

# Position Statement

---

## EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

The National Association of School Psychologists believes that services for young children should be coordinated, prevention-oriented and relevant to all young children, and grounded in evidence-based practice. NASP believes services should be linked to important goals for all young children and evaluated for effectiveness on a routine basis to ensure children, programs, and systems of care are making meaningful progress toward those goals. NASP recognizes that important skills in early childhood often bridge multiple developmental domains (social, motor, communication, cognitive, and early academic) and therefore emphasizes the identification of functional and generative skills that can be assessed and targeted for intervention across a number of contexts relevant to the everyday lives of children (Slentz & Hyatt, 2008). NASP also recognizes that important cultural and linguistic differences exist that may alter skill sequences, family priorities, and decisions about what skills require intervention.

### FOCUS ON ALL YOUNG CHILDREN

The National Association of School Psychologists believes in the importance of quality experiences for all young children and supports:

- Policies, programs, and funding to increase universal access to high-quality education and care experiences, provide support for caregivers, and promote health, safety, and development for all children.
- An active and highly collaborative role for school psychologists in early education and care settings that results in innovative approaches to assessment and intervention for all children.
- Communication systems that promote sharing information between early education settings and kindergarten programs to prepare young children for formal schooling and to prepare schools to meet the diverse needs of young children and families (Carlton & Winsler, 1999).
- Models of education that focus on quality experiences prior to kindergarten and seamless service as children transition to kindergarten, facilitated by coordination of curriculum, instruction, and services between the early education and the K–12 setting (Bogard & Takanishi, 2005).
- Partnerships with families and communities to support young children through the transition from early education to the K–12 setting and to encourage families continued engagement in their child's education.

### EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

Response-to-Intervention frameworks (RTI; VanDerheyden & Snyder, 2006), general outcome measurement systems (Fuchs & Deno, 1991), and tiered models of intervention (Hemmeter, Ostrosky, & Fox, 2006) provide a foundation for the practice of school psychology in early care and education. In promoting Response-to-Intervention frameworks in early care and education settings school psychologists should:

- Collaborate with early educators and families to identify instructional foci that reflect important learning goals for all children (e.g., early literacy and numeracy, social competence).
- Assist in implementing a scientific framework for interpreting rate of skill development relative to expectations or criteria for growth.
- Promote a systems-level approach to considering the development of *all* children to ensure that children make gains and those who do not make gains receive support that effectively accelerates their growth.

General outcome measurement systems hold promise for use, and there is increasing evidence to support the use of general outcome measurement systems in early education and care settings (VanDerHeyden, 2005). School psychologists should:

- Assist early educators and administrators to establish valued goals for learning and development and to identify benchmark criteria against which to compare child skill proficiency and growth.
- Lead teams to design and collect general outcome measurement data for all children to make data-based decisions about children’s programming needs.
- Work with early educators to implement progress monitoring systems and use data to inform instruction and intervention to accelerate the progress of all children (Bagnato, 2005).
- Aid kindergarten teachers to use data to plan instruction to accommodate diverse learners as they enter kindergarten.

Tiered models of intervention provide a flexible yet comprehensive structure for meeting the diverse needs of young children. At each tier (e.g., universal, targeted, individualized), school psychologists can collaborate with early educators and families to promote supports that integrate developmentally appropriate learning perspectives with intentional and strategic structured learning experiences.

- At the primary or universal level, school psychologists can assist early educators to identify behaviors essential for school readiness, develop a plan to teach and reinforce those behaviors, and create positive environments that support those behaviors. School psychologists should assist schools in selecting and evaluating instructional and curricula models to ensure adequate opportunities for skill building.
- At the secondary or targeted level, school psychologists should assist teachers and care providers to implement small-group and peer-mediated interventions to increase opportunities for learning for children at-risk.
- At the tertiary or individualized level, school psychologists should guide the collection of individualized data to identify interventions that should effectively solve a problem, evaluate implementation of the intervention, and evaluate the effects of the intervention over time. Interventions grounded in applied behavior analysis have a strong evidence base in early intervention and provide a rich source of intervention strategies for school psychologists. School psychologists should actively collaborate with classroom teachers to modify interventions to increase their use, ecological congruence (e.g., similarity to classroom routines), sustainability over time, and acceptability to parents and teachers.

