



16

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PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

BY **DR. JAMES DIPERNA**, PENN STATE UNIVERSITY

Welcome to the winter issue of *The School Psychologist*. In my final update, I would like to briefly highlight some of the Division's recent accomplishments as well as share a few upcoming opportunities in the months ahead.

Communications Initiative

One of our primary goals during the past year has been to ensure that members, affiliates, and students were informed of the many activities and accomplishments of the Division. We have worked closely with our Communications Director, Wade George, to expand our digital footprint via [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#). In October, we launched the new format for [The School Psychologist \(TSP\)](#) to improve distribution and expand content. In November, we launched our biweekly [Division 16 Digest](#) to distribute recent announcements and professional opportunities to all members via our announcement listserv. Finally, in December we launched a new [website](#). At the end of 2015, we distributed a brief online survey to solicit member feedback regarding these efforts, and overall the feedback was quite positive and encouraging. In addition, respondents made a number of suggestions regarding areas of professional interest that the Executive Committee is using to inform new initiatives (division-sponsored webinars, article content for TSP, future convention themes, etc.) I would like to thank everyone who took the time to respond to our brief survey and provide ideas regarding how the Division can further enhance its efforts on behalf of our members. If you have any additional ideas, questions, or feedback regarding our communication efforts, please do not hesitate to contact the Division at wade@apadivision16.org

Trauma Work Group Special Issue

Division 16 sponsored a work group focused on the provision of trauma-related mental health services in the schools. Although lay publications and various white



President James DiPerna

papers abound, discussion and evaluation of trauma-informed schools have largely been absent in peer-reviewed outlets. In response to this need, our work group authored a [special issue](#) focused on trauma-informed schools which was just published in School Mental Health. This issue features 14 articles reporting original research to support trauma-informed approaches to service delivery in schools. Articles focus on topics such as trauma screening, a blueprint for trauma-informed service delivery, and assessing staff attitudes about trauma-informed care. I would like to thank Drs. Stacy Overstreet and Sandy Chafouleas for leading this effort and all of the authors whom contributed to the work group and special series. The introductory article to the series is available [here](#), and members without full access to School Mental Health can request articles of interest directly from lead authors.



Grant Program for School Psychology Internships (GPSPI)

The GPSPI's primary aim is to provide funds and consultation for developing new APPIC School Psychology Internship Programs that will eventually obtain APA Accreditation. The GPSPI also provides funds and consultation for expanding existing APPIC School Psychology Internship Programs that will eventually obtain APA Accreditation. In December, the GPSPI program received its second round of applicants, and we are pleased to announce that two received awards:

Great Lakes Psychology Internship Consortium

Director: Dr. Katrina Rhymer
Affiliated Organization: Central Michigan University

Guilford County Schools Psychological Services Doctoral Psychology Internship

Director: Dr. Alexander Tabori
Affiliated Organization: University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill

I would like to congratulate the latest GPSPI recipients and thank them for their commitment to training future school psychologists. I also would like to thank our partner organizations (Council of Directors of School Psychology Programs, National Association of School Psychologists, & Trainers of School Psychologists) and the members of the GPSPI committee for their effort to make this important program a reality. Applications for the next round of GPSPI funding are due on **June 30th**. For additional information, please visit the [GPSPI webpage](#) on the division's new website.

Join us at the 2016 APA Convention in Denver

Division 16 has established a strong scientific program that will be featured at the 2016 APA Convention in Denver, CO, August 4th-7th. With the leadership of David Hulac (Chair), Julia Ogg (Co-chair), Robin Coddington, Michelle Perfect and over 100 reviewers, the convention program has been finalized. The Division 16 proceedings are extensive, with over 30 hours of events scheduled for practitioners, faculty, and students. Specifically, the 2016 program includes 13 symposium sessions, 5 poster sessions (including over 150 posters), and the SASP Graduate Student Research Forum. Symposium topics include improving screening and diagnostic accuracy for school-based services, faculty career presentations, report writing, and providing CBT in rural schools. The program also features our annual business meeting, award ceremony, and social hour on Saturday, August 6th. Stay tuned for more details in the spring!



Award Nominations

Each year, the Division recognizes outstanding contributions to the field in the areas of research, service, and practice. Starting in 2016, the Division is offering **two**

new awards recognizing the contributions of mid-career members along with our continuing awards for graduate students, early career, and advanced career members. Please note that all nomination materials are due to the respective committee chairs by April 1st. For specific information regarding the nomination process for each award, please visit the [Awards section](#) of the Division 16 website.

Membership Gift Initiative

With graduation season rapidly approaching, we wanted to remind everyone of Division 16's new membership campaign where current members can gift a membership to a recent graduate or early career colleague. Gift memberships purchased in the spring will begin mid-year and continue through the end of the next membership year (December, 2017). For additional information, please visit the [membership gift announcement](#).

Thanks for a Wonderful Year

In closing, I would like to thank all of my colleagues on the Executive Committee for making my presidential year such an enjoyable and productive experience. I would also like to thank the many members serving the profession through their efforts on various committees, work groups, task forces, and boards within the division and APA.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you, our members, for your continued support of Division 16 and providing me the opportunity to serve in this role. Doing so has been a privilege, and I am confident that the division will continue to flourish under our new President, Dr. Lea Theodore.



BEST PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY FOR HELPING ALL STUDENTS SUCCEED

TRANSLATION OF EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT (ESSA) INTO INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM WORK

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On December 10, 2015, President Obama signed into law the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which is notable for the degree of bipartisan support it received and the introduction of flexibility not allowed under the one-size-fits-all model of its predecessor, the *No Child Left Behind Act*. The purpose of this article is to encourage school psychologists to bring to the attention of those now writing regulations for ESSA the importance of incorporating into these regulations “best professional practices informed by both research and the voice of seasoned, effective educational professionals in school settings,” to achieve the goal of every child succeeding. That is, best professional practices should be allowed to guide daily practice of interdisciplinary teams in school settings. Government regulations alone are not sufficient if every child is to succeed.

We focus in this article on three sizable populations in schools in the United States whose educational needs must be addressed if every child

is to succeed. The first is those with biologically based specific learning disabilities (SLDs), which epidemiological studies show affect one in five school age children (Colligan & Katusic, 2015). The second is the one in four school age children who live below the poverty line (Berliner, 2012, 2013). The third is those who exhibit cultural and linguistic diversity (Banks, 2012; Banks and Banks, 2011; Brice Heath, 2012; Jones; Worrell, 2005) and may be voluntary immigrants or involuntary immigrants (African Americans and Native Americans; Ladson-Billings, 2006). These three populations are not mutually exclusive, but each has unique educational needs that must be addressed if schools in the United States are to narrow the achievement gap and ensure that each student succeeds.

