore

Hofstra University

*Nominee*



Lea Theodore

I am honored to have been nominated for Treasurer of Division 16 and look forward to the prospect of becoming a more active member of the Division. I believe that my diligence, efficient organizational skills, punctuality, and work ethic will contribute to fulfilling the responsibilities of Treasurer in an exemplary manner. Previous service to the Division has included co-chairing the Hospitality Suite and serving as an ad hoc reviewer for *School Psychology Quarterly*. Currently, I am a member of the Conversation/Videotape Series, and will chair the Hospitality Suite during the 2004 convention.

#### Background

After receiving my doctorate at the University of Connecticut in 2002, I accepted a position as an Assistant Professor of School Psychology at Hofstra University. My primary teaching responsibilities include behavior disorders of childhood, academic assessment, and consultation. My research interests involve interventions designed to address serious emotional disturbance, health-related disorders, and communication disorders.

On a personal note, I have been drawn to the profession of school psychology by having witnessed the situations that many individuals face throughout their development. For a large percentage of today's population, the emotional and cognitive tasks commensurate with each stage of maturity have been met with the aid of nurturing support networks. However, what has influenced my decision to work with children and adolescents is the recognition that a growing number of youth are subject to less fortunate environmental conditions. These conditions (e.g., parental neglect and abuse, divorce, inadequate housing and education, increased exposure to alcohol, drugs, and violence), either alone or in combination, often impede healthy development in those who hold great potential. I chose this profession to help individuals cope effectively with these and other environmental stressors, to aid in their cognitive and emotional development, and to maximize their capacity for healthy development. There is a great need for psychology to offer coping strategies to enhance individual mental health and to strengthen society in general. Reflecting on my own

experiences, I have learned that family, "commitment," "compassion," and "sense of responsibility" are not meaningless words reiterated by parents and teachers, but are indeed powerful values that give any society the strength to rise above adversity. These are the values that I plan to espouse as I seek to make my contribution.

Honor and dedication are characteristics I hold dear to me regardless of the situation, be it work or personal life. Dedication to do what I set my mind to and honor to ensure that the job is done correctly. I believe that these characteristics make me an individual who will strongly contribute to Division 16.

## APA Council Representative Cindy Carlson

# Nominee

I am pleased and honored to be considered as a nominee to represent Division 16 in the APA Council of Representatives. Division 16 is fortunate to have gained a third seat in Council, to have very qualified representatives beginning their terms on Council in 2004 (Deborah Tharinger and Randy Kamphaus), and no one could be more energetic and committed to the Division than my opponent, Steve Little. A vote in this election, like most in Division 16, is a win-win decision for the voter.

Briefly, what I offer to Division 16 in the capacity of Council Representative is past and present experience in APA governance.

- Board of Educational Affairs member (2003-2005)
- Council Representative for Division 16 (2001-2003)
- Psychology in Education Coalition (2003-2004)
- Presidential Task Force on Psychology in Education (2003)
- Committee on Accreditation member representing CDSPP (1995-2001)
- Advisory to the Psychology in the Schools office
- President of Division 16 (1994)
- Division 16 Vice-President of Education, Training, & Scientific Affairs
- Task Force on School-to-Work Transition
- Task Force on Schools as Health Care Settings

Like any legislative body, effectiveness on Council generally accumulates over time with experience and the development of relationships. It would be my hope that my recent term on Council and current membership on BEA, which includes liaison responsibilities to several other groups, such as the Committee on Accreditation, could be beneficial in serving Division 16 on Council at this time.



**Cindy Carlson**

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## APA Council Representative Steven G. Little

*Nominee*



**Steven G. Little**

### Background Information

I am currently Associate Professor and Chair of the Department Educational and School Psychology at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California. I was recently hired here to help develop a Ph.D. program in School Psychology which we hope to have operational in September. Prior to accepting this position I held academic appointments in school psychology programs at the University at Albany, SUNY; Hofstra University; The University of Alabama; Northern Illinois University; and California State University Northridge. I have also worked as a school psychologist in schools in Louisiana and am a licensed psychologist and certified school psychologist in New York (pending in California). I have also served as a consultant to local school districts throughout my academic career.

I received my Ph.D. in School Psychology in 1987 from Tulane University. Prior to that I earned a master's degree in psychology from the University of New Orleans (1979) and worked for 4 years as a school psychologist in a rural Louisiana parish (county to the rest of the country) and a state residential facility for people with developmental disabilities. My bachelor's degree in psychology is also from Tulane (1976). While my higher education was all in the south I grew up and attended elementary and secondary schools in the greater Boston area.