## **EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Accountability should occur at individual, service program, and system levels. To ensure quality of services at all levels, the National Association of School Psychologists supports:

- The inclusion of all children in evaluation and accountability efforts.
- Meaningful participation of all stakeholders, particularly families, in identifying valued goals for children, monitoring progress toward goals, and evaluating outcomes.
- The use of a data-based decision-making framework to facilitate sound decision making and increase communication among stakeholders regarding children’s progress toward important goals.
- Formative or responsive assessment practices that inform timely and meaningful changes in service delivery to maximize positive outcomes for all children.
- Coordinated professional development that focuses on evidence-based practices in assessment, instruction, and intervention.

To promote evaluation and accountability efforts that are likely to result in improved outcomes for all young children, school psychologists can assist in collecting, analyzing, and using data to inform service delivery at the individual, program, and system levels. Specifically, school psychologists should:

- Coordinate assessment and evaluation efforts.
- Actively engage families in assessment and intervention efforts.
- Identify appropriate targets for measurement in the context of school readiness.
- Promote the use of systems of measurement that are sensitive to growth over time and that inform instruction and intervention.
- Assist with monitoring progress of individual children as well as large groups of children to evaluate growth at different levels.
- Provide professional development, teacher support, and technical assistance in data-based decision making (i.e., methods of data collection, creating, and interpreting graphs, linking data to programmatic changes).
- Work with families and educators to use data to evaluate outcomes at individual, program, and systems levels and to make changes accordingly.

## **SUMMARY**

The National Association of School Psychologists believes that school psychologists should be active partners in early education and care settings. Such work fits with NASP’s Strategic Plan goals to enhance professional competency and advocacy for all children. School psychologists can collaborate with early educators to create supportive learning environments for all children, effectively promote the identification of children needing intervention, assist with planning and implementation of interventions in the classroom and home setting, and evaluation of intervention effects. Further, school psychologists can provide leadership to evaluate the effects of assessment and intervention efforts at the program level to promote learning for all young children and prevent early and future learning deficits for children found to be at risk.

## **REFERENCES**

- Bagnato, S. J. (2005). The authentic alternative for assessment in early childhood: An emerging evidence-based practice. *Journal of Early Intervention, 28*, 17–22.
- Bogard, K., & Takanishi, R. (2005). *PK-3: An aligned and coordinated approach to education for children 3 to 8 years old* (Social Policy Report No. 19-3). Society for Research in Child Development.

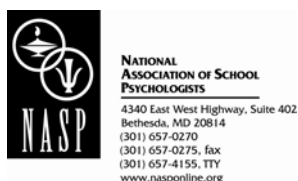
- Carlton, M. P., & Winsler, A. (1999). School readiness: The need for a paradigm shift. *School Psychology Review, 28*, 338–352.
- Fuchs, L. S., & Deno, S. L. (1991). Paradigmatic distinctions between instructionally relevant measurement models. *Exceptional Children, 57*, 488–500.
- Hemmeter, M. L., Ostrosky, M., & Fox, L. (2006). Social and emotional foundations for early learning: A conceptual model for intervention. *School Psychology Review, 35*, 583–601.
- Slentz, K. L., & Hyatt, K. J. (2008). Best practices in applying curriculum-based assessment in early childhood. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.) *Best practices in school psychology V* (pp. 519–534). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.
- VanDerHeyden, A. M. (2005). Intervention-driven assessment practices in early childhood/early intervention: Measuring what is possible rather than what is present. *Journal of Early Intervention, 28*, 28–33.
- VanDerHeyden, A. M., & Snyder, P. (2006). Integrating frameworks from early childhood intervention and school psychology to accelerate growth for all young children. *School Psychology Review, 35*, 519–534.

Adopted by the NASP Delegate Assembly on July 20, 2008.

Please cite this document as:

National Association of School Psychologists. (2008). *Early childhood services* (Position Statement). Bethesda, MD: Author.