Biologically Based Specific Learning Disabilities

Two unfortunate outcomes of the federal legislation guaranteeing civil rights for educationally handicapped school-age children and youth to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) have been the messages (a) sent to schools that they only need to provide FAPE for students who qualify for special education services; and (b) sent to parents that they must advocate for their children, which may require hiring an attorney. Unfortunately, eligibility criteria for qualifying for services vary from state to state and generally are not informed by current research for diagnosing educationally handicapping conditions; and legal approaches often result in adversarial home-school relationships, rather than trusting ones, without necessarily resulting in optimal achievement outcomes for students.

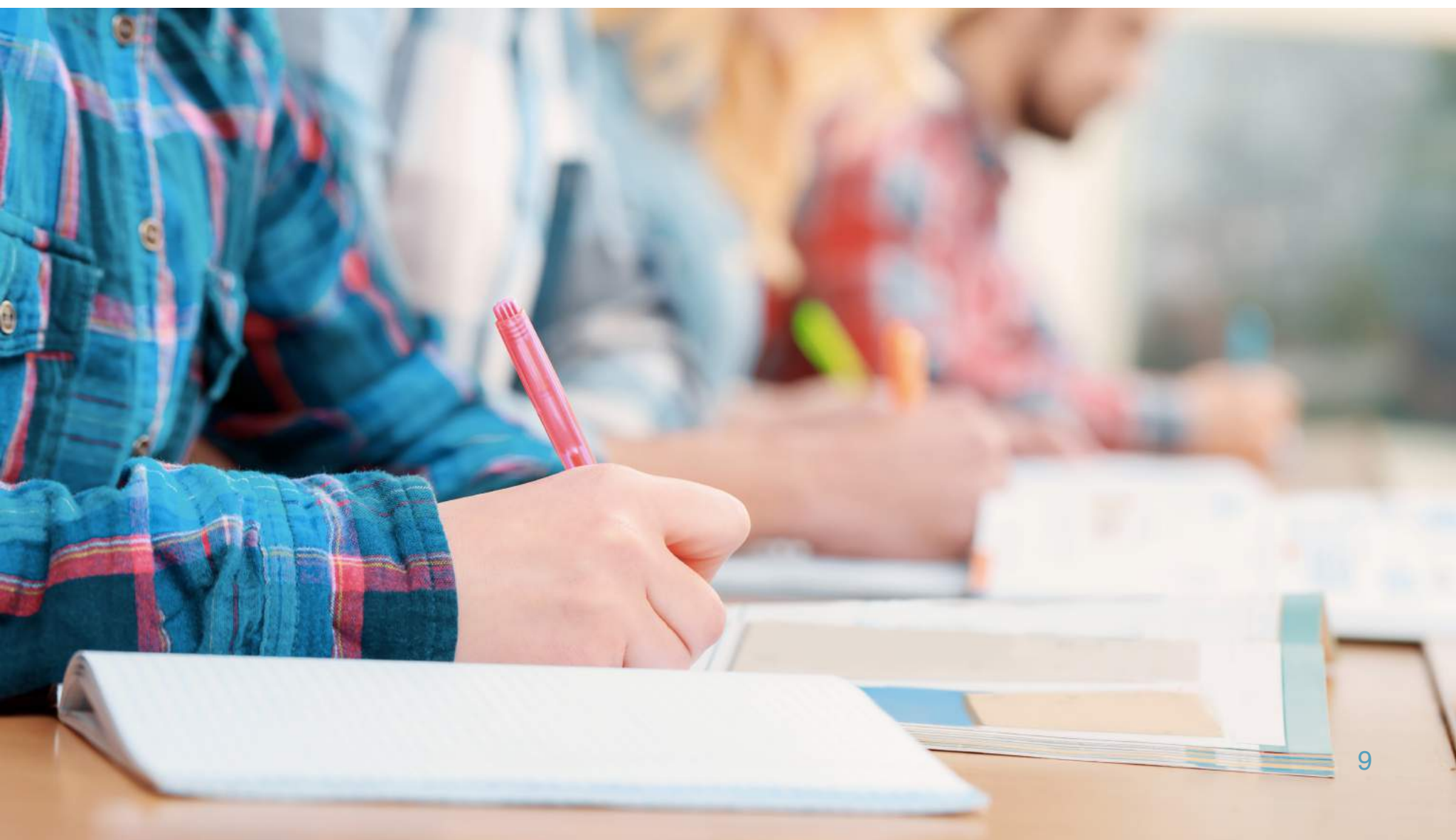
Recently, some frustrated parents have organized and pursued legal action to achieve recognition in the federal special education legislation for dyslexia. However, not all SLDs are dyslexia. In a letter dated July 24, 2015 to Michael Yudin, Assistant Secretary Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, U. S. Department of Education, nine organizations¹ expressed concern about using DSM-V medical diagnostic terms/labels such as dysgraphia, dyslexia, and dyscalculia for the IDEA procedures for eligibility for educational services. Nevertheless, on October 23, 2015 the US Department of Education issued a policy statement that schools must acknowledge the existence of dysgraphia, dyslexia, and dyscalculia. The December 8, 2015 School Law Bulletin interpreted this as use of labels rather than patterns of deficiencies and/or weaknesses.

On the one hand, we share the concern that educational professionals in school settings need manuals tailored to how interdisciplinary teams do their work in school settings, and that diagnostic manuals used in medical settings are designed for other purposes. For example, the Interdisciplinary Frameworks for Schools: Best Professional Practices for Serving All Students (Berninger, 2015) was written for encouraging professionals working in school settings to (a) draw on the best professional practices of their respective professions in helping students succeed despite individual and developmental differences of students, and (b) reach out to parents in proactive, compassionate ways. Although legal protection is needed for the rights of individuals with educationally handicapping conditions, laws cannot specify what is required for day to day best professional practices to help all children succeed educationally. A pull-in,

“Although legal protection is needed for the rights of individuals with educationally handicapping conditions, laws cannot specify what is required for day to day best professional practices to help all children succeed educationally.”

inclusionary model for general education (interdisciplinary team supporting classroom teachers in educating students who exhibit developmental and individual differences) was introduced that is more cost-effective and research-supported for providing FAPE for all. The first edition of the Interdisciplinary Frameworks was written by a lead author and advisory board, but given to APA Division 16 to manage and update the companion websites and develop future editions. School psychologists are encouraged to contribute now to the websites and to future versions of the manual written by a team of professionals to guide their work in schools.