My research and professional interests are varied and have included the role of teacher attributions on the consultation process, overscheduling of children and youth, issues in inclusion, professional issues in school psychology, and behavioral interventions in the classroom. I have served Division 16 as editor of *The School Psychologist* (1995-2000) and President (2002). My service to school psychology also includes my serving as secretary/treasurer and later treasurer of the Council of Directors of School Psychology Programs since 1998, being a site visitor for the APA Committee on Accreditation, and serving on a number of committees.

### Position Statement

When I accepted my first job as a school psychologist back in 1979 I held a master's degree in psychology, with no specialization, and NO experience working in the schools. What I had were a couple of assessment classes and a general knowledge of child development. Thank God that things have changed so that someone as naive and poorly trained as I was can no longer become certified to practice in the schools. School psychology has made tremendous strides in the past 25 years in the education and credentialing of psychologists in the schools, but we are still faced with many challenges both within school psychology (i.e., NASP-APA level of training issues) and within psychology as a whole (i.e., relationship with other practice areas, particularly clinical psychology). I was fortunate to have excellent doctoral training at Tulane University and my experiences as a trainer and consultant throughout the country have helped me gain a broad perspective on the field of school psychology and the problems faced by school psychologists.

In addition, my 6 years as editor of *The School Psychologist* and the past 3 years as President-Elect, President, and Past-President have allowed me to serve on the executive committee of Division 16 and keep up-to-date on issues facing the Division and the profession. I have also been fortunate to be able to work closely with various people at APA and become knowledgeable about the workings of the organization as a whole. As President of Division 16 I served on the final year of the APA-NASP Interorganizational Committee, I am currently a member of the APA Interdivisional Coalition on Psychology in Schools and Education, and I have worked closely with Ron Palomares in the Practice Directorate on a number of issues. Finally, being on the executive board of CDSPP has kept me knowledgeable and involved in doctoral-level training issues. I believe these experiences prepare me well for assuming the responsibilities as Council Representative for Division 16.

I love being a school psychologist and this is an exciting time to be one. Division 16 now has three representatives to Council, representation that would not exist if not for the growth of our



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 44

**APA Council Representative - Steven G. Little**

profession and the support of our members. I have the very strong conviction that school psychologists are the best trained of all of the practice areas. Unfortunately, we remain the smallest of the three areas (Clinical and Counseling being the other two) and lack the representation of the other areas within APA, state licensing boards, and the health care industry. It is important that we stand up for the parity of school psychology within all of these domains while working collaboratively with natural allies such as child clinical and pediatric psychology to work for the benefit of children, youth, and families. I believe I can be a very strong voice for school psychology over the next 3 years if given the opportunity to represent Division 16 on Council.

I would like to conclude by stating that I feel very honored to have been nominated to run to be one of three Division 16 Representatives to the APA Council. I have enjoyed my service to the Division, APA, and the profession of school psychology. Whoever assumes this position will be filling very large shoes. Steve Demers has been a strong and tireless voice for school psychology within APA for a number of years. His contributions to the profession are immeasurable. I do not have the

extensive knowledge base regarding APA that Steve possesses but I have been around long enough to know how things work at APA and I promise to do my best to represent Division 16 and School Psychology. Division 16 is fortunate to have two excellent representatives currently serving the Division in Deborah Tharinger and Randy Kamphaus. I would love the opportunity to work with them to advance school psychology within the structure of professional psychology that APA represents. Thank you for your consideration.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 39

**Nominee of Publications, Communications, and Convention Affairs - Tammy Hughes**

on the executive board. She also serves as the associate editor of the *Trainer's Forum*, a peer-reviewed periodical of TSP and as the webmaster of TSP. Tammy is currently a Co-Chair of the School Psychology Leadership Roundtable where she collaborates with constituent organizations on common goals originating from the Futures

Conference. She is currently finishing a Guest Editorship with *Psychology in the Schools*.