© 2008 National Association of School Psychologists, 4340 East West Highway, Suite 402, Bethesda, MD 20814





For over 100 years,  
preparing children for success

2707 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96826

Phone: (808) 941-9414  
Fax: (808) 946-1468

[www.kcaapreschools.org](http://www.kcaapreschools.org)



March 24, 2014

To: Senator David Y. Ige, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair  
Committee on Ways and Means

From: Christina Cox, President  
KCAA Preschools of Hawaii

Subject: HB 2276, HD1, SD1 Relating to Early Childhood Education

KCAA Preschools of Hawaii was established in 1895 by the Woman's Board of Missions to serve the children of immigrant workers. We serve over 900 children per year in 7 NAEYC accredited preschools on Oahu. More than 50% of our students are low-income and over 80% go on to attend DOE elementary schools. We manage tuition subsidies from 7 different sources, each with its own set of requirements. We have a \$7 million annual operating budget with 130 employees. This past year, KCAA completed the construction of Hawaii's first professional development center for early educators at a cost of \$3.2 million. It is located on our Mother Rice campus in Moiliili. The Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Center for Early Education and Development was funded exclusively by private businesses and Hawaii's dedicated philanthropic community. KCAA's Board was instrumental in this effort and is committed to working with the State, the DOE, UH and Chaminade University as well as the early education community to increase the number of qualified teachers, to improve their practice and to improve outcomes for Hawaii's *keiki*.

**Please note that while I presently serve as the center-based program provider representative on the Early Learning Advisory Board and also serve as the Liaison for the Childcare Business Coalition of Hawaii which represents more than 90 centers throughout the State I am testifying in support of the intent of this measure today as the President of KCAA Preschools of Hawaii, a position that I have held for the past 13 years.**

There has never been more research to document the rate of return on investment made by states than there is today. *Bloomberg Businessweek* published an article in the January 16, 2014 edition citing the findings of James Heckman, Professor of Economics at the University of Chicago and 2000 Nobel Laureate in Economics: *The bottom line: Heckman calculates that early education spending yields an annual lifetime "return to society" of up to 10%. The earlier a child gets help, the better the results through each stage of education.*"

ATHERTON - KAILUA

KUAPA - HAWAII KAI

LAURA MORGAN - KAPALAMA HEIGHTS

MOTHER RICE - MOILILI

MURIEL - KAKAAKO

NA LEI - KALIHI

WAI-KAHALA - KAHALA



- Early experiences have a decisive impact on the actual architecture of the brain and on the nature and extent of adult capacities.
- By the time children from middle-income families are in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade they know about 12,000 words compared to low income children who know just 4,000 words, one third as many as their peers. This gap begins in the early years and research has repeatedly confirmed that early education makes all the difference in school success.

While clearly all children benefit from a high quality early learning experience, a report issued this past September from the Brookings Institution makes the following observations:

*Expanding access to preschool programs, as advocated in President Obama's "Preschool for All" initiative, would have positive effects on the preschool enrollment of all 4-year olds, but if access is free regardless of income, it could lead many children to switch out of the private system and into the public program. This "crowd-out" should be an important consideration as states would have to decide on the level of cost-sharing for middle-class families.* The study also found that the children from lower-income families had the most significant academic gains. Hawaii should take heed of these findings as we move forward, working to leverage State dollars and existing community resources.

The recently approved 2014 Omnibus Budget includes additional funding for low-income children in multiple forms; of most interest are the "Pre-K Development Grants" which will be jointly administered by the DOE and HHS. As one of the last states to develop a state-funded prek program Hawaii is referred to as a **remedial State**, a special category was created for us! We should embrace this as an opportunity to move forward.

Hawaii should use the fact that we are one of the last states to adopt a state-funded pre-k program to our benefit. **We have learned from other states that those that have developed mixed delivery systems that prioritize limited tax payer dollars to support preschool access for low-income children and that both blend and braid federal and state dollars to support the development of higher quality programs are those that truly improve educational outcomes for low-income children!**

The philanthropic community has a history of supporting both public and private education in Hawaii. It is poised to support the State's efforts to create a high quality mixed-delivery system, one that works in partnership with the DOE. We all have something to bring to the table and we are confident that together we can build capacity and strengthen our future workforce.

While it is true that the need to pass a Constitutional amendment adds a layer of complexity to this effort, I believe that it can be done and that this bill is a good first step.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.