More recently, Berninger and Wolf (2016) proposed professional development standards in education that legislators, government regulators, policy makers, and lawyers involved in passing educational law, creating regulations for implementing educational laws, advising educators on what they should be teaching and how they should be assessing, or representing those who feel their FAPE rights have been violated, respectively, should meet. These standards include demonstrating knowledge of the scientific foundations of developmental stepping stones in typical learning across the curriculum, biological and environmental diversity in school-age children and youth, and the practical realities of teaching and providing related services in



classrooms and local schools. The latter would require supervised practice in schools.

Research, much of it federally funded, supports five key principles that are relevant to best professional practices in schools which need to be considered if every child is to succeed. First, just because SLDs, such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, and OWL LD, have biological bases—genetic (for review for school professionals, see Raskind, Peters, Richards, Eckert, & Berninger, 2012) and brain (for recent research supporting US Department of Education policy statement, see Berninger, Richards, & Abbott, 2015; Richards et al., 2015)—it does not follow that they are medical problems (due to illness or injury). In fact, they respond favorably to appropriate instructional interventions and effective treatment does not require medication or injections. However, the diagnostic labels for SLDs are not merely labels but rather linked to specific reading, writing, aural/ language, and math skills that are impaired and must be taught to help the student become successful in learning. For examples of instructional intervention linked to differential diagnosis being effective, see Berninger and O'Malley-May (2011), and Berninger and Wolf (2016); these also cover the sizable body of research about Oral and Written Language Learning Disability (OWL LD) not mentioned in the October 23, 2015 US Department of Education policy statement. Dyslexia and dysgraphia are not the only causes of reading and writing disabilities.

Second, SLDs occur in otherwise typically developing children and youth who experience unusual struggles in learning specific writing, reading, oral language, and/or math skills; not all writing, reading, oral language, and math

disabilities are SLDs and some may be due to other disorders (Berninger, 2015). That is why it is important to obtain careful developmental, medical, family, and educational histories and not just test scores in the diagnostic process.

Third, SLDs are invisible, internal disabilities in the mind due to selective impairments in one or more working memory components that support language or math learning such as coding heard words (phonological), viewed letters, words, numerals (orthographic), and word bases and affixes (morphological); phonological or orthographic loops for cross-code integration; and supervisory attention (focused, switching, sustaining, monitoring; Berninger & Richards, 2010). Thus, without evidence-based assessment SLDs may not be identified and others may not have compassion for the struggles to succeed that many of the affected individuals endure.

Fourth, each of the SLDs can be defined on the basis of profiles (patterns) of hallmark educational deficits and associated behavioral markers of biological bases (genetic and brain variants) and these profiles are instructionally relevant (Silliman & Berninger, 2011). Dysgraphia is impaired legible and automatic handwriting that expresses as profile of impaired accurate and automatic letter production from memory or letter and word copying and/or sustained handwriting over time. Dyslexia is impaired word reading (decoding) and spelling (encoding). OWL LD is impaired oral and written language at the morphological and syntax levels. Dyscalculia is impairment in numeral writing, math fact retrieval, and/or computation operations.

Fifth, evidence-based identification and differential diagnosis are based on a measure of



translating cognitions into oral language, profiles of writing, reading, oral language, and math skills, and behavioral markers of working memory components as well as developmental, medical, family, and educational history (Berninger, 2015).

Helping Students Living in Poverty Succeed Educationally

We will not achieve the goal, however, of every student successful if we focus only on students with SLDs. Poverty is the leading cause of low achievement in schools in the United States (Duncan & Mumane, 2011; Reardon, in press). Jensen (2009) offers many practical suggestions for helping teachers teach students who live in poverty. Under the leadership of now retired Director of Psychological Services Alnita Dunn in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), instead of focusing on assessment to qualify the students for pull out programs, school

psychologists formed partnerships with first grade classroom teachers and provided either evidence-based writing plus reading or reading only instruction in the lowest achieving schools in low income areas. During that school year all students improved significantly in their literacy skills, especially those who received writing plus reading instruction, and many reached grade level (Berninger, 2015; Berninger, Dunn, Lin, & Shimada, 2004).

Insufficient food and nutrition in the preschool and school years can also interfere with brain development and response to instruction. Although free and reduced breakfast and lunch are provided at school, many students have limited access to food during evenings, weekends, and summers. Schools can apply to state and federal programs to obtain student food assistance for times when school is not in session (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/summer-food->

[service-program-sfsp](#)). However, brains need social nurturing as well as nutrition (Luby et al., 2013). Zenia Lemos Hornig, school psychologist, provides both social and educational nurturing for adolescents, many of whom are dealing with parenting their children as well as their own education and the chronic stressors of poverty including homelessness and finding safe places to live (see Chapter 6 in *Interdisciplinary Frameworks*). Schools can also work with community professionals to provide such social nurturing. Under the leadership of Tom Powers, Professor at the University of Pennsylvania, and Chief of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), psychologists offer outreach to those in the community living in poverty. Rose, a parent and paraprofessional near CHOP, helped build strong relationships with those living in poverty in the community and the professionals in an elementary school to help kindergarten and first grade students achieve favorable educational outcomes (see Chapter 12 of the *Interdisciplinary Frameworks*). Another inspiring example of a university-community partnership providing medical, psychological, family, and educational services for community members living in poverty is the Harriet Lane Clinic affiliated with Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, which is headed by Tina Cheng, M.D., M.P.H., and Barry Solomon, M.D., M.P.H (See Chapter 3 of the *Interdisciplinary Frameworks*).

One of the major challenges facing the US is the high rate of school dropout and subsequent prison drop-in (Alexander, 2011). As a member of the advisory board for the *Interdisciplinary Frameworks for Schools* (pp. 28-29), Dunn shared the groundbreaking efforts of LAUSD to support students with special needs returning to school

from the juvenile justice system. See <http://achieve.lausd.net>.

Nicole Alston Abel is a school psychologist in an elementary school with a school-wide goal of reducing school dropout rate. Instead of expelling misbehaving children, the police are invited to come to the school to teach the misbehaving children how to behave at school. She uses an assessment model for identifying strengths and weaknesses in low income, racially and culturally diverse students, provides consultation to classroom teachers, and finds referrals to special education are reduced while achievement has increased.