# Awards Announcements

## Senior Scientist Award

The Division of School Psychology (Division 16) of the American Psychological Association requests nominations for the Senior Scientist Award. This award is presented to school psychologists who throughout their careers have demonstrated exceptional programs of scholarship that merit special recognition. This is not an award necessarily for the amount of writing done by a scholar, but rather for a sustained program of outstanding theoretical and research activity. Nominees must be (a) either 20 years past the granting of their doctoral degree or at least 50 years old by December 31, 2003, and (b) a Fellow, Member, or Associate of Division 16. The award recipient will be asked to prepare an address for the Division to be presented at the subsequent APA annual convention and serve on a committee to select subsequent award winners. Anyone, including a candidate him or herself, may nominate a school psychologist for the award. Five sets of materials should be submitted for each

nominee, including a vita, 3-5 supporting letters, and five major papers or publications. Please send nominations by March 15, 2004, to Professor Jonathan Sandoval, School of Education, One Shields Ave., University of California, Davis, CA 95616-8579



## The Jack Bardon Distinguished Service Award

The Division of School Psychology (Division 16) of the American Psychological Association requests nominations for the Jack Bardon Distinguished Service Award. This award is presented to mature professional and academic school psychologists who throughout their careers have demonstrated exceptional programs of service that merit special recognition. This award is given for accomplishments relating to (a) major leadership in the administration of psychological services in the schools, (b) major contributions in the formulation and implementation of policy leading to psychologically and socially sound training and practice in school psychology, (c) sustained direction and/or participation in research that has contributed to more effective practice in school psychology, and/or (d) the inauguration or development or training programs for new school psychologists or for the systematic development of inservice training for psychologists engaged in the practice of school psychology. The award recipient will be asked to prepare an address for the Division to be presented at the subsequent APA annual convention and serve on a committee to select subsequent award winners. Anyone, including a candidate him or herself, may nominate a school psychologist for the award. Two sets of materials should be submitted for each nominee, including a vita, supporting letters (minimum of three), and other appropriate supporting documentation. Please send nominations by March 15, 2004 to Cynthia A. Riccio, Ph.D., Department of Educational Psychology, TAMU MS 4225, 704 Harrington, Texas A & M University, College Station, TX 77845-4225



### **Lightner Witmer Award**

The Division of School Psychology (Division 16) of the American Psychological Association requests nominations for the Lightner Witmer Award. This award is presented to school psychologists who have demonstrated exceptional scholarship early in their careers. Continuing scholarship, rather than a thesis or dissertation alone, is the primary consideration in making the award. Nominees must be (a) within seven years of receiving their educational specialist or doctoral degree as of September 1, 2004, and (b) a Fellow, Member, Associate, or Student Affiliate of Division 16. A person does not need to have a doctoral degree to be eligible. The award recipient will be asked to prepare an address for the Division to be presented at the subsequent APA annual convention and serve on a committee to select subsequent award winners. Anyone, including a candidate him or herself, may nominate a school psychologist for the award. Five sets of materials should be submitted for each nominee, including a vita, 3-5 letters of support, reprints, and other evidence of scholarship. Please send nominations by March 15, 2004, to Tanya L. Eckert, Ph.D., Syracuse University, 430 Huntington Hall, Syracuse, NY 13244.

### **Outstanding Dissertation Award**

The Division of School Psychology (Division 16) of the American Psychological Association requests nominations for the Outstanding Dissertation in School Psychology Award. This award is presented to a school psychologist who has completed a doctoral dissertation which merits special recognition and which has the potential to contribute to the science and practice of school psychology. Nominees must (a) have successfully defended the dissertation between January 1, 2003 and December 31, 2003, and (b) be a Member OR Student Affiliate of Division 16 at the time of receipt of the award (August, 2004). The award recipient will be asked to serve on a committee to select subsequent award winners, give an award presentation based on the dissertation at the subsequent APA annual convention, and submit a manuscript to *School Psychology Quarterly* (the Division 16 journal). Anyone, including a candidate her or himself, may nominate a school psychologist for the award. Four copies of the nominee's vita and letters of support from at least two members of the dissertation itself should be submitted for each candidate, along with a copy of the dissertation. Please send nominations by March 15, 2004, to John S. Carlson, PhD, NCSP, School Psychology Program, Michigan State University, 431 Erickson Hall, East Lansing, MI 48823.

