



2017

**PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
MANUAL**



Mission

Building a world-class school system through education, collaboration and innovation.

Vision

RCSS will create a world-class, globally competitive school system where all students will graduate and are college/career ready.

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PREFACE

The information presented in this manual is intended to familiarize school psychologists with policies and procedures relevant to their work within the Richmond County School System. The school psychologist is responsible for having a clear understanding of the contents of this manual. Any staff member having questions concerning the policies or procedures contained within this manual should contact the Director of Psychological Services for clarification.

The manual is also intended to assist those working with school psychologists in understanding the policies and procedures of the Department of Psychological Services. In addition, it should assist private practitioners, who provide services to children in Richmond County, by enabling them to coordinate their evaluations and reports in addressing children's needs.

This manual can be accessed online at www.rcboe.org.

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Mission of Psychological Services

To become a preeminent department of psychological services working proactively and cooperatively with schools, families, and the community; to aid in the development of healthy, productive, and self-sufficient students; and to promote the delivery of comprehensive and ethical psychological services within the school environment.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES PROGRAM

Psychological Services provides consultation, information regarding research based interventions, behavior management, assessment, diagnosis, and short-term counseling for students enrolled in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. The school psychologist functions as a member of the total educational team in the schools assigned to him/her and on department and system-wide committees.

Consultation, assessment, and identification of learning/behavior problems are the core functions of Psychological Services. Consultation services are provided for teachers, parents, and administrators to assist them in the development and adjustment of interventions and strategies that enable them to meet the needs of **all** students in general education, bilingual education, special education, and alternative education. In addition, the school psychologist completes a comprehensive evaluation of intellectual, personality/emotional adjustment, academic achievement, and learning styles of students for whom an evaluation for special education consideration is requested.

The school psychologist is an integral part of the collaborative effort of the RTI/SST process and should serve as a consultant to each school's leadership team.

Each psychologist is responsible for providing his/her cluster of schools the consultative and assessment services that will assist the students to be successful academically and socially. Each cluster is made up of 4 to 5 schools depending on the size and case load of the schools assigned. Although school psychologists each have an office at the RCSS Central Office, they are considered to be school based staff because they spend approximately 80% of their time working directly in the schools.

Psychologists also serve on system-wide as well as school level teams (e.g., Leadership Teams) and may assist in program planning.

Psychologists may also serve as mentors for internship/practicum students from school psychology programs in university settings.

Psychologists often are a liaison between a school or parent and a local agency such as Mental Health or local hospitals.

School Psychology as a Profession

School psychologists help children and youth succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. They collaborate with educators, parents, and other professionals to create safe, healthy, and

supportive learning environments for all students that strengthen connections between home and school. School psychologists are highly trained in both psychology and education.

There are different levels of certification in School Psychology in Georgia. The "entry level" is generally considered to be the Sixth Year or Specialist level. They must complete a school psychology degree program (60 graduate semester credits) that includes a 1200-hour internship and emphasizes preparation in the following: data-based decision making, consultation and collaboration, effective instruction, child development, student diversity and development, school organization, prevention, intervention, mental health, learning styles, behavior, research, and program evaluation. This is the "Associate School Psychologist" level of certification or S-6. Those who complete doctoral level programs, including a year-long internship, are designated as a "School Psychologist". This is the S-7 level of certification.

Those who have only completed a Masters level training program in School Psychology hold the S-5 certificate which is currently non-renewable. This is generally considered a limited certificate and it is assumed that the individual will pursue a higher level of training within a designated period of time. However, some individuals were grandfathered in and have a renewable certificate at this level.

School psychologists must be certified and/or licensed by the state in which they work. They also may be nationally certified by the NCSP Board of NASP and/or licensed as a Psychologist (Doctoral level) by the State Board of Examiners.

What School Psychologists Do

School psychologists work to find the best solution for each student and situation, through consultation, observation and/or evaluation; they use different strategies to address student needs and to improve school and district-wide support systems.

School psychologists work with students individually and in groups. They also train teachers and parents about effective teaching and learning strategies, techniques to manage behavior at home and in the classroom, working with students with disabilities or with special talents, and preventing and managing crises.

Richmond County School System Responsibilities of School Psychologists

It should be noted that most of the information comes directly from the school psychologist job description in the RCSS Human Resources Department.

