

## School Psychology

School psychologists provide a variety of professional services to support the academic achievement, positive behavior, and social-emotional wellness of all students, especially those who struggle with barriers to learning. School psychologists play a critical role in supporting the attainment of the goals of local school divisions and help to ensure that every student is ready to learn and every teacher is empowered to teach.

School psychologists work with students, teachers, administrators, and families to:

- Improve academic achievement
- Promote positive behavior and mental health
- Create safe, positive school climate
- Support diverse learners
- Strengthen family-school partnerships
- Improve school-wide assessment and accountability

The roles and responsibilities of school psychologists in Virginia may vary according to their local school division and community needs as well as available staffing ratios. Examples of professional services provided by school psychologists within a comprehensive model include:

- Develop and integrate school-wide programming to promote social–emotional and mental wellness for all students based on the needs of the school community.
- Deliver professional development to school staff and families on a range of topics, such as trauma informed practices, mental health first aid, crisis prevention, suicide prevention, effective discipline, and behavior management.
- Help schools conduct comprehensive needs assessments to develop strategies to address attendance, poverty, trauma, violence, and other barriers to learning.
- Enhance coordination and alignment of efforts to improve school safety, including crisis prevention, intervention, and response.
- Design, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive range of interventions for students at risk for academic, social–emotional, or mental and behavioral health concerns.
- Provide mental and behavioral health services for individual students and groups of students, including the delivery of individual and small group counseling and direct instruction in social skills.
- Support school-wide efforts to facilitate student progress toward measurable goals through data collection, progress monitoring, and data interpretation.
- Support divisions and school leadership teams by effectively integrating and interpreting of multiple data sources to aid in decision making.
- Conduct culturally competent psychoeducational evaluations to assess abilities, skills, and social/emotional functioning of students suspected of having a disability.
- Conduct functional behavioral assessments and assist in the development of behavior plans.
- Work collaboratively with teachers in delivering effective differentiation strategies for students with diverse needs.
- Collaborate with teachers and school leaders to implement universal, targeted, and intensive academic and behavioral support programs using evidence-based practices.

- Facilitate collaboration and coordination between school and community providers to ensure access to wraparound supports for students with the most significant needs.