**Student Affiliates of School Psychology (SASP)****SASP Officers  
2003-2004****President**John Eagle  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln**President-Elect**Kisha Haye  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln**Membership Chair**Sarah A. Arroyo  
Indiana State University**Liaison**Ariadne V. Schemm  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

## Conjoint Behavioral Consultation: Meeting the Needs of Students at Risk of Dropping Out

**Ariadne Schemm  
University of Nebraska**

There is an ongoing debate in the United States about the need for accountability in the school systems regarding children's educational achievement levels. The current federal focus on educational accountability is on the importance of addressing the needs of all students, from the academically successful student to the disengaged student at risk of dropping out of school (No Child Left Behind Act, 2001). Federal education funds become at risk if schools do not address such deficits as significant dropout rates and poor academic test scores.

Although federal educational policies hold schools accountable for the academic achievement levels of all students, there are also significant

societal and economic repercussions resulting from dropping out of school. Adolescents that drop out of school engage in a higher rate of such health risk behaviors as regular alcohol use, illegal drug use, weapon carrying, suicidal thoughts and risky sexual activity (Lindberg, Boggess, Porter, & Williams, 2000). Dropout unemployment rates are high (NEGP, 2000). These adolescents are also more likely to be lacking in the basic academic and work skills needed for skilled labor and are not prepared to enter the labor force.

A dropout is defined as: "an individual who was enrolled in a school at some time during the previous school year and was not enrolled on October 1 of the current school year or was not enrolled on October 1 of the previous school year although expected to

be and has not graduated from high school or completed a state or a district approved educational program" (The National Center for Education Statistics – NCES, 1995, p.1). In 2001, 11% of adolescents between the ages of 16 and 24 were not enrolled and had not completed high school (NCES, 2003). There are significant percentages of adolescents and young adults joining the undereducated population.

The dropout process may begin in elementary or middle school (Jimerson, Egeland, Sroufe, & Carlson, 2000). Students dropout between 9th and 12th grade or as early as after 8th grade during the transition from middle school to high school (Garcia & Walker De Felix, 1992; Institute on Violence and Destructive Behaviors-IVDB, 2000). In a study of over 20,000 students enrolled in middle schools, Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack, and Rock (1986) found that students who later dropped out of school were dissatisfied with grades, felt alienated from the school community, had lower self-esteem, and were less satisfied and interested in their education, and felt less popular than students who did not dropout of school. Alienation from the school community may indicate that the student no longer perceives him or herself as a member of that community or as a member of the student community. If students do not feel valued by teachers or the school, they will not develop positive values about school (Murdock, Anderman, & Hodge, 2000) or a positive identification with the school.

Re-engaging the alienated student into the school and student communities would seem to be an essential intervention focus in preventing future school dropout. The literature on decreasing student dropout suggests numerous strategies to increasing student participation, addressing risk factors, and preventing student dropout. These

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Indiana State University**Convention Chair**Jennifer S. Sears  
Indiana State University**Communications Chair**Reagan Rinderknecht  
Oklahoma State University**Technology Chair**Rachelle R. Whittaker  
Indiana State University

include: (a) assessing and identifying students for risk several identified risk factors; (b) providing supports to ensure that the students gain academic skills to succeed; (c) developing special curricula, incentives, and rewards; (d) collaborative partnerships between the home and school environments, characterized by open communication and (e) parental involvement in the child's education (Cantelon & LeBouef, 1997; Gleason & Dynarski, 1998; Ogden & Germinario, 1988).

Partnerships between home and school also increase the level of parent involvement in students' overall school functioning. Parental involvement has been found to improve student academic performance, increase students' positive attitudes toward school, increase school attendance, and lead to the development of more effective study and homework habits (Sheridan, Kratochwill, & Bergan, 1996). Parent involvement has also been found to be one of the most important variables forecasting future dropout risk during the sixth grade (Voelkl, 1996) and more important in children's academic progress than parents' level of education or occupation (Snodgrass, 1991).

Conjoint Behavioral Consultation (CBC), a consultation model, encompasses many of the components that have been shown to prevent school dropout. These components include: (a) encouraging parent involvement in the child's academic functioning; b) encouraging social and emotional progress in the school setting; c) providing opportunities for the child to participate in both the development and evaluation of the intervention; and d) providing positive experiences for the consultees and the child to build partnerships together in an effort to support both the intervention and the child (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001).

Previous studies have found that CBC and the intervention package developed through the consultation process show promising results, particularly in homework completion and the students' attitudes toward school and education. Involving the student in the process also seems to create a vehicle in which the student can both explore problem-solving and develop more of a sense of empowerment within the school and home

community; key ingredients in maintaining a student's educational placement.