1. Serve as a consultant on RTI/SST committees, providing intervention strategies (school and home), data collection methods, and assisting with evaluating the effectiveness of the interventions implemented (*)
2. Provide direct support to teachers by assisting in universal screeners, benchmarks, baseline data, CBA/CBM results, state mandated assessments, and other measures to determine individual needs of students as well as assist in monitoring schools' attainment of AYP objectives
3. Conduct screenings and comprehensive psycho-educational evaluations to determine ability levels, academic achievement, social-emotional/behavioral issues, learning styles, adaptive behavior, visual-motor development, etc. to assist in designing interventions for the classroom/home and/or special education (*)
4. Provide timely crisis intervention support to students, faculty and administrators (*)
5. Conduct classroom observations to assist in monitoring interventions, collecting/analyzing data to assist in determining effectiveness and/or need for higher levels of interventions (Pyramid of Interventions) (*)
6. Collaborate with Special Education by participating in eligibility/staffing meetings and redetermination meetings to present findings of psycho-educational evaluations, assist in determining needs, assist in developing academic/behavioral/emotional interventions (*)
7. Serve as a liaison/referral source for students to community agencies that provide assistance to children and families, with the consent of the child's family
8. Serve on departmental, school and system-wide steering committees as needed
9. Participate in organizing, planning, and implementing professional learning activities for teachers and other school personnel/parents that will improve learning, social skills and personal adjustment in all children and adolescents (*)
10. Update knowledge and skills and continue to grow professionally through reading relevant research, attending local and/or national conferences, participating in in-service/professional learning activities, etc. (*)
11. Become familiar with and stay abreast of the laws regarding special education and the Georgia Rules and Regulations, etc. (*)
12. Provide individual and/or group counseling in conjunction with the guidance counselors, teacher request, and parents
13. Design and consult on individualized instructional interventions using diagnostic teaching to determine the need for more intensive support.
14. Provide leadership and assistance to facilitate differentiated instruction and insure that interventions are delivered with integrity at the appropriate level of intensity, and of adequate duration.
15. Orchestrate progress monitoring, data plotting, and evaluation effectiveness of interventions; design modifications to ineffective interventions; utilize targeted diagnostic assessment tools for the purpose of aiding in intervention development and improving educational outcomes.

16. Provide instructional and behavioral consultation for smaller groups of students who are falling below their peers
17. Develop and evaluate targeted interventions for students not achieving at benchmark levels; orchestrate progress monitoring, data plotting, and evaluation of effectiveness of interventions; design modifications to ineffective interventions' utilize targeted diagnostic assessment tools for the purpose of aiding in intervention development (*)
18. The employee shall carry out such other and further duties, whether specifically listed above or not, as are assigned or required by such employee's supervisor, other appropriate school personnel, law, board policy, administrative regulation, department handbook, as are reasonably necessary to efficient operation of the school system and its mission.

(*) This is considered an essential duty.

Psychological Services Personnel

The staff currently consists of the Coordinator, and includes funding for thirteen full-time psychologists, the RtI Program Specialist, and two secretaries. Each psychologist is assigned to a cluster of 4 to 5 schools and is responsible for building and maintaining a good consultative relationship with the school personnel and providing services to students, teachers, parents, and administrators. Each full-time psychologist serves a student population of approximately 2,500 students. Each cluster is designed such that the psychologist is as close as possible to each of their schools in case they are needed quickly. Also, an effort is made to evenly distribute case loads.

Employment in Psychological Services

Employment

Psychological Services' staff on a twelve-month contract work 248 days each year and earn 1 vacation day for each month worked. They also earn 1 ¼ sick leave days per month. Three of these sick leave days can be taken as Personal Leave. If not used, these days carry over as sick leave.

Ten and eleven month staff members do not earn vacation time, but do earn sick leave days (1 ¼ per month) and can take three days of Personal Leave each year. If not used, these days carry over as sick leave. (Please refer to District policies regarding all types of employee leave.)

Salary

Certified staff members' salaries are based on the teacher's salary schedule, years of experience, level of training (degree earned), and contract length. There is also a small local supplement.

Procedures for Personnel Evaluation

School psychologists are evaluated on an annual basis according to aspects of the Georgia School Psychologist Evaluation Instrument (GSPEI) and Duties and Responsibilities Instrument (DRI) or through a similar method. Each school psychologist is observed during either a parent conference to review test results, eligibility meeting or an RTI/SST meeting where test results are reviewed. The evaluation for psychologists will also include a Psychological Evaluation Rating to evaluate the quality of psychological reports and a General Duties and Responsibilities Rubric which addresses how the psychologist conducts themselves in various situations and follows the standards set by the profession (See Appendix A).

All other staff members are also evaluated on an annual basis. Any grievances should follow existing District policies.

Continuing Professional Growth

All certified staff members are expected to annually review their needs for professional growth experiences. In addition, they must meet certification requirements set by the state and district to continue their employment. Job-embedded professional learning can be obtained by attending local or national association meetings such as the Georgia Association of School Psychologists (GASP) or the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) conferences, for professional learning activities implemented in Psychological Services based on needs identified by the Coordinator and/or staff member, and through independent study. Any questions regarding professional learning should be addressed to the Coordinator.

Professional Standards

School Psychologists must adhere to the ethical standards of the profession as set forth by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and/or the Georgia Association of School Psychologists (GASP). All staff members are expected to follow the Georgia Code of Professional Ethics.

Professional Organizations

It is strongly suggested that each psychologist belong to a state or national association as part of their professional responsibility in order to stay abreast of new developments (i.e., research) in the field as well as the professional standards.

Departmental Responsibilities/Requirements

Work Hours

The workday for certified staff members shall be 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. including a 30 minute lunch. However, if an assignment requires a psychologist to be at a work location other than the Central Office for an entire workday, they may leave when the teachers are dismissed (e.g., at a “7:30 a.m. school” they may leave at 3:30 p.m. if they began their day at 7:30 a.m.)

Mileage Reimbursement

When a staff members' official duties require use of a private automobile for travel within the county, they are eligible for reimbursement at the maximum mileage established by the Richmond County Board of Education. The current rate is .535 cents per mile. This rate may vary. Mileage is not reimbursed for daily travel to and from the employees' home.