Narrowing the Achievement Gap—Cultural Diversity

Two groups that have been targeted for narrowing the achievement gap are Native Americans (McCardle & Berninger, 2015) and African Americans (Worrell, 2005) but each group is itself culturally diverse. However, Alston-Abel (2009) found that when parental level of education was equated for African American, Asian American, and European American parents, their children's reading and writing achievement did not differ significantly; parent assistance reported in questionnaires about home literacy activities generally did not differ, but, when it did, the African American mothers reported providing more assistance (tables with results are available upon request). Building relationships with family and community has been shown to be effective for Native American students (McCardle & Berninger, 2015). Overall, there is reason to be hopeful that the achievement gap can be narrowed for those at risk for varied reasons. Please send names of practitioners who have made exemplary contributions to Narrowing the

Achievement Gap to APA Division 16 to be considered for posting on website for Rose Award and Honor Roll Model. Also contact Alnita Dunn (nita95@ aol.com) to share your own efforts toward Narrowing the Achievement Gap.

Making the Case for New Approach to Guiding Educational Practices

Our hope is that school psychologists and other professionals working in schools or with community service providers for school-age children and youth will become involved in creating the new policies and regulations for ESSA. They can introduce the importance of best professional practices at all levels of the school system, guiding the day-to-day operations of those in the front lines educating the children. Otherwise, only policy and laws written, legislated, regulated, and defended by non-educators will guide day-to-day educational practices. Please share with APA Division 16 your vision of how school psychologists can contribute to a changing model of best professional practices. Such practices should incorporate the perspectives and expertise of professionals representing multiple disciplines who have worked at many levels of the educational system from classroom to district administration as the authors have to provide FAPE for ALL rather than pull-out for a few (see OEC, June 2014). In contrast to a purely top-down approach within the school system or exclusively from without by non-educators, such an approach is more likely to help every student succeed.

The passage of the ESSA marks an opportunity for policy makers and practitioners to come together to ensure that Every Students Succeeds is a reality and not simply the newest name for

the piece of federal legislation that has been shaping K-12 education since 1965. As Blankstein and Noguera (2015) point out, now is the time to pursue excellence through equity. Creating systems which identify the varied needs of our students and allow flexible mechanisms for meeting these needs, no matter their etiology, is indeed the only way "... to avoid remaining trapped on a path that is not only generating greater inequality in academic outcomes but also contributing to deeper inequality within our society generally" (Blankstein & Noguera, 2015, p. 3). In addition to issues of SLDs, poverty, and cultural diversity featured in this article, more attention should also be devoted to preventing and treating mental health problems during the school years. School psychologists are in the unique position of being the educational practitioners who can assist their colleagues in translating the research from neuroscience, cognitive psychology, linguistics, mental health and other areas, into best practices for meeting all the needs of all learners.

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THE ORIGINS AND FUTURE OF STUDENT-FOCUSED MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

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School psychologists assume a wide range of roles while providing professional services (e.g., assessment, direct services, consultation, administrative). More often than not, the time-demand of some roles conflicts with the need or desire to fulfill other roles. For example, large assessment caseloads and time constraints of the school environment (i.e., 180 days and required instructional periods) limit the typical school psychologist's ability to provide direct intervention services to students (Terry et al., 2014). These constraints add to the pressing challenges (e.g., financial, motivation, transportation, and school transitions and transfers) students face when attempting to access or complete services. In fact, approximately 40 to 60% of youth receiving intervention services end treatment prematurely (Baekeland & Lundwall, 1975; Miller, Southam-Gerow, & Allin, 2008). In order to decrease treatment attrition, increase treatment access, and increase school psychologists' involvement in providing a complete course of treatment, practitioners should adopt brief and effective interventions. One such intervention is Motivational Interviewing (MI).

MI is a brief (e.g., 1 to 4 sessions) counseling style used to motivate people for change (Miller & Rollnick, 2013, Rollnick & Miller, 1995). The practice of MI consists of relational and technical components (Miller & Rose, 2009) used within four MI processes: engaging the client in a collaborative conversation, focusing the conversation on goals and values, evoking change talk (e.g., statements indicating a desire, need, ability, or intention for change), and planning for change. The relational components address an evidence-based interpersonal style of counseling characterized by expressions of empathy, affirmations that support autonomy and self-efficacy, and collaborative problem solving. The technical components involve the strategic use of open-ended questions, complex reflective listening, and differential evocation and reinforcement of client change talk. Recent theoretical work suggests that interviewees' expressions of intentions to change are a critical aspect of MI (Apodaca & Longabaugh, 2009).

In general, a large body of research shows that MI can improve a broad range of problem behavior, ranging from ineffective parenting and teaching strategies to risky behavior (e.g., substance use) in older adolescents and adults (Hester, Squires, & Delaney, 2005; Lundahl, Kunz, Brownell, Tollefson, & Burke, 2010; O'Leary, 2001; Rao, 1999). Owing to this success, researchers have advocated for the use and de-

velopment of student-focused Motivational Interviewing (SFMI; Strait et al., 2014). SFMI has two distinguishing characteristics (Strait et al., 2014). First, service providers use it directly with school-age students in the school setting. Second, the focus of SFMI is on academic outcomes (e.g., grades, behavioral referrals) and related behaviors (e.g., classroom participation, studying, and homework completion). As discussed below, previous applications of MI with adolescents focused primarily on alcohol and substance abuse prevention.

Student Focused Motivational Interviewing: The Origins

Miller and Rollnick (2012) originally used and developed MI as a brief alcohol and drug treatment for adults (Miller, 1983; Miller & Rollnick, 2002). Over 30 years of research has consistently demonstrated the efficacy, effectiveness, and efficiency (e.g., 1 to 4 sessions) of MI to reduce problem behaviors related to drugs and alcohol. Effect sizes of MI typically range from small (.25) to medium (.57; Burk et al., 2003; Lundahl et al., 2010), which is a powerful effect of a brief intervention for stubborn problems related to substance abuse. Because of MI's effectiveness for adult substance abuse, researchers started evaluating the use of MI for adolescents' substance abuse. Barnett and colleagues (2012) found that 67% ($n = 39$) of MI studies with adolescents reported statistically significant effects on substance use outcomes. Moreover, Macgowan and Engle (2010) found that the majority of MI studies for adolescent substance use were conducted in schools; thus, becoming one of the first incarnations of school-based MI used directly with students—though, arguably, not meeting the definition of SFMI because it targeted non-academic behaviors.

