

Steps for Cycle One - New School Psychologists

Welcome to School Psychology, a most challenging and fulfilling professional career!

During the first few weeks of school, your school psychology mentor will be helping you to become familiar with your school/district/state procedures, policies, and requirements. As time goes on, he/she will help assure that you have completed the certification process and understand what you will need to do to attain the basic school psychology certificate and complete the mentoring and induction process to earn the continuing license. He/she will introduce you to other staff members and assist you with securing the resources that you may need to be effective in your new position.

Some of the ways that the mentor may assist you are as follows:

- Familiarizing you with school, district, and state policies and procedures
- Showing you the Administrative Manual for Special Education
- Securing materials and supplies that you will need
- Seeing that you have the appropriate technology, books, and professional materials
- Identifying a place within each building where you will work and store supplies
- Discussing specific guidelines, responsibilities, and events that are unique to your building and school population
- Helping you with electronic documentation and other important files
- Identifying locations in the school that you will need to know- counseling suite, library, cafeteria, playground, and others
- Assuring that you understand the crisis response plan, emergency policies and procedures
- Introducing you to DEEDS and DPAS II
- Other needs identified by you or the site

Ask questions, get clarifications, and ask for assistance when needed. The purpose of the program is not only to help you professionally, but to assure that you have the support you need to be successful. When you feel you have mastered adjustment to the early days of the school year, you and your mentor can begin Cycle One of the New School Psychologist Mentoring Program.

CYCLE ONE

Cycle one of the new school psychologist program parallels the Delaware New Teacher Mentoring Program that uses Danielson's Framework: *The Classroom Environment*. School psychologists will follow the *Enhancing Professional Development: A Framework for Teaching 2nd Edition* by Danielson. The goal of the program is to introduce and familiarize the new school psychologist with the unique and specialized area of school psychology. The purpose of Cycle One is to help you to get a clear picture of your professional, school/s, and community environment. In addition, you will be asked to choose an area of school psychology practice that you feel needs further

study and practice and to focus on that area for improvement. School psychology standards (NASP) require that all psychologists reflect on their practice, self-evaluate, and work on improvements of professional performance.

The mentoring journey is a personal one. The length of time that you take to complete the steps is not prescribed. You should not be concerned if you and a colleague do not take the same amount of time to complete the each cycle. You should focus on identifying how your mentor can support you and reflecting on your current level of performance as a beginning school psychologist.

In this cycle the following forms and documents are thought to be helpful and may be utilized.

Orientation and Mentoring Checklist- This list was created by Delaware school psychologists as a way to trigger discussion and information sharing as part of the orientation and mentoring process. Include a completed copy in the portfolio.

School Psychologist Self Assessment Tool – This tool can be used by new school psychologist and experienced school psychologist to assess their proficiency in a broad spectrum of knowledge, skills and professional practice. (Specific to Cycle Four but may be helpful throughout the process)

Documentation of Resources Form-A list of individuals and contact information in many areas of the school. Your mentor will help you with this form. It will be a great resource. A copy needs to be in your portfolio. Complete one form for each school.

Technology and Related Responsibilities-This form is a handy desk resource for school psychologists who need information about using technology. Please include a copy in your portfolio.

Guiding Questions- These are potential questions that may be asked of you by your mentor or an administrator. You are not required to answer the questions in a written form for your portfolio. You should review the questions, think about how you would respond if a particular question was asked of you, and discuss any clarifications that you may need with your mentor. Knowing this information will help you be prepared for the Delaware Performance Appraisal System (DPAS II).

Mentor Formative Observation Logs (2)-These one page documents are to be completed by your mentor during your observations. You will be given a copy of the log. The observations are to be a non-evaluative collection of data for reflection and improvement of practice. Copies must be included in your portfolio.

Discussion Logs (2 filled out by the mentor) -These one page documents are to be completed by the mentor as you discuss your practice together after each observation. You will be given a copy of the discussion log. This document is designed to celebrate your successes, identify your challenges, and determine what support and resources you may need to become more effective in this domain.

Procedural Steps for Two observations and Follow-up Discussions

1. Arrange with your mentor to discuss how and when you will be observed on Professional Practice and Delivery of Service. We encourage the mentors to video your performance, if appropriate, and parent permission is obtained, so that you can review it alone and together. The mentor will record notes of what he/she sees and hears during 30 minutes.
2. Your mentor will schedule a meeting soon after your observation. At that meeting, the mentor will complete the discussion log as you discuss and review the results of the observation. At that point, you will be asked to choose one area of your practice for the School Psychology Practice observation. *An example might be time management within each school.* At the conclusion of this meeting, you and your mentor should determine any needs and/or resources you may want that would support or enhance this area of practice and agree as to how and when they will be provided.
3. You should plan on refining your skills in the selected component for a period of 2 to 4 weeks. As you implement your plan, note changes that you see. If you implement the plan and feel that your selected focus is still challenging, let your mentor know at once so that he/she can assist you.
4. Schedule a second observation date with your mentor. Again, if appropriate, you may video this session. During that time the focus is **only** on the component of focus that you selected.
5. Meet with your mentor and complete the second discussion log, review of your practice, and any notes or questions that you wish to share. Decide if this area of practice needs more changes or concentrated practice.

At this point you will determine your next steps in the mentoring program process. If performance is in the "proficient" range you should move on to the next cycle. If you still identify areas as "basic," you may want to refine your practice in these areas while working with your mentor. Your mentor is there to provide support and feedback. He/she may see improvement in the component you selected, but may want you to consider refining other areas before you move forward. Such suggestions are made to help assure that you are ultimately successful in your formal evaluation. However, in the end, it is your decision as to whether you leave this cycle or work on other components.

Sign Out

At the end of this cycle you are to complete the Verification of Services form. This should not be done while you and your mentor are meeting. This is a personal statement. You only need to check the statements and sign the form. This is an opportunity for you to note any concerns that you have. It is important that you be honest about your feelings. If you feel that you need another

person to mentor you, please indicate that you would like a change. Send this form to your district or charter school's designated mentoring site coordinator and keep a copy in your portfolio.

New School Psychologist Document Collection: *The basic documents should be kept in a portfolio (A binder labeled **School Psychologist Mentoring Program**) that must be kept for four years. It is recommended that the portfolio become part of the school psychologist's permanent professional file.*

Documents to be completed by the **new school psychologist in Cycle One** -

- Orientation and Mentoring Checklist and Verification of Services form.
- Documentation of Resources Form
- Technology Access Form
- Verification of Services for Cycle One Form

Documents to be completed by the **mentor and copies in the new school psychologist portfolio**

- Two Mentor Formative Observation Logs (1+2)
- Two Discussion Logs for Formative Observations

Certificate of completion for Cycle One must be included in the portfolio.

Important Information

**** If you move to another district/charter school during the period of time when you hold an initial license, you are required to present the specified documents related to each of the three cycles. Failure to provide the documentation may result in your not securing a position or being required to repeat some or all of the missing cycles.*

*After the first year as a school psychologist, the new school psychologist's portfolio should contain copies of his/her **summative DPAS II** evaluations. School Psychologists moving from the initial license to a continuing license must have proof of two successful summative evaluations. Failure to have this part of the program completed may result in a required extension of the initial license or the inability to secure a continuing license.*

Verify with your mentor to assure that you are moving through the correct path of evaluation. You are to receive a summative evaluation at the end of each of your three years on the initial license. A case analysis or informal observation is not a summative evaluation. In the event that administration does not provide you with a summative evaluation at the end of the year you should notify your school psychologist mentor

and the site coordinator for teacher mentoring.