Timelines for Psychological Reports

In order to ensure that services are provided in a timely manner, timelines have been established for evaluations. When an Initial evaluation is requested, it should be completed and the report written (at least a draft) within 50 calendar days from the date that the school received the signed parental consent for evaluation form. It should be noted that calendar days are not counted when school is out for 5 consecutive days or more. Timelines for Eligibility Redeterminations may vary depending on date due and date received by Psychological Services.

Psychological Services Log

Certified staff members are to keep a log which contains the names of children tested, date of evaluation, as well as other services provided in the schools. This log is updated weekly and submitted to the secretary electronically or in print form on the last working day of the week. This information is compiled annually to submit to the GADOE each June. This form can be found in Appendix B.

Weekly Schedule

Each certified staff member is required to submit a weekly schedule indicating where they expect to be during the week, so that they can be contacted quickly if there is a school system or personal emergency necessitating contacting them. This schedule is to be submitted with the log on the last working day of the week.

PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING NEEDS OF AT-RISK STUDENTS

Response to Intervention (RtI)/ Student Support Team (SST)

The Psychological Services Department is responsible for collaborating with the many offices and departments of this school system to implement the RtI/SST process in all our schools.

RtI/SST is an individualized, comprehensive process, utilizing a problem-solving framework to identify and address student academic and behavioral difficulties using effective, efficient, research-based instruction. Successful implementation of this model depends on critical planning to establish an environment that thrives on data-driven collaboration among professionals invested in the continuous improvement of instructional skills and student achievement. The department provides ongoing support to this effort by serving directly on RtI/SST teams, providing training to leadership teams and teachers, and helping insure that any referrals from the team are complete and clearly describe (with adequate data) the interventions used and the outcomes of all interventions.

Note: Please refer to the Psychological Services Response to Intervention/Student Support Team Manual located on the www.rcboe.org website under Psychological Services.

Types of Evaluations Used with General Education Students

There are three primary types of evaluations of a student. These include:

Screening/Brief Evaluation

These are used as part of the RtI/SST process to determine cognitive, achievement or behavioral/emotional strengths and weaknesses. This testing can vary from an hour or more, depending on the request from the RtI/SST team. In either case, vision and hearing must be checked (and passed) and consent for screening must be obtained before any testing can begin. A copy of the screening referral packet is only sent to Psychological Services and not also to Special Education.

Comprehensive Evaluation

These provide information in a number of areas of functioning to further highlight skill and performance deficits and/or assist in determining eligibility/need for special education services. Once interventions have been implemented with fidelity and ongoing progress monitoring demonstrates that a child's academic and/or behavioral problems have not improved as a result of interventions, the team may decide to conduct a comprehensive psycho-educational evaluation. The decision to evaluate a student should not be taken lightly, as it is part of the process of possibly identifying a student as having a disability and in possible need of services from a special education program. In a comprehensive evaluation the student will be assessed in all areas of suspected disability. Before requesting a comprehensive evaluation, the following steps must be followed:

- Intervention strategies must have been implemented and documented
- Progress Monitoring must have taken place to track the student's response to intervention(s) over time
- Patterns of response to the intervention and levels of support needed to maintain progress must be considered before making a referral for testing

For students who present with obvious disabilities (e.g., severe cognitive impairment, sensory impairment or severe emotional/behavioral difficulties), an evaluation may be requested concurrently with the development and implementation of interventions. (Please refer to the Georgia Department of Education 2011 Student Support Team (SST) manual for further information.)

Before conducting a comprehensive evaluation, the school psychologist must determine that the initial request for evaluation packet is complete and that a vision and hearing screening has been conducted by the School Nurse. A consent must be obtained prior to having a vision and hearing screening conducted by the School Nurse. Vision and hearing must be passed (20/40 or better near point vision and no more than one frequency error in either ear) to continue the referral process. The school psychologist then initials and dates the consent for evaluation form and all materials are sent (or delivered) to Psychological Services AND Special Education. Under no circumstances should a blank Parental Consent for evaluation form ever be given. At a minimum, the student's name must be printed in the correct space on the consent prior to having a parent/guardian sign it. The Handbook on Parent's Rights should also be given to the parent along with the consent. Referral packets should be received at Psychological Services and Special Education within 5 business days of the consent being received by school personnel.

Parent Requests for Evaluation

These will be honored if the parent and RtI/SST believe that their child has a disability or may require special education services to be successful in school. In these cases, the parental consent is signed and vision and hearing are checked. The request is then sent in to Psychological Services and Special Education. While the evaluation process is taking place, the school should continue to implement interventions and collect data to assist with the eligibility determination after the testing has been completed.

It should be noted that there may be times that a parent request for testing results only a screening being necessary. In this case only a consent for screening is obtained and no copies are sent to Special Education.

Withdrawal of Consent

There may be times when a parent chooses to withdraw consent for an evaluation after previously consenting to it. In such cases the following guidelines should be followed:

- Document the request for withdrawing the consent in the Psychological Services file along with the date and name of the parent making the request. Then forward this information to appropriate personnel in the Special Education Department.

Request a written confirmation from the parent that the evaluation is no longer desired. (A sample revocation of consent is included in the Appendix C, however, a signed/dated written statement from the parent may suffice.)

If, after two weeks, the written confirmation has not been received, the school should issue a letter to the parent concerning the verbal request to not have the child evaluated. The letter should be sent with return receipt requested. School social work services may also be initiated at this step.