While studying MI to reduce alcohol and substance use, researchers started to develop semi-structured MI interventions known as the Check-Ups. The Check-Ups focus the conversation and evoke change talk through comprehensive self-assessment and feedback related to goals, values, and current behaviors (Rollnick & Miller, 1995). The Drinker's Check-Up was the original Check-Up and mental health practitioners used it to motivate adults to reduce alcohol abuse (Hester et al., 2005; Rollnick & Miller, 1995). Later, researchers created the Family Check-Up (FCU) and Classroom Check-Up (CCU) to motivate parents and teachers to adopt evidence-based behavioral management strategies: A major transition from MI's original focus on alcohol and substance abuse. Researchers found that the FCU and CCU increase parents and teachers' adoption of behavioral management programs, which consequently influence student outcomes (O'Leary, 2001; Rao, 1999; Reinke, Lewis-Palmer, & Merrell, 2008).

Though the CCU is not SFMI, it laid much of the groundwork for many SFMI interventions because it is school-based and influences students' academic behaviors, albeit indirectly (Reinke, Lewis-Palmer, & Merrell, 2008). The CCU uses classroom observations, self-assessment, feedback, and change plan support to evoke teachers' change talk and adoption of evidence based behavioral management practices. In summary, SFMI evolved from two lines of research: research on MI for adolescent substance use and research on MI used with teachers to improve their interactions with students.

Student Focused Motivational Interviewing: The Present

Atkinson and Wood (2003) conducted one of first studies of SFMI to improve academic perform-

ance. In their case study, five sessions of MI—conducted by a graduate psychology student—increased the punctuality and attendance of a disaffected secondary student. Similarly, Enea and Dafinoui (2009) found that MI combined with other interventions reduced truancy. In their study, students met with a counselor for approximately eight sessions and each session incorporated MI, solution-focused therapy, behavioral contracts, and behavioral reinforcement strategies. Daughtery (2009) conducted the first randomized experiment of MI to increase academic performance in college students. Her results indicated that students participating in three MI sessions with a peer coach demonstrated improved study habits and grade performance.

“Her results indicated that students participating in three MI sessions with a peer coach demonstrated improved study habits and grade performance.”

Following Daughtery’s (2009) study, Strait and colleagues (2012) developed the Student Check-Up (SCU; also referred to as academic report card coaching), which is a semi-structured motivational interview used with middle school students to improve academic outcomes. The SCU has four phases: introduction, self-assessment, feedback, and change plan development. Results of two randomized control trials on the SCU indicated that students receiving one session of SCU had significantly



higher post treatment math grades than a control group after accounting for pretreatment math grades (Strait et al., 2012; Terry et al., 2012). Relatedly, Terry and colleagues (2014) found that the SCU plus a booster session had a significantly larger effect on multiple grade outcomes in comparison to the SCU alone. The booster SCU session also had four phases: introduction, summary of the first session, self-assessment, and change plan renewal or creation. The interviewers in all of these SCU studies were graduate students in school or clinical psychology doctoral programs or bachelor-level research specialists.

More recently, McQuillin and colleagues (2015) created an 8 session mentoring program that used SFMI in combination with the Homework, Organization, Planning, and Skills intervention (Langberg et al., 2012). They found that middle school students paired with undergraduate mentors, in comparison to a school as usual control group, had significant decreases in behavioral referrals and increases in math grades and life satisfaction. The results of McQuillin and colleagues' study are consistent with the adult MI literature, demonstrating that MI is often most effective in combination with other evidence-based treatments.

Taken together, these studies demonstrate that SFMI is a promising brief intervention for improving an array of academic and behavioral outcomes. Specifically, multiple studies have shown that students participating in SFMI demonstrate improvements in grades and attendance. However, SFMI is still in the early stages of becoming an evidence-based intervention and, as discussed below, we caution school psychologists from prematurely using SFMI (Strait et al., 2013).

Student Focused Motivational Interviewing: The Future

In general, SFMI is in the process of undergoing research designed to evaluate its efficacy; thus, it is important that researchers replicate the above findings using larger sample sizes and contact control groups. Specifically, all of the studies reviewed above were limited by small samples sizes (e.g., $N < 120$) and none of the studies compared SFMI to plausible alternative interventions. Therefore, it is unknown whether SFMI is the most efficient or effective intervention in comparison to alternatives. Furthermore, studies have not identified the mechanism of action of SFMI, which is a critical consideration for future research as it identifies key considerations for training and fidelity evaluations (Kazdin, 2011).

In addition to testing SFMI with plausible alternatives, there should be systematic efficacy studies comparing SFMI in combination with other interventions. Researchers will likely find that SFMI is most effective when used in combination with other interventions (Miller and Rollnick, 2012; McQuillin et al., 2015). This is often referred to as a motivational enhancement effect, which is a brief and efficient complement to an established intervention that could possibly improve intervention engagement and outcomes.

While efficacy studies are important, the future of SFMI depends on finding ways for actual school personnel to deliver this novel intervention. Thus, future research on SFMI should include developmental studies that address the acceptability, effectiveness, feasibility, and cost effectiveness considerations essential for wide spread adoption (Flay et al., 2005). To date, most of the ex-

perimental SFMI studies were implemented through university-school partnerships, with the service delivery personnel recruited and trained by university faculty or graduate students (Strait et al., 2012; Terry et al., 2014). Unfortunately, programs developed at universities often fail to achieve similar results in real world settings (Kazdin, 2011).

One primary reason for failure of interventions to achieve similar results is the limited time and resource capacity of school-based and community-based personnel. Relatedly, Epstein and Klerman (2012) distinguish five common program failures and barriers: failure to secure required inputs (i.e., resources), low program enrollment, low treatment completion rates, low treatment fidelity, and lack of pre and post treatment improvement. SFMI is unique compared to other interventions because it requires minimal time and school personnel. However, as Miller and Rollnick (2012) emphasize, “MI is not easy to learn.” It requires an understanding of principles and techniques (generally through books and workshops), ample practice, and feedback via supervision and self-assessment. Most MI studies include 9 to 16 hours of training (Madison, Loignon, & Lane, 2008). With this in mind, the viability of SFMI is dependent on efficient training programs that produce MI compliant providers and lead to positive student outcomes.

Currently, there are growing resources (i.e., motivationalinterviewing.org, workshops, and books) and research on training in a variety of MI fields, including school-based MI interventions (Simon & Ward, 2014; Small et al., 2014). However, we are unaware of studies on SFMI that evaluate the link between training, improved MI skills, and student outcomes. Relatedly, we are

unaware of any SFMI training studies that target school psychologists or use a comparison group. Therefore, researchers need to evaluate the effect of SFMI training programs on school psychologists in comparison to other school personnel (e.g., counselors, social workers, and administrators) and control groups. Once completed, researchers should focus on the effects of training and the causal relationship between practitioners’ MI skills, treatment fidelity, and student outcomes (Apodaca & Longabaugh, 2009).

