

School Social Worker

Student Services Job Description

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER JOB DESCRIPTION

DRAFT

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School Social Worker Job Description

Process

The 2006 School Social Worker Job Description was prepared collaboratively by representatives from school districts, institutions of higher education, professional organizations and the Department of Public Instruction. Department staff acknowledges with deep appreciation and gratitude the contributions of the following advisory committee members:

Name	Position	Organization
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Mr. Antonio Blow	LEA School Social Work Coordinator	Greene County Schools
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Ms. Brenda Pace	School Social Worker	NC School Social Work Association and Nash-Rocky Mount Schools

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Ms. Carole Price	School Social Worker	Cabarrus County Schools
Ms. Cynthia Pritchard	School Social Worker	NC School Social Work Association and Nash-Rocky Mount Schools
Ms. Jennifer Raper	School Social Worker	NC Dropout Prevention Association and Georgia Public Schools
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Ms. Natasha Scott	LEA School Social Work Coordinator	Cumberland County Schools
Ms. Christine Turner	School Social Worker	Avery County Schools
Ms. Cathy Waugh	School Social Worker	School Social Work Association of America Southern Council of School Social Workers and Person County Schools
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Ms. Danielle Woodall	President	NC School Social Work Association

Additional input was gathered via feedback from distribution of the proposed school social worker job description draft at meetings, at the NCSSWA Fall Conference, via e-mail listservs to school personnel and through posting the job description on the DPI/LEARN NC School Social Work web page. The revised job description is to be presented to the State Board of Education for consideration and action.

Purpose and Background

This document is intended for use by North Carolina schools and local education agencies which employ school social workers. The 2006 North Carolina School Social Worker Job Description represents a revision of the 1987 North Carolina School Social Worker Job Description. In developing the 2006 job description, a variety of documents and relevant State policies and statutes were consulted including the North Carolina Standards for the Preparation of School Social Workers approved by the State Board of Education on November 3, 2005; State Board of Education Policy QP-C-006; State Board of Education

Priorities; State General Statute 115C-333; current North Carolina educational staff job descriptions and evaluation systems; the National Association of Social Work Standards for School Social Work; and select pages from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction *School Social Work Practice Guide*.

Role of the School Social Worker

School social work celebrated its one hundredth anniversary in 2006. Social work services in schools first began independently in New York City, Chicago, Boston, and Hartford during the school year of 1906-1907 to meet the social service needs of children and to improve communication between the home and school. The first board of education to initiate and finance a school social work program was in Rochester, New York, in 1913 (Shaffer, 2006).

During this century of school social work, school social workers have grown significantly in numbers and the focus of the service has changed in response to important influences of the times. A focus on school attendance in the early 1900's showed the need for professionals who understood the influences of living conditions, socioeconomic status, poor health, family and community on academic performance, behavior, and attendance at school (Shaffer, 2006). The foremost responsibility of the school social worker at that time was home-school-community liaison. Although school social work has evolved considerably with the dynamic changes of society and school social workers function as change-agents more so than ever before, school social workers today continue to serve as the vital link between home, school and community.

In order to be a licensed school social worker in North Carolina, one has to complete a bachelor's or master's degree in social work from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited program with additional specialized preparation in school social work. Within these school social work education programs, several standards are studied such as the foundations of school social work practice, assessment and evaluation, cultural diversity, consultative and collaborative relationships and understanding of the role of advocacy and facilitation. Also required are intervention strategies to support student development, discernment of statutes and case law and completion of a school social work internship comprising of a minimum of 400 contact hours in a school setting.

School social workers are expected to apply their professional training in schools in order to support student success. Their capacity to influence student success is clearly influenced by school social worker-to-student ratios (*No Child Left Behind* recommends one-school-social-worker-to-800-students ratio; the School Social Work Association of America recommends one master's-degreed social worker per 400 students). Through specialized school social work programs that strengthen the home/school/community partnership and address barriers to student learning, school social workers serve as catalysts in promoting student wellbeing and successful completion of school. This job description is a guide for the implementation of such specialized school social work programs in the public schools of North Carolina.

Shaffer, G. L. (2006). School Social Work History. In L. Bye & M. E. Alvarez, *School Social Work: Theory to Practice*. Pacific Grove, CA: Thompson/Brooks/Cole.

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Pub. L. No. 107-110, § 5421,115 Stat. 1816.

According to the National Mental Health Association, fewer than one in five of the 17.5 million children in need of mental health services actually receive them. Many of these are students who will not achieve academic success due to social, emotional and behavioral problems affecting school performance. School social workers help these students through early identification, prevention, intervention, counseling and support.