Copies of the letter should be kept with the psychological services folder and special education folder.

The referral for testing should be terminated and no report written, if an official withdrawal of consent is received.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

The school board of the Richmond County School System adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination in the educational environment. Discrimination is the failure to provide students with disabilities the same opportunities to benefit from education programs, services, or activities as are provided to their non-disabled peers. School personnel must ensure that all students receive equal access to all educational opportunities as required by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination against the handicapped.

Occasionally, students determined not eligible for the Special Education (IDEIA) program may be eligible for services under Section 504 if the student is handicapped according to the provisions of Section 504. School psychologists may be called on as members of the RTI/SST to review data and at times participate in Section 504 meetings for the purposes of assisting in the development of accommodations. Students may also be referred for 504 accommodations through the RTI/SST committee. Psychological and/or achievement testing may be requested to assist in determining need for services, although testing is NOT a requirement for Section 504 services. (Please refer to the RCSS Section 504 Manual for additional information.)

GENERAL EVALUATION PROCESS GUIDELINES

General Considerations

General Advocacy

School psychologists are advocates of the child/children; therefore, in situations in which different interests need to be weighed (e.g., the teachers, the parents, or the school administration), the school psychologist should make clear that he/she is representing the interest of the children. In such situations, a clear statement regarding child advocacy should help clear up any possible misunderstanding of the purposes and goals of interventions. It is the school psychologist's responsibility to advocate for the child needing assistance as well as the other children in that child's classroom.

Confidentiality

All information regarding a child, including reports, must be treated with the utmost confidentiality. School psychologists have a professional and ethical responsibility to protect their clients and their evaluation data from inappropriate access.

Test Security

Maintaining test security before and after testing is the direct responsibility of the test purchaser and user. Test administrators must adhere to copyright law and must not reproduce tests or test protocols.

The tests and test materials, including answer documents, scoring reports, and normative tables are copyrighted and may not be reproduced, replicated, or transmitted for any purpose, in whole or part, in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, or be stored in a database or retrieval system without prior written permission by an officer of the publishing company unless the records are specifically subpoenaed by a court of law.

When parents or guardians request copies of the protocol:

The school psychologist should arrange to meet and review the results of the testing. If the parent still insists on a copy of the test protocols, the Director should schedule a subsequent meeting within 45 days of the parent's request to meet with the parents, and anyone else the parent approves (except a lawyer, in which case the BOE Attorney must be present also), to review their respective child's protocol in the presence of the school psychologist. Under only extreme and unusual circumstances (e.g., court ordered) are test protocols to be copied and provided to parents and then only with the approval of the Coordinator.

If protocols need to be provided to an outside licensed psychologist, and a release has been signed by both parties (parent and licensed psychologist), copies may be directly given only to the licensed professional.

Be aware that the contents of the student's psychological folder; including test protocols, reports, and handwritten notes are subject to subpoena by a judge or hearing officer and may also be inspected by parents (Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act).

Standardization

Test examiners should not paraphrase the directions when administering a test, since such practices may invalidate results, unless it is necessary for a particular testing situation, (i.e., multiple disabilities). Strict observation of the testing times for timed tests must be followed.

In the rare instance when the school psychologist deviates from the standardized procedures, the deviation must be noted on the protocol. The written report must also reflect the deviation from standard procedures as well as the reasons why the deviation was deemed necessary.

Appropriate Testing Conditions

Student test scores can be affected by several factors including the setting of the evaluation, eating arrangements and distractions. Schools are required to provide an adequate testing area. If problems arise please discuss with the Coordinator. Below are several suggestions for the testing environment:

- Quiet and free from distractions
- Traffic free area (where other students/staff will not be going through)
- Appropriate size chairs and tables
- Clean area with appropriate lighting
- Adequate ventilation

It is usually a good idea to reserve a room with the school in advance. The media center, guidance department or front office will often be able to provide an adequate testing room.

Computerized Assessment Guidelines

NASP Principles for Professional Ethics states that "school psychologists do not promote or encourage inappropriate use of computer generated test analyses or reports. For example, a school psychologist would not offer an unedited computer report as one's own writing, nor use a computer scoring system for tests in which one has no training. They select scoring and interpretation services on the basis of accuracy and professional alignment with the underlying decision rules." (National Association of School Psychologist: Professional Conduct Manual, Principles for Professional Ethics Guidelines for the Provision of School Psychological Services, 2000, Page 30)

Under no circumstances will an unedited computer generated report be submitted as a final copy.

The school psychologist is responsible for the final report and his/her initials indicate agreement with the contents of the report, including any erroneous statements.

Use of the Standard Error of Measurement (SEM) on Tests of Intelligence.

The SEM should be applied only to the Full Scale Scores or the equivalent (e.g., IQ Composite, General Conceptual Ability, etc.), utilizing the SEM provided by the publisher and is required to be reported for cases involving IQ scores in the Intellectual Disability range.

Requests for Testing from Other Agencies, Physicians, or the Tribunal Panel.

All requests for testing from outside agencies or the Tribunal panel should be referred to the RTI/SST team and follow the normal steps, to include implementing interventions, unless these are already in place and there is ample data to show that a referral for testing is appropriate.

Evaluations Completed by Outside Agencies or Practitioner.