Conclusion

In summary, the origins of SFMI are strong, with over 30 years of research showing MI’s effectiveness for motivating people to make changes that improve their lives. Recent experimental research indicates that the future of SFMI is bright as an efficacious intervention for promoting positive academic behavior and improving grades. However, the current studies need replication. In addition, there is a need for mechanism studies that identify causal components of SFMI and developmental studies that addressed the viability of SFMI delivered by actual school personnel. In other words, the future of SFMI depends on knowing how it works and who can make it work in schools. This essential research will require collaboration and service-learning partnerships between researchers, schools, and practitioners.

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EARLY CAREER CORNER

REVIEWING MANUSCRIPTS FOR PUBLICATION:
A PRIMER FOR RESEARCHERS AND PRACTITIONERS

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Reviewing manuscripts for publication is an important service activity for researchers and practitioners. The blinded peer review process helps to ensure that journals publish articles that advance the science and practice of school psychology. Peer reviewers have the vital task of evaluating the quality of the scientific knowledge described in a manuscript and making a recommendation based upon their areas of expertise.

If you are interested in serving as a peer reviewer, there are several potential avenues. If you are a student or early career psychologist working with a mentor who regularly reviews for journals as an Editorial Board Member or Ad-Hoc reviewer, s/he may have you assist in reviewing a manuscript s/he has been assigned. Additionally, publishing within your areas of interest can help to establish your expertise in an area, which may lead to journal editors contacting you to review a manuscript. Occasionally, journals may solicit new volunteers who are willing to serve as Ad-Hoc reviewers.

Once you receive an invitation to review a manuscript, it is important to know when to turn down the opportunity. For instance, decline the review if the manuscript includes content or methodology that is outside of your areas of expertise. You should also decline to review a manuscript if you have a conflict of interest that would prevent you from providing a high quality review. Editors will ask you to review the manuscript within a specific time-frame (e.g., four weeks). Given the importance of timely reviews to the publication process, do not accept an assignment if you cannot provide a high quality review of the manuscript on or before the due date.

Reviewing for journals not only provides a service to the field, but can be a learning opportunity. With many journals, a blinded copy of the Editor's decision letter is sent to the peer reviewers. Therefore, as a new reviewer, you should read the other reviewers' comments and the decision letter from the Editor. By taking note of the types of comments addressed by reviewers and the concerns highlighted by the Editor, you can inform your future reviewing activities. Finally, you can also earn continuing education (CE) credits when reviewing for APA journals.

What to Look for When Reviewing Manuscripts

The golden rule of reviewing is to “review unto others as you would like to be reviewed” (McLaughlin, 2015). This means that it is important to provide a kind, constructive critique of the manuscript and always offer suggestions for improvements on the

study or future studies. Remember that the research process is difficult and our loftiest research goals are often beset by unforeseen circumstances. This is especially true when research is conducted in applied settings. The other element of the golden rule of reviewing is to focus on the big issues and to not be overly concerned with providing copy-editing services. You can provide feedback about the need for a thorough copy-editing without highlighting every grammatical and spelling error.

There are two major considerations when reviewing a manuscript. First, it is important to evaluate the research methodology as it relates to the internal and external validity of the study. In other words, did the researchers collect the data appropriately and systematically, implement the intervention with fidelity (if applicable), and utilize appropriate data analysis methods? Relatedly, consider whether the results of the study answer the questions it intended to answer and whether the data collected are adequate for addressing the stated purposes. That is, there should be clear alignment between the questions, measures, methodology, and data analytic strategies utilized. In addition to using your knowledge of research design and statistics to make these judgments, there are objective standards that can be utilized. For example, a special issue of *Exceptional Children* published in 2005 provided quality indicators for research using quasi-experimental and experimental, single-subject, correlational, and qualitative designs (see the Additional Resources section below for their references). These articles are an excellent starting point for information on addressing the quality of science in a manuscript.

The second consideration is whether the study makes a significant contribution to the literature. This is based on your

knowledge of the research in the content area, but is also the responsibility of the author. The Introduction should clearly review the relevant extant research and provide a strong rationale for why the current investigation was the next logical step in the development of the identified research base. It is especially important to consider how the study differs from other studies in the literature.

Although it is not your role to be a copy-editor, the manuscript should conform to the specific requirements of the journal and conventions of presenting scientific information, such as those found in the publication manual of the APA. Each section should provide all of the relevant and expected information. The title should appropriately and concisely capture the topic studied. The abstract should provide an accurate summary of the study, including relevant major findings. The literature review should be comprehensive, but focused on the research relevant to the current study. The methodology should be described sufficiently to inform replication. The Results section should provide data that answer each of the research questions. It is also important to consider whether narrative text could be summarized in tabular form. The tables and figures should be clear. Look for redundancy between the narrative text and the tables/figures; the major findings presented in the tables/figures should be highlighted in the Results narrative. Finally, the Discussion section should connect the findings of the study within the previous literature, suggest implications for practice and future research, and appropriately note the limitations of the study.

Composing the Review

After reading and taking notes on the manuscript based on the aforementioned considerations, it is the task of the peer

reviewer to make a recommendation regarding suitability for publication and to write a letter to the Editor. Ultimately, the Editor independently reviews the manuscript, considers each review, and then makes a final decision. Despite that the letter is submitted online, it is good practice to draft it in a word processing software and then copy and paste the text into the online submission platform. These online forms usually have radio boxes to indicate your recommendation to the Editor. Generally, your options are to recommend acceptance without changes, acceptance with minor revisions, rejection with revision and resubmission encouraged, or rejection with no encouragement for resubmission. The terminology and exact nature of each option varies by journal.

“Despite that the letter is submitted online, it is good practice to draft it in a word processing software and then copy and paste the text into the online submission platform.”

A recommendation of “Accept” indicates that the manuscript substantially contributes to the literature, meets all of the quality indicators for good research, is consistent with the publishing aims of the journal, and needs no changes. This recommendation is typically an infrequent occurrence. By recommending acceptance with minor revisions, it signifies that you found the manuscript to be high quality and suitable for publication, but it would benefit from specific minor additions or changes. For example, “please provide more detail on the observed



psychometrics of the measures utilized in the study.” A recommendation of rejection with revision and resubmission encouraged is often used to indicate that the manuscript has promise, but that major changes need to be made in order for it to be suitable for publication. Finally, suggesting that a manuscript is rejected without consideration of resubmission reflects either serious methodological flaws, lack of fit with the journal, and/or numerous significant concerns that make the manuscript unsuitable for publication.