*- "Ensuring Student Success: Removing Barriers to Education"
brochure, School Social Work Association of America*

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER STUDENT SERVICES JOB DESCRIPTION

OUTLINE

POSITION: School Social Worker

REPORTS TO: Supervisor of School Social Work or Appropriate Administrator

PURPOSE: The School Social Worker promotes and enhances the overall academic mission by providing services that strengthen home/school/community partnerships and alleviate barriers to learning. The School Social Worker significantly contributes to the development of a healthy, safe and caring environment by advancing the understanding of the emotional and social development of children and the influences of family, community, and cultural differences on student success and by implementing effective intervention strategies.

The major functions of the school social worker job description incorporate the North Carolina State Board of Education guiding mission that every public school student will graduate from high school globally competitive for work and postsecondary education and prepared for life in the 21st century.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

MAJOR FUNCTION: Assessment of Student, Family and School Needs

Effectively and appropriately assesses and address the needs, characteristics and interactions of students, families, LEA personnel and community.

MAJOR FUNCTION: Direct Services/ Service Delivery

Uses knowledge and understanding of the reciprocal influences of home, school, and community to intervene for student success via such practices as assessment, crisis intervention, home visits, conflict resolution, individual and group counseling, consultation, program development, dropout prevention and coordination of school and community services.

MAJOR FUNCTION: Advocacy

Advocates for appropriate services for students and their families.

MAJOR FUNCTION: Consultation and Collaboration

Consults and collaborates with stakeholders on behalf of students and their families.

MAJOR FUNCTION: Program Planning, Implementation and Evaluation

Effectively plans, implements and evaluates programs that promote student and family success.

MAJOR FUNCTION: Accountability

Advocates, facilitates, and contributes to School Social Work accountability for outcomes aligned with local, state, and federal policies and guidelines.

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POSITION: School Social Worker

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DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The School Social Worker's principle task is to empower students, families and school personnel to access available opportunities and resources to fully develop each student's potential. Integrated into all major functions are home/school/community assimilation; diversity and cultural competence; dropout prevention; and adherence to federal and state statutes, professional development and practices, School Social Work Standards and the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics.

- 1. MAJOR FUNCTION: Assessment of Student, Family and School Needs**
Effectively and appropriately assesses and address the needs, characteristics and interactions of students, families, LEA personnel and community
 - 1.1 Conducts assessments and evaluations in accordance with parent or guardian and student rights.
 - 1.2 Uses student, family and school assessment results to identify needs that impact student learning.
 - 1.3 Uses assessment and evaluation results to develop appropriate interventions for students, families, schools and communities.
 - 1.4 Develops long-term and short-term intervention plans consistent with curriculum; students' needs, strengths, diversity and life experiences; and social and emotional factors.

- 1.5 Uses a variety of appropriate formal and informal tools and techniques including observations and interviews to evaluate the progress and performance of students and families.

2. MAJOR FUNCTION: Direct Services/ Service Delivery

Uses knowledge and understanding of the reciprocal influences of home, school, and community to intervene for student success via such practices as assessment, crisis intervention, home visits, conflict resolution, individual and group counseling, consultation, program development, dropout prevention and coordination of school and community services.

- 2.1 Promotes services to students and their families be provided within the context of multicultural understanding and competence that enhance families' support of students learning experiences.
- 2.2 Provides services to students in ways that build upon individual strengths and offers students maximum opportunities to participate in the planning and direction of their own learning experience.
- 2.3 Develops and provides training and educational programs that address the goals and mission of the educational institution.

3. MAJOR FUNCTION: Advocacy

Advocates for appropriate services for students and their families.

- 3.1 Advocates and facilitates change that effectively responds to the needs of students, families, and school systems using appropriate statutes, case law, policies, and procedures.
- 3.2 Promotes services to students and their families be provided within the context of multicultural understanding and competence that enhance families' support of students learning experiences.
- 3.3 Assists students and their families to gain access to formal and informal community resources.
- 3.4 Utilizes research and technologies to assist students, families, schools, and communities.

4. MAJOR FUNCTION: Consultation and Collaboration

Consults and collaborates with stakeholders on behalf of students and their families.

- 4.1 Consults with stakeholders to facilitate an understanding of factors in the home, local education agency, and community that affect students' educational experiences.
- 4.2 Consults on such issues as attendance, confidentiality, ethnicity and diversity, mental health, behavior management, discipline, crisis intervention and child abuse and neglect.