Parents always have the right to obtain private evaluations at their own expense. The special education eligibility team will consider all information a parent provides to the school. However, parents should be made aware that a private evaluation can only be used for placement if it is conducted by a licensed school psychologist or licensed psychologist. Furthermore, parents should inquire if the private practitioner is familiar with the Special Education Rules and Regulations. A release form for these types of evaluation can be found in Appendix D.

Dual practicing RCSS school psychologists are not to place themselves in a situation that creates a conflict of interest for a client or the system in which he/she is employed. Therefore they are not to complete an evaluation for students attending any public or private school in Richmond County.

Independent Educational Evaluations (IEE)

Occasionally, a parent will not agree with an evaluation provided by a RCSS school psychologist. They have the right to request that an independent educational evaluation (IEE) be conducted at public expense. Parents may make the request orally or in writing. Once a parent makes a request for an IEE, this information must be relayed to the Special Education Department. The request will be discussed by the Director of Psychological Services and the Special Education Director to determine if the IEE is warranted.

Summer Testing

Efforts will be made to complete all referrals for testing which are submitted prior to May 1st. Any referrals received on or after May 1st may be considered a summer referral. All supporting documentation (data) and any required checklists (adaptive behavior, social/emotional, etc.) should also be in the referral packet. There are typically 8 or more school psychologists who work during the summer (i.e., 11 or 12 month contracts). Their goal is to attempt to evaluate 4 students each week. Students for summer evaluations are usually selected based upon if their

parent/guardian can provide transportation for them to the RCSS Central Office. However, there are times that psychologists will conduct the evaluation at a school (e.g., if the student is attending summer school).

Transfer Students

Students entering the Richmond County School System from another school district in Georgia with an active IEP and current eligibility will typically be placed in special education based on this data. No additional testing will be requested at this time. If additional testing is determined to be needed by the IEP team at a later date, a request of a re-determination evaluation will be completed and submitted after a vision and hearing screening has been passed. These requests will be considered a re-evaluation.

For students entering our system with an IEP from outside Georgia, the student will be placed in special education provided verification of the student's special education services by the previous school system (IEP) is obtained. If the eligibility does not meet Georgia guidelines, then the IEP team will schedule a 60 day meeting and request a vision and hearing screening. Eligibility and evaluative records will be reviewed by the program specialist upon receipt for compliance under Georgia's Eligibility Rules and Regulations. If the out-of-state eligibility is in compliance with Georgia guidelines, the liaison or school will be notified and the IEP team will reconvene prior to the end date of the current IEP to conduct an annual review.

If, however, that data is missing or inadequate, following the 60 day meeting, the IEP team will submit a complete Eligibility Redetermination packet to include a copy of the vision and hearing screening, signed Permission for Evaluation, Progress Monitoring, Observations, and Analyzed Work Samples. This referral will be treated as an Initial referral and the mandated timelines must be followed.

Test Battery Guidelines

When a comprehensive initial evaluation is requested, the student is assessed using one or more tests in each area related to the **suspected disability**. These tests include, if appropriate, measures of academic performance, adaptive behavior, communication skills, general intelligence, and social/emotional functioning.

A student's level of intellectual functioning is one of the factors in programming and placement decisions for Special Education. This highlights the need for the school psychologist to carefully determine a student's most accurate, documented level of intellectual functioning. When addressing the student's level of intellectual functioning, the school psychologist should take into account the following:

- Native language
- Culture
- School experience

- Appropriateness of test instrument and scores reported
- Significant differences between verbal and performance subscales
- Significant differences between individual subtests

School psychologists can choose from a wide variety of acceptable evaluation instruments. When choosing instruments, school psychologists have a responsibility to utilize instruments that are reliable, valid and that provide the most recently standardized norms using groups that appropriately represent the current population. School psychologists must adhere to the guidelines established by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) regarding the use of obsolete tests.

Consequently, practitioners should expect that new test revisions will be required to be in use within one year of their introduction and availability. Use of older versions should also be disallowed at that time. An exception to this would be use of tests when revised were no longer appropriate for very low functioning students, such as the Slosson Intelligence Test (SIT). In cases where the older test is used, this must be explained in the psychoeducational report.

School psychologists and private licensed psychologists must also be aware of the guidelines for retesting using the same instruments. The guidelines in place specify that the same intellectual assessment instrument should typically not be used to retest a student within one year of the original test date. Exceptions for this guideline should be discussed with the Director prior to the giving the test.

Report Format

Although there is some variation in individual writing and report styles, all reports should present a clear picture of the student in regard to the following areas:

Demographic Information

- Identifying information (name, address, phone number, DOB, school, parent or guardian's name, etc.)
- Date(s) of testing, tests administered

Referral information

(e.g., who referred the student, what were the reasons for the referral, etc.)

Background Information

Using the information provided in the referral packet, the report should reflect:

- Onset and history of the problem
- Pertinent developmental and medical information
- Previous evaluations and dates, identified in chronological order
- Academic history data, attendance, schools attended, standardized test scores

- e. If an initial referral, RTI/SST process and results may be included. This information can be summarized in narrative form.

Vision and Hearing Results

If a student has been prescribed glasses for near point vision, he/she must wear them at the time of testing and this should be documented in the report, as well as any other modifications made due to other sensory (e.g., hearing aids) or motor problems.

Behavioral Observations

Note that observations should clearly describe and possibly interpret the child's behavior during the testing session.

