

School-Based Mental Health Providers in South Dakota



Students who receive social-emotional, behavioral, and mental health support are more successful in school when it comes to academic achievement, classroom behavior, and engagement in learning. School-based mental health providers help students develop an ability to cope with life's challenges so they may learn, thrive, and grow.

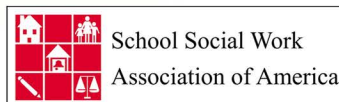


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contributing Groups.....3

Introduction4

Overview of School-Based Mental Health Providers in South Dakota.....5-7

School-Based Mental Health Providers and a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)8

School Counselors.....9-12

School Psychologists.....13-16

School Social Workers.....17-22

Community-Based Clinical Mental Health Counselors & Social Workers23-26

References27-29

CONTRIBUTING GROUPS

National Association of Social Workers, South Dakota Chapter

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) works to enhance the professional growth and development of its members, to create and maintain professional standards, and to advance sound social policies. The mission of NASW, South Dakota Chapter is: to strengthen and unify the profession of social work within South Dakota; to develop, promote, and protect the practice of social work in South Dakota; to advance sound and equitable social policy through advocacy for individuals, families, and communities; and to support and participate in the mission and purposes of NASW. Learn more at naswsd.socialworkers.org.

School Social Work Association of America

The School Social Work Association of America (SSWAA) is the premiere national organization solely dedicated to promoting the profession of school social work. SSWAA empowers school social workers and promotes the profession to enhance the social and emotional growth and academic outcomes of all students national and globally. Learn more at sswaa.org.

South Dakota Association of School Psychologists

The purpose of the South Dakota Association of School Psychologists (SDASP) is: to serve the educational and mental health needs of ALL students; to encourage and provide opportunities for the professional growth of school psychologists; to inform the public about the services and practice of psychology in the schools; to advance the standards of the profession of school psychology; and to cooperate with other agencies, offices, and organizations on subjects of common concern. Learn more at sites.google.com/view/sdasp/home.

South Dakota Department of Education

The South Dakota Department of Education is dedicated to enhancing learning through leadership and service so that all students will leave the K-12 education system college, career, and life ready. For additional information, visit doe.sd.gov.

South Dakota Division of Behavioral Health

The Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) is a division in the Department of Social Services whose mission is to support quality clinical treatment and prevention services, with integrity, to obtain positive outcomes for individuals with behavioral health needs. Mental health and substance use disorder treatment services are available including if you need assistance in paying for services. To find services in your area, please visit: <https://dss.sd.gov/behavioralhealth/agencycounty.aspx>.

South Dakota Mental Health Counseling Association

The purpose of the South Dakota Mental Health Counseling Association (SDMHCA) is: to promote the profession of mental health counseling; to provide programs for mental health counselors to assist in updating and enhancing competencies of professional mental health services; and to provide a forum for mental health counselors to address public policy (advocacy issues). Learn more at sdcounseling.org/sdmhca.

South Dakota School Counselor Association

The South Dakota School Counselor Association (SDSCA) is geared to unite, support, and empower school counselors through advocacy, leadership, and collaboration. SDSCA empowers members through professional development opportunities, ethical support, and resources to promote student success in academic, career, and social/emotional domains. Learn more at sdschoolcounselors.com.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to provide a general overview of the roles of the wide variety of school-based mental health providers in South Dakota and to gain an understanding of how these professionals may work together to support students.

It's worth noting, not every district may employ or contract services from every school-based mental health provider mentioned in this document. This will depend on the size of the school, funding, and needs of students.

There is an overwhelming need for youth mental health support.

- 50% of lifetime mental illness begins at age 14¹
- 75% to 80% of children and youth that needed mental health services did not receive them²
- Suicide was the leading cause of death for South Dakota youth ages 10-19 in 2020³
- 23.1% of South Dakota high school youth reported considering suicide in 2019³
- 46% of parents say their teen has shown new or worsening mental health conditions due to the COVID-19 pandemic⁴

Students who receive social-emotional, behavioral, and mental health support are more successful in school when it comes to academic achievement, classroom behavior, and engagement in learning. A school-based mental health team can help students develop an ability to cope with life's challenges and be successful in school⁵ so they will leave the K-12 education system college, career, and life ready. Access to school-based mental health services is linked to students' improvement in academics, social-emotional learning, and physical and psychological safety⁶.

1. "Mental Health by the Numbers." National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), <https://nami.org/mhstats>.
2. "Treatment Options." Youth.gov, <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/youth-mental-health/treatment-options-youth-mental-health-disorders>.
3. "Facts & Stats." South Dakota Suicide Prevention, <https://sdsuicideprevention.org/about-suicide/facts-stats>.
4. "How the Pandemic Has Impacted Teen Mental Health." Mott Poll Report, <https://mottpoll.org/reports/how-pandemic-has-impacted-teen-mental-health>
5. "Comprehensive School-Based Mental and Behavioral Health Services and School Psychologists." National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/mental-health/school-psychology-and-mental-health/comprehensive-school-based-mental-and-behavioral-health-services-and-school-psychologists>.
6. "A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools." National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/systems-level-prevention/a-framework-for-safe-and-successful-schools>.

OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS IN SOUTH DAKOTA

The following three pages are a bird’s-eye view of each school-based mental health provider’s role, taken from the [Overview of School-Based Mental Health Providers in South Dakota](#). More in-depth information on each school-based mental health provider is featured in each provider’s section within this document.

Who are school-based mental health providers?

School-based mental health providers support each other while bringing unique training and expertise to address the academic, career, and social-emotional and behavioral needs of K-12 students. Although each provider plays a specialized role to meet the needs of students, some supports may overlap to cultivate the overall well-being of the whole child. These professionals ensure equitable access to their supports so that all students can learn, thrive, and grow.



School Counselors

Unique Role in School

Support all students to be successful with a focus on academic achievement, career development, and social-emotional development. School counselors provide a broad reach across all students.

Training

Master's degree in school counseling
OR

Master's degree or higher in counseling with one year of supervision by a Mentor School Counselor and must pass the state-designated school counselor test

Certified by the Department of Education

Academic Support

Provide classroom lessons, small group counseling, and individual planning to remove a variety of barriers to learning through direct support to help all students develop skills and behaviors critical to academic success. Collaborate, consult and provide data for teachers, families, and administration to support classroom success.

Career Support

Provide career awareness, exploration, and preparation opportunities to assist all students through the K-12 career planning process. Utilize classroom lessons, small group counseling, and individual planning to assist students to form postsecondary and career goals, build a plan to meet goals, foster skill-building, and assess student abilities and interests.

Social-Emotional & Behavioral Support