To begin your review, it is customary to thank the editor(s) and author(s) for the opportunity to review their manuscript and refer to its title (and manuscript number, if applicable). For the remainder of the first paragraph, provide a brief summary of the manuscript. It is also helpful in this paragraph to provide global feedback on the quality of the manuscript and identify at least one strength. You may also provide a recommendation as to whether the manuscript is suitable for publication; this recommendation should be consistent with the recommendation provided in the online review form. Of note, you may also summarize your recommendation in a concluding paragraph. For the remainder of the review, there are two acceptable approaches: (1) describe the major weaknesses and then minor concerns or (2) summarize strengths and concerns section by section: Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion. Regardless of the approach, the reviewer should describe specific, concrete suggestions for each concern noted, whether major or minor. When possible, citing relevant literature to support your statements will strengthen your recommendation.

Conclusion

Peer reviewers should attend closely to the manuscript and provide reviews that not

only evaluate the science and potential contribution of the manuscript, but are also kind, constructive, and considerate of the time and effort authors put into the study and preparing the manuscript. Although the recommendations presented here are general guidelines, it is also essential that peer reviewers understand the specific reviewer expectations for the journal for which you are reviewing. By providing high quality reviews of manuscripts for journals, researchers and practitioners can help to advance the science and practice of school psychology.

Additional Resources

APA Publications and Communications Board Working Group on Journal Article Reporting Standards (2008). Reporting standards for research in psychology: Why do we need them? What might they be? *American Psychologist*, 63, 842–845. <http://www.apa.org/pubs/authors/jars.pdf>.

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FOSTERING THE FUTURE OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

AN UPDATE ON APA DIVISION 16 STUDENT
AFFILIATES IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY (SASP)

BY **AARON D. HADDOCK**, UC SANTA BARBARA

APA Division 16's Student Affiliates in School Psychology (SASP) is the only student organization of its kind within the discipline and one of the most highly organized and active student affiliate groups of all the APA divisions. Formed under the auspices of the Division 16 Executive Committee, SASP aims to keep graduate students apprised of issues pertaining to school psychology and involve graduate students in the broader professional organization in order to strengthen the discipline and foster the next generation of leaders in the field of school psychology. In this article, I would like to

highlight some of SASP's recent accomplishments and provide an update on some of its current activities and initiatives.

SASP's purpose is closely aligned with the objectives of APA Division 16 and shares its mission to enhance the status of children, youth, and adults as learners and productive citizens in schools, families, and communities. In addition to these aims, SASP seeks to represent graduate students within the field of school psychology, communicating and advocating for their interests and concerns within APA and Division 16 governance. SASP facilitates and collaborates with Division 16 to promote the training and professional development of graduate students within the field. SASP also serves as an information resource for information on school psychology that is particularly relevant for graduate students.

SASP provides graduate students with unique professional development opportunities. Graduate students in school psychology programs across the nation provide leadership for SASP through positions on its Executive Board in the roles of President, President-Elect, Past-President, Student Interest Liaison, Membership Chair, Convention Chair, Diversity Affairs Chair, Communications Liaison, and Editor and Editor-Elect of the SASP quarterly newsletter *From Science to Practice to Policy*. The Executive Board meets monthly, as a group, via Google Hangouts to plan and update board members on activities. The SASP President attends the Division 16 Mid-Winter Meeting to coordinate activities, and SASP board members also often arrange to meet with one another and Division 16 leadership at the NASP and APA conventions. Moreover, a recent initiative by 2015 President Cait Hynes established three new ad hoc committees focused on Membership, Diversity, and Publication, which has

enabled a greater number of students to participate in leadership roles in SASP. Furthermore, SASP assists in the establishment of local university-based SASP chapters; there are currently 44 SASP chapters in school psychology programs nationwide.

The SASP Executive Board engages in a number of important activities worth highlighting. SASP annually hosts the Student Research Forum during the APA convention. The Student Research Forum provides graduate students with an opportunity to network, present original research, and learn from a luminary in the field of school psychology. This past year, Dr. Katie Eklund provided a very informative presentation on "Population-based approaches for addressing the mental health needs of all students." Currently, SASP's returning Convention Chair, Maribeth Wicoff (East Carolina University), is hard at work planning another outstanding Student Research Forum. SASP invites you to attend the Student Research Forum at the next APA convention this summer in Denver, Colorado!

SASP also organizes and oversees a very successful Diversity Mentoring Program. The Diversity Mentoring Program connects graduate students with professionals outside of their own graduate program who share common interests related to diversity. The program provides opportunities for mentors and mentees to communicate regarding relevant professional issues related to diversity and multiculturalism, collaborate on research or other professional activities, and develop a lasting professional relationship. At present, there are 32 mentor/mentee pairs. For those interested in participating in the program as a mentee or mentor, please contact Isoken Adodo (University of Arizona), SASP's current Diversity Affairs Chair, at ipadodo@email.arizona.edu.

In conjunction with the Diversity Mentoring Program, SASP grants annual Diversity Scholarships with funds generously provided by APA Division 16. The Diversity Scholarships support SASP members from underrepresented cultural backgrounds in the field of school psychology. SASP offers three awards, two incoming student awards of \$500 and one advanced student award of \$1,000. Award winners are invited to attend the SRF and present a poster highlighting their research interests in diversity issues. Melanie Nelson (University of British Columbia) is this year's Advanced Award Winner. Melanie is an Indigenous woman from the Smith family of the Samahquam Band (In-SHUCK-ch Nation) and the Jimmie family of the Squiala Band (Sto:lo Nation). Raul Palacios, a Mexican-American graduate student in the Ph.D. School Psychology Program at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, and Chaturai Ranmali Illapperuma, a Sri Lankan graduate student in the Ph.D. School Psychology Program at Mississippi State University are this year's Incoming Award Winners. For more information on the SASP Diversity Scholarship, please visit the formal award page [here](#).

SASP is also proud to produce and disseminate a quarterly periodical, From Science to Practice to Policy (FSPP). FSPP serves as a platform for informing the membership of relevant activities, opportunities, and resources; promoting and disseminating graduate student scholarship; sharing valuable training experiences; exchanging information and opinions on critical issues within the discipline; and propagating scientific and applied insights from current professionals. To accomplish these aims, FSPP features diverse columns authored by graduate students, interns, faculty, and practitioners. FSPP publishes a wide-range of pieces, including original empirical research, research reviews, lessons from the field, book reviews, interviews with leaders in the field of school

psychology, and more. This past year, the publication emphasized and addressed social justice issues in school psychology and published its first special issue, which focused on School Mental Health. For more information on FSPP and manuscript submission guidelines, please visit [this page](#). You can also contact the current Editor Jacqueline Canonaco (University of Wisconsin – Madison) at jacqueline.canonaco@gmail.com or Editor-Elect Sarah Babcock (University of California – Santa Barbara) at sbabcock@education.ucsb.edu.