- a. Physical status (should include pertinent data only)
- b. Test behaviors (e.g., eye contact, activity level, relationship to examiner)
- c. Statement of validity and/or reliability of the test results.

Assessment Results

Cognitive, Academic Achievement, Behavior/Socio-Emotional, Adaptive, etc.

- a. Tests Administered (full name spelled out with acronym in parentheses)
- b. Scores are reported, along with the mean and standard deviation of each test/subtest and what the level of performance is as indicated by score should be provided. Scores alone should not be reported without proper explanation. Only findings that are considered to be accurate indicators of a student's abilities or behavior should be interpreted.
- c. Technical terms are explained in such a way to be clear to those who do not have a background in psychometrics.
- d. Results are to be explained in narrative form (e.g., particular instruments and scores are described and results are integrated across the report in light of the referral question/s and observed behavior/s).
- e. Discrepancies in results must be discussed.
- f. Evaluation activities/tests clearly address the referral question.
- g. Strengths or weaknesses are identified if there are sufficient differences using a normative comparison or an intra-individual comparison. Significance of the difference(s) should be explained relative to the norms as well as how rare that difference is for the child's age.

Conclusions/Recommendations

- a. Summary of results focuses on the reason for referral question(s) plus any ancillary issues.
- b. The program needs of the student are addressed; however, there should typically not be any indication of a specific eligibility or placement recommendation. That is the responsibility of the IEP team to determine. However, there may be times when it is appropriate to state that a student warrants consideration for a specific eligibility area/s. It should always be indicated that eligibility decisions are determined by an eligibility team.
- c. Recommendations:
 - 1. Are clear and consistent with the results of the evaluation.

2. Provide assistance in program planning for the student evaluated.
3. Are scientifically research-based and specific to the student's needs.
4. Are readily usable for program planning and support to teacher
5. Should not incur an additional monetary commitment from the school system.

The school psychologist should make attempts to review the evaluation results with the parents/guardians. This may be accomplished either in person or by phone, whichever is preferred by the parent.

Addendums to Reports

Sometimes there is a need to make a correction or addition after a report has been typed and filed. In this case, the school psychologist can include an addendum to the report. The addendum should be clearly marked and have the same format for the heading as the original report with the dates of the additional testing/information. Addendums should rarely occur.

Information turned in after an eligibility decision has been made or after an unreasonable amount of time (e.g., 4 months after a report has been disseminated) should be filed with a note indicating the date received. That information does not need to be interpreted, but can be subject to interpretation if requested.

Re-Evaluation Procedures

At a minimum of three years from the last eligibility team meeting date, the IEP team will convene and review information about the student. The IEP team will then determine what, if any, additional information (e.g., testing) is needed to continue special education services.

If a determination is made that additional data are needed and a formal assessment is required, written parental consent is obtained by the IEP team prior to the administration of any assessment instruments and a vision and hearing screening is conducted by the school nurse. Then the completed referral packet will be submitted to Psychological Services by the IEP team. It is not the responsibility of Psychological Services to seek out these referrals. Incomplete referral packets may be returned to the sending school.

Procedures for Completed Reports

Once a report has been written in entirety, it is to be turned in to the "To Be Read" box near the mailboxes. The report will be reviewed by the Coordinator and then given to the administrative assistant to be logged as processed. The administrative assistant will return to the psychologist for necessary modifications.

After corrections are made and the report is initialed, copies are to be made for the required parties (by an administrative assistant or the psychologist). Re-evaluations and initial reports require 3 copies. The original should be left in the file, one should be given to the school and one

to the parent. The third copy should be placed in the “Special Education” box by the mail boxes so that it will be tracked when it is sent to the Department of Special Education. Screenings should not be sent to Special Education. Parent copies should be distributed at your discretion. It is recommended that contact be made with the parent prior to sending reports as some parents do not want copies mailed to them.

APPENDIX

Appendix A

Psychological Evaluation Rating

Psychologist: _____ **Date:** _____

Coordinator: Gina Hudson, Ph.D.

Child assessed: _____

The following ratings will be used to indicate the quality of the elements of the report:

1 = Needs Improvement

2 = Meets Standard

Overall Score: (Score is based upon mean of all indicators)

_____ Appropriate headings are employed throughout the report.

_____ Report is free from major errors (e.g., use of the wrong student's name in heading, standard score miscalculated by 10+ points, etc.). Report has obviously been proofed for errors prior to submitting to the Director. (NOTE: Two bonus points for 5 or less minor/typographical errors.)

_____ The report provides one or more clear referral questions or reasons for referral.

_____ Assessment methods are listed and scores are reported in an accurate and clear fashion which should be understandable to parents, teachers, and others.

_____ Assessment methods that are employed follow logically from the referral question(s) and **all** areas of suspected disability are assessed.

_____ Multiple assessment methods are used, including (where appropriate) review of records; standardized tests; classroom observations; curriculum-based assessment; and interviews with teacher, parent and child.

_____ The report presents pertinent background related to school, family, medical, developmental, and cultural information in a coherent presentation.

_____ The report presents a clear description of relevant behaviors of the child observed during testing.

_____ The report offers multiple, specific, research supported, and/or practical recommendations that address the referral question(s) and that may serve as the basis for developing an IEP or intervention plan, where appropriate.