- 4.3 Initiates and supports activities to overcome institutional barriers and gaps in services as leaders and members of interdisciplinary teams with the unique contribution of bringing the home, school and community perspective to the interdisciplinary process.
- 4.4 Works with individuals, groups and organizations that have diverse interests to develop programs or systems of care that support and enhance the health, social and emotional well-being and safety of students.
- 4.5 Promotes collaboration among community health and mental health service providers and facilitates student access to these services.
- 4.6 Uses extensive knowledge of community resources, enabling the school social worker to play a critical role in facilitating the provision of community services in the local education agency.
- 4.7 Helps to build effective school-community teams and orients community providers to school climate, culture and structure and to the laws and regulations governing practice in educational settings.

5. MAJOR FUNCTION: Program Planning, Implementation and Evaluation

Effectively plans, implements and evaluates programs that promote student and family success.

- 5.1 Applies knowledge of environmental factors in planning programs.
- 5.2 Conducts individual and/or system-wide surveys to assess the school and/or community needs.
- 5.3 Plans school and/or system-wide programs to promote a safe, healthy, caring school climate that fosters academic success.
- 5.4 Assists the school and community in planning programs that alleviate situations which may interfere with the learning process of students.
- 5.5 Assists in the evaluation of effective departmental, school-based, system, community, and state-wide programs.

6. MAJOR FUNCTION: Accountability

Advocates, facilitates, and contributes to School Social Work accountability for outcomes aligned with local, state, and federal policies and guidelines.

- 6.1 Conforms to the National Association of Social Work (NASW) Code of Ethics and Standards for School Social Work practice.
- 6.2 Maintains accurate case records and documentation.

- 6.3 Maintains current knowledge of and abides by federal and state laws and regulations with emphasis on persons with disabilities, child welfare, mental health, confidentiality, and student and parent rights.
- 6.4 Organizes time, resources, energy, and workload in order to meet responsibilities.
- 6.5 Evaluates own practice and disseminates the findings to consumers, LEAs, the community, and the profession in order to maximize the effectiveness of services & resources provided to students” to indicate that by evaluating one's practice, more effective services and resources will be provided.
- 6.6 Participates in appropriate professional development activities to improve knowledge and skills.

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Standards for School Social Worker Evaluation

SAMPLE EVIDENCES OF DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

POSITION: School Social Worker

REPORTS TO: Supervisor of School Social Work or Appropriate Administrator

PURPOSE: The School Social Worker promotes and enhances the overall academic mission by providing services that strengthen home/school/community partnerships and alleviate barriers to learning. The School Social Worker significantly contributes to the development of a healthy, safe and caring environment by advancing the understanding of the emotional and social development of children and the influences of family, community, and cultural differences on student success and by implementing effective intervention strategies.

The following are suggested examples of each of the major functions for school social workers. Because each work situation is different, it is not likely that all of these evidences will be demonstrated by every school social worker. The evaluator is urged to develop a similar list of expectations specifically for the individual school social worker being evaluated. These expectations should provide indication that the six major functions are being performed.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The School Social Worker's principle task is to empower students, families and school personnel to access available opportunities and resources to fully develop each student's potential. Integrated into all major functions are home/school/community assimilation; diversity and cultural competence; dropout prevention; and adherence to federal and state statutes, professional development and practices, School Social Work Standards and the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics.

1. MAJOR FUNCTION: Assessment of Student, Family and School Needs

Effectively and appropriately assesses and address the needs, characteristics and interactions of students, families, LEA personnel and community

- 1.1 Conducts assessments and evaluations in accordance with parent or guardian and student rights.
 - Conducts formal and informal assessments to evaluate student's functioning in the following areas:
 - Physical, cognitive, emotional, social development
 - Family history and factors that influence overall function
 - Behavior and attitude in different settings
 - Patterns of interpersonal relationships
 - Patterns of achievement
 - Adaptive behavior and cultural factors that may influence learning



- 1.2 Uses student, family and school assessment results to identify needs that impact student learning.
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- 1.3 Uses assessment and evaluation results to develop appropriate interventions for students, families, schools and communities.
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- 1.4 Develops long-term and short-term intervention plans consistent with curriculum; students' needs, strengths, diversity and life experiences; and social and emotional factors.
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- 1.5 Uses a variety of appropriate formal and informal tools and techniques including observations and interviews to evaluate the progress and performance of students and families.
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2. MAJOR FUNCTION: Direct Services/ Service Delivery

Uses knowledge and understanding of the reciprocal influences of home, school, and community to intervene for student success via such practices as assessment, crisis intervention, home visits, conflict resolution, individual and group counseling, consultation, program development, dropout prevention and coordination of school and community services.