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## APA DIVISION 16 SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

### Objectives

The ultimate goal of all Division activity is the enhancement of the status of children, youth, and adults as learners and productive citizens in schools, families, and communities.

The objectives of the Division of School Psychology are:

- a. to promote and maintain high standards of professional education and training within the specialty, and to expand appropriate scientific and scholarly knowledge and the pursuit of scientific affairs;
- b. to increase effective and efficient conduct of professional affairs, including the practice of psychology within the schools, among other settings, and collaboration/cooperation with individuals, groups, and organizations in the shared realization of Division objectives;
- c. to support the ethical and social responsibilities of the specialty, to encourage opportunities for the ethnic minority participation in the specialty, and to provide opportunities for professional fellowship; and
- d. to encourage and effect publications, communications, and conferences regarding the activities, interests, and concerns within the specialty on a regional, national, and international basis.



### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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Please complete and mail this application with your check payable to APA Division 16 to:

Attn: Division 16 Membership  
APA Division Services Office  
750 First Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20002-4242

# People & Places

Compiled by Angeleque Akin-Little  
University of the Pacific

- Tom Huberty, Russ Skiba, Karen Gavin, and Jack Cummings welcome **Rebecca Martinez** to the **Indiana University-Bloomington** school psychology faculty. Rebecca was previously at the University of Houston as an assistant professor. She is a graduate of the **University of Texas-Austin**.
- **Alan W. Brue, Ph.D.**, NCSP, has been named Director of Professional Standards with the National Association of School Psychologists, a position that he will assume in July 2004.
- The school psychology program at **Auburn University** announces a new faculty member, **Robin Sobansky**, who completed her Ph.D. in the combined school and developmental psychology program at the **University of Nebraska-Lincoln** and her internship through the Nebraska Internship Consortium in Professional Psychology at Father Flanagan's Boys' Home in Boys Town, Nebraska. Program director **Joseph A. Buckhalt** was also recently named **Wayne T. Smith Distinguished Professor by the College of Education**.
- The School Psychology Program at **Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU)** announces the appointment of two new faculty members. **Ida Jeltova**, who completed her Ph.D. in School Psychology Program at the **City University of New York (CUNY)** and, prior to coming to FDU, was on the faculty at CUNY in the Secondary Education and Youth Services Department. Her areas of research interest include issues related to second culture acquisition and health behaviors in adolescents, prevention and intervention with immigrant teens, curriculum-based dynamic assessment. **Sam Feinberg**, completed his Ph.D. in Educational Psychology at **New York University**. For 36 years, prior to coming to FDU, Sam worked for the Yonkers Public Schools in a variety of positions, including Department Head of School Psychological Services. His areas of research interest include sexual harassment, humor, social facilitation, home/school collaboration, and program evaluation.
- **Vincent Alfonso** was the recipient of the **Leadership in School Psychology Award from the New York Association of School Psychologists**. The award is given to an individual who has made broad and significant contributions to the welfare of children and the field of school psychology in areas such as professional practice, research, state, regional, and national association leadership, training and/or supervision, and community service. Congratulations, Vinny!
- **Gloria Miller, Karen Riley (University of Denver) and Michelle Athanasiou (University of Northern Colorado)** are excited to announce they received a 5-year \$1,250,000 grant from the **U.S. Department of Education** to create an early childhood specialization within the existing school psychology programs at the two universities. The grant, entitled **Project InSPECT** (Integrated School Psychology Early Childhood Training), represents a collaboration across universities, professionals in multiple disciplines, and service providers in rural and urban counties in Colorado.

Please send all submissions to  
aakinlittle@pacific.edu

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### NY/DOCTORAL-LEVEL SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY INTERNS:

Paid doctoral-level interns in school psychology. Facility with a problem-solving model desirable. Stipend \$24,000. Excellent opportunity in ethnically and economically diverse district 30 miles north of NYC. Forward resumes to Ms. Maureen Boozang-Hill, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, Ossining UFSD, 190 Croton Avenue, Ossining, NY 10562  
email: mbhill@ossining.k12.ny.us.

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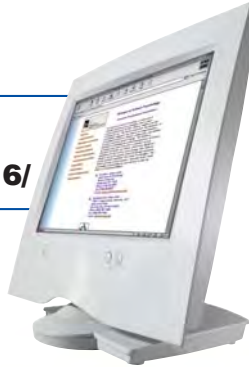
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