_____ Report is submitted to the Director within 60 calendar days from the evaluation date.
(NOTE: Two bonus points will be added if the report is submitted to the Director within 30 calendar days from the evaluation date.)

_____ Total

Appendix A

General Duties and Responsibilities

It is assumed that all psychologists conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times, meeting and exceeding the standards set by our profession. The rubric below serves as a guideline for expectations.

Activity	Exceeds Standard (3 pts)	Meets Standard (2pts)	Needs Improvement (1pt)	Forms of Documentation
Manages referrals	Utilizes professional skills in meetings to guide a referral into screening or full evaluation.	Psychologist serves as only a “gatekeeper” for assigned referrals	Referrals are generated independent of psychologist’s input	Review of referrals
Responds appropriately to referrals	Psychologist initials consent for evaluation and tracks progress; all referrals are submitted to Psychological Services within 5 school days of date the consent is received	Psychologist initials consent for evaluation and tracks progress; almost all referrals are submitted within 5 school days	Referrals are not adequately initialed and there is a minimum tracking of progress; referrals are seldom submitted in a timely manner	Reviews with psychologist on case monitoring, departmental log
Utilizes appropriate instruments and techniques to determine learning styles, needs, processing strengths and weaknesses, etc.	Psychologist regularly utilizes instruments, techniques and observations appropriate to the nature of the presenting problem; identifies factors for student’s difficulties through analysis of progress monitoring, rating scales, interviews, review of records, etc.	Psychologist uses a full range of test instruments to conduct assessments in all areas of suspected difficulty	Psychologist uses basically the same instruments for most evaluations, regardless of the referral question	Review of reports by director
Responds to system and/or departmental need for assistance i.e., crisis situations, assisting other psychologists w/cases, volunteers	Psychologist participates consistently; frequently volunteers in departmental activities, needs and goals; helps to set and carry out departmental and system goals	Psychologist almost always participates in mandatory requests; sometimes volunteers	Psychologist does not participate consistently in mandatory requests for assistance and never volunteers	Director observation; review of log
Reports	Reports address each child as an individual and contains applicable data and interventions	Reports address referral concerns	Reports do not adequately address all referral concerns	Director review of psychological reports
Comprehensive/supplemental evaluations and screenings completed in a timely manner (Completed reports are those which have been initialed by the psychologist)	Reports are completed within 60 calendar days from the evaluation date 90+% of the time	Reports are completed within 60 calendar days from the evaluation date 70% to 89% of the time	Reports are completed within 60 calendar days from the evaluation date <70% of the time	Director’s monitoring of reports/logs

Appendix A

Facilitates communication	Psychologist consistently (90% or more of cases) holds post evaluation conference with parents (or documents efforts to contact parent) and attends 90% or more of initial eligibility meetings; psychologist has positive relationships with other school personnel (i.e., no complaints to director regarding psychologist from other school personnel)	Psychologist consistently (75% to 89% of cases) holds post evaluation conference with parents (or documents efforts to contact parent) and attends 75% to 89% of initial eligibility meetings; psychologist has no more than one complaint to the director from other school personnel regarding their job performance or other issues	Psychologist displays weak communication skills with staff/admin; consistently misses meetings; psychologist attends less than 75% of initial eligibility meetings to review data: psychologist does not usually respond to written or verbal requests from director, school administrators or teachers	Schedules from eligibility meetings; log information and data from schools; review of reports
Punctuality	Punctual (less than 5 min. late) to work, meetings and school activities 95% of time; often goes beyond minimum requirements (e.g. works after 4:00p.m.)	Punctual (less than 15 min. late to work, meetings and school activities 80%-94% of the time; sometimes goes beyond minimum work requirements	Punctual (less than 15 min.) to work, meetings, office and school activities less than 80% of time; chronic lateness	Director observation; principal reports; self-evaluation
State mandated timelines met	100% of initial eligibility meetings are held within 60 calendar days	<100% of initial eligibility meetings held within 60 calendar days, when no fault can be attributed to the psychologist	Less than 100% of initial eligibility meetings held within 60 calendar days, due to any fault of the psychologist	Processed date and logs
Professional development	Member of a professional organization; reviews current research; may be initiating own research or involvement in research or conduct formal and informal research as needed; demonstrates an active interest in learning new approaches, techniques and procedures	Engages in some professional development activities	Does not engage in professional development activities as required	Supervision and other administrator review of records (log) and attendance at workshops; record of PLU's earned
Maintains confidentiality	Diligent in maintaining confidentiality of written , electronic and verbal information pertaining to a child	Consistently follows procedures maintaining confidentiality	Shows difficulty with following procedures in maintaining confidentiality	Director observation and/or other documentation