- 2.1 Promotes services to students and their families be provided within the context of multicultural understanding and competence that enhance families' support of students learning experiences.
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- 2.2 Provides services to students in ways that build upon individual strengths and offers students maximum opportunities to participate in the planning and direction of their own learning experience.
 - involves students in self-assessment activities in developing and implementing intervention and evaluation plans that enhance students' abilities to benefit from educational experience
- 2.3 Develops and provides training and educational programs that address the goals and mission of the educational institution.
 - Coordinates drop-out prevention programs

4. MAJOR FUNCTION: Advocacy

Advocates for appropriate services for students and their families.

- 3.1 Advocates and facilitates change that effectively responds to the needs of students, families, and school systems using appropriate statutes, case law, policies, and procedures.
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- 3.2 Promotes services to students and their families be provided within the context of multicultural understanding and competence that enhance families' support of students learning experiences.
 -
- 3.3 Assists students and their families to gain access to formal and informal community resources.
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- 3.4 Utilizes research and technologies to assist students, families, schools, and communities.



4. MAJOR FUNCTION: Consultation and Collaboration

Consults and collaborates with stakeholders on behalf of students and their families.

- 4.1 Consults with stakeholders to facilitate an understanding of factors in the home, local education agency, and community that affect students' educational experiences.



- 4.2 Consults on such issues as attendance, confidentiality, ethnicity and diversity, mental health, behavior management, discipline, crisis intervention and child abuse and neglect.

- Meets with the school counselor to discuss individual student concerns.

- 4.4 Initiates and supports activities to overcome institutional barriers and gaps in services as leaders and members of interdisciplinary teams with the unique contribution of bringing the home, school and community perspective to the interdisciplinary process.



- 4.5 Works with individuals, groups and organizations that have diverse interests to develop programs or systems of care that support and enhance the health, social and emotional well-being and safety of students.

- Serves on the community collaborative task force that addresses the needs of students and families who are being served by several agencies

- 4.6 Promotes collaboration among community health and mental health service providers and facilitates student access to these services.

- Serves as a liaison between service providers to individual students and assist families with finding transportation services to appointments.

- 4.7 Uses extensive knowledge of community resources, enabling the school social worker to play a critical role in facilitating the provision of community services in the local education agency.

- Makes contacts and helps to connect schools, students and families with the appropriate needed services such as a student in need of health benefits assistance to go to the dentist or acquiring food and clothing for a student's family who has lost their home to fire.



- 4.8 Helps to build effective school-community teams and orients community providers to school climate, culture and structure and to the laws and regulations governing practice in educational settings.



5. MAJOR FUNCTION: Program Planning, Implementation and Evaluation

Effectively plans, implements and evaluates programs that promote student and family success.

- 5.1 Applies knowledge of environmental factors in planning programs.



- 5.2 Conducts individual and/or system-wide surveys to assess the school and/or community needs.



- 5.3 Plans school and/or system-wide programs to promote a safe, healthy, caring school climate that fosters academic success.
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- 5.4 Assists the school and community in planning programs that alleviate situations which may interfere with the learning process of students.
 - Serves on LEA Crisis Intervention Team
- 5.5 Assists in the evaluation of effective departmental, school-based, system, community, and state-wide programs.
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6. MAJOR FUNCTION: Accountability

Advocates, facilitates, and contributes to School Social Work accountability for outcomes aligned with local, state, and federal policies and guidelines.

- 6.1 Conforms to the National Association of Social Work (NASW) Code of Ethics and Standards for School Social Work practice.
 -
- 6.2 Maintains accurate case records and documentation.
 -
- 6.3 Maintains current knowledge of and abides by federal and state laws and regulations with emphasis on persons with disabilities, child welfare, mental health, confidentiality, and student and parent rights.
 - Assists schools and families with enrolling and serving students who meet the criteria of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act by helping school staff understand their responsibilities and how to best serve these students and by helping families understand their rights and resources.
- 6.4 Organizes time, resources, energy, and workload in order to meet responsibilities.
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- 6.5 Evaluates own practice and disseminates the findings to consumers, LEAs, the community, and the profession in order to maximize the effectiveness of services & resources provided to students” to indicate that by evaluating one's practice, more effective services and resources will be provided.
 -
- 6.6 Participates in appropriate professional development activities to improve knowledge and skills.
 - Attends local, state and/or national conferences and workshops specific to the school social work profession.