In the year ahead, SASP is excited to be partnering with the American Psychological Association of Graduate Students (APAGS) and Division 16 leadership to help end the internship crisis. SASP will contribute to efforts aimed at raising awareness of how the internship crisis specifically impacts students in school psychology doctoral programs and advocating for the creation of additional APA-accredited school-based internship programs, such as the programs receiving support through the [Division 16 Grant Program for School Psychology Internships](#). To this end, SASP is currently collecting short video testimonials from graduate students in school psychology sharing why they believe it is important for school psychologists to obtain an accredited internship. If you would like to participate in this advocacy initiative, please contact SASP President Aaron Haddock (University of California – Santa Barbara) at ahaddock@education.ucsb.edu.

In sum, APA Division 16's Student Affiliates in School Psychology is thriving and actively pursuing its mission to support school psychology graduate students and advance the field. If you are interested in getting more involved with SASP, please visit [our website](#) or reach out to one of the current SASP Executive Board members. We look forward to hearing from you!



PEOPLE AND PLACES

BY ARA J. SCHMITT, PH.D. (DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY)

The University of Northern Colorado school psychology program is excited to welcome **David Hulac**, PhD and **Nicholas Young**, PhD to the faculty. Dr. Hulac joins us from the University of South Dakota, where he was an associate professor. He received his PhD in School Psychology from the University of Northern Colorado, is President-Elect of the Trainers of School Psychologists, and he will serve as the Chair of the APA Division 16 conference in Denver in 2016. His scholarly work focuses on response to intervention for academic and behavior problems. Young completed his PhD in School Psychology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and he is completing a post-doctoral fellowship at the Pediatric Mental Health Institute at Children's Hospital Colorado. His primary research interests center on interventions for children with academic and behavioral difficulties, as well as professional judgment/data-based decision making using Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) as a conceptual framework. We are so pleased Hulac and Young have chosen to join us at UNC, and we look forward to working with them!

Ronald S. Palomares, PhD, Senior Associate at Elisabeth Scheffer & Associates, LLC and assistant professor at Texas Woman's University, was awarded the Texas Psychological Association's 2015 Award for Outstanding Service to the Public for his "public service work with children and families in third world countries and his commitment to help people live a better life." Dr. Palomares spent five weeks in Nepal (July-Aug, 2015) providing psychological first aid to students, families, and staff at an orphanage in response to the country's two devastating earthquakes. He then conducted several Psychological First Aid and PTSD "train the trainer" workshops in South Sudan (Nov 2015) for teachers, nurses, and midwives to help them expand the reach of psychological services in that country as it works to rise from over fifty years of civil war.

Michael Tansy, PhD, has begun a two-year term as the President of the American Board of Professional Psychology. Shelley Pelletier is the ABPP School Psychology Specialty Board of Trustees Representative. Additionally, Dr. Tansy has been elected to the APA Committee on Professional Practice and Standards (COPPS) for a term from 2016 through 2018.

Dr. **Kevin McGrew** (Institute for Applied Psychometrics; University of Minnesota) is starting year three as the intelligence theory and testing consultant for a four-year project to develop the first ever individually administered, nationally normed, CHC-theory based, measure of intelligence for Indonesian children from ages 6-19. He has been working since 2014 with the [Dharma Bermakna Foundation](#) and the [Universitas Gadjah Mada](#) (UGM) on the development of the Indonesian AJT Cognitive Assessment project. Test development has been completed and national standardization is commencing the first quarter of 2016. In its current form the AJT assessment battery will be one of the most comprehensive measures of human intelligence in the world.

Baylor University's School Psychology program is pleased to announce that it now offers training at the doctoral level in addition to its NASP-approved specialist level training. The doctoral program offers specialized training in developmental disabilities and advanced methods for research and data analysis. **Kristin Mainor**, Ed.S., director of the behavioral and educational services at the Baylor Center for Developmental Disabilities, won the Outstanding School Psychologist (Specialist Level) award from the Texas Association of School Psychologists (TASP) at the 2015 TASP convention. Ms. Mainor earned her specialist degree from Baylor University in 2010 and is

currently enrolled in Baylor's doctoral program. **Allen Mom** won the Outstanding Graduate Student (Specialist Level) award from the Texas Association of School Psychologists (TASP) at the 2015 TASP convention. Mr. Mom is a student in the specialist degree program at Baylor University and is currently completing his internship at the Linn Benton Lincoln Education Service District (Albany, OR).

The Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology at Rutgers University has awarded Dr. **Carol Lidz** the 2015 Peterson Prize for an extraordinary career spanning service in the schools, high level administration, scholarly publishing, and international consulting and lecturing.

The School Psychology program at Kent State University is pleased to announce that Dr. **Kizzy Albritton** has joined our program as an Assistant Professor. Dr. Albritton received her Ph.D. in School Psychology from Georgia State University. Her research examines the role of school psychologists in early childhood settings to prevent later academic failure for students from ethnic minority backgrounds. Specifically, Dr. Albritton's research explores school-based consultation models to increase early language and literacy skills in preschool-age children and the implementation benefits and challenges of Response to Intervention (RtI) frameworks in early childhood settings. We are delighted with the addition of Dr. Albritton as a faculty member in our school psychology doctoral and educational specialist training programs.



See Yourself & Colleagues Here!

Please send items for next issue's "People & Places" to [Ara Schmitt](#).

Suitable information includes personal accomplishments within the field, such as hires, professional awards, and other recognitions. Similarly, let us know about the accomplishments of your program or institution (e.g., gaining accreditation status). Finally, please let us know about relevant program creations—such as training programs, internship sites, post-doctoral positions, and so forth.

Information that promotes products or services is not suited for "People & Places," but may be shared via Division 16's paid advertising options (please contact [Greg Machek](#) for more information).

DIVISION 16 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The following elected officials have been selected by Division 16 membership to serve leadership roles for the specified terms.

Office	Term	Name	Contact Information
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AUTHOR'S INSTRUCTIONS & PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

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

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



For more information about submissions and/or advertising, please e-mail or write to:

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To be considered in an upcoming issue, please note the following deadlines:

Spring Issue: Approximate publication Date - June 1st; Submission Deadline - April 15th

Fall Issue: Approximate publication Date - September 15th; Submission Deadline - August 1st

Winter Issue: Approximate publication Date - January 15th; Submission Deadline - December 1st