Appendix A

Department meetings	Attends and participates in meetings that contribute to department's goals and other meetings to support district's vision statements 95% of the time	Attends and participates in required and requested meetings 90-94% of the time	Misses required and/or requested meetings more than 10% of the time without notifying supervisor	Director observation and/or other documentation
Interpersonal skills	Establishes rapport and works effectively with students, staff, parents, administrators; demonstrates sensitivity and tolerance to others; shows receptivity to feedback; listens attentively and allows others to present their views	Engages positively with students, staff, parents, administrators; demonstrates tolerance to others; shows receptivity to feedback	Limited engagement with students, staff, parents, administrators; demonstrates poor tolerance to others; shows limited receptivity to feedback	Director documentation; self-evaluation
Knowledge of RtI/SST tier process for all levels	Demonstrates in-depth understanding of tiers and methods of implementation; understands federal, state, and local guidelines and forms; becomes familiar with services within the school and district at all tiers	Demonstrates basic understanding of tiers and methods of implementation local guidelines, forms and services	Does not demonstrate sufficient understanding of tiers, methods of implementation of local, guidelines, forms and services	Director documentation; self-evaluation
Professional standards	Adheres to professional standards set by NASP; adheres to federal and state laws; advocates for Best Practices in department/district	Adheres to professional standards set by NASP; adheres to federal and state laws	Violates professional standards and federal and/or state laws	Director documentation; self-evaluation
Professional leadership	Actively works to build positive relationships between school and community (e.g., facilitates workshops or other methods of support for students/schools as requested to meet department and district goals)	Participates in activities (when requested) which build positive relationships between school and department (e.g., participates in workshops or other methods to support students and schools and to meet department and district goals)	Limited involvement in activities which build positive relationships: seldom participates in workshops or other activities to support students and schools to meet department and/or district goals	Director documentation; self-evaluation
Technology as a communication tool	Almost always checks and responds to email daily to be informed and communicate effectively during work week	Typically checks and responds to email at least every other day to be informed and communicate during work week	Does not consistently use or respond via email	Observation; email documentation

Appendix A

Technology as a research tool	Uses internet as an appropriate research tool on a regular basis: reviews and evaluates new software, intervention strategies, etc., relevant to profession	Uses internet as an appropriate research tool on a regular basis	Does not or rarely uses internet as an appropriate research tool	Observation; self-evaluation
RtI/SST training and Implementation	Psychologist presented or assisted in presenting workshops facilitating implementation of RtI/SST in all assigned schools	Psychologist presented or assisted in presenting workshops facilitating implementation of RtI/SST in 75+% of assigned schools	Psychologist presented or assisted in presenting workshops facilitating implementation of RtI/SST in <50% of assigned schools	Checklist and log documentation; sign-in sheets from trainings
Follows basic departmental procedures	Follows basic departmental procedures (e.g., turns in log/schedule, reviews reports before submitting them, turns in leave requests within 5 days of absence) 95% or more of the time	Follows basic departmental procedures at least 80% of the time	Follows basic departmental procedures <80% of the time	Review of log; checklists from director; other documentation provided by the psychologist

Psychologist's Rating _____

Coordinator's Rating _____

Appendix B

WEEK OF:

Day	Location	Comprehensive Eval	Screening/Supplemental	Parent Consultation	Tier 2 RTI/SST Meeting	Tier 3 RTI/SST Meetings	Student Consultation	School Consultation	Other School Consultation	Eligibilities/IEPs/Review	504 Meetings	Crisis Information	Data Team Meetings	File Review	Prof. Dev. Attended	Prof. Dev. Presented	# of Participants	Formal Observation	Other
Monday																			
Tuesday																			
Wednesday																			
Thursday																			
Friday																			
TOTAL		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

EVALUATION/OBSERVATION LOG

Type	Student	School	Tested	Parent Conference

I= Initial

R= Re-evaluation

B=Screening

S=Supplemental

T= Interim

O= Observation

Appendix C

RICHMOND COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

Psychological Services

864 Broad Street

Augusta, Georgia 30901

Tel (706) 826-1131 Fax (706) 826-4634

REVOCATION OF CONSENT FOR EVALUATION

Student's Name _____

Date of Birth _____ Age _____

Consent means that the parent or student who has reached 18 years of age has been fully informed of all information about the activity to which the consent is needed. Information given to obtain consent must be in the parent's or the 18 year old's native language. A parent or an 18 year old who gives consent should agree in writing to the activity for which consent is needed.

If a parent or an 18-year-old revokes consent, the revocation is not retroactive (i.e., it does not undo an action that has occurred after the consent was given and before the consent was revoked).

After being informed of my rights and after due consideration, I, _____ wish to revoke the consent for evaluation.

Signature

Witness

Date

Date

Date Rec by RCSS _____

Received by _____

Richmond County School System

Psychological Services

864 Broad Street
Augusta, GA 30901
Phone: (706) 826-1131
Fax: (706) 826-4634

AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

RECORDS ARE BEING REQUESTED FROM:

RECORDS ARE TO BE FORWARDED TO:

NAME

NAME

AGENCY

AGENCY

STREET

STREET

CITY STATE ZIP

CITY STATE ZIP

You are hereby authorized to release confidential information on the following child:

NAME (as shown on cumulative records)

Birthdate

TYPE OF MATERIAL TO BE RELEASED:

- Education Evaluation
- I.E.P /I.T.P.
- Medical Records
- Minutes of Placement Committee
- Transition Plan
- Eligibility Report(s)
- Psychological Evaluation
- Other _____

REASON FOR RELEASE:

- Educational Planning and/or Placement
- Maintenance of Student Records
- Medical Problems related to Learning
- Proof of Disability
- Other Transition Services
- _____
- _____
- _____

I am aware that there is information within my child's file which has been received from the following third party agencies:

I (____ do, ____ do not) give consent to have this information forwarded to the designated agency above.

SIGNATURE OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN

WITNESS (SCHOOL OFFICIAL)

RELATIONSHIP TO STUDENT

POSITION

DATE

DATE (PSY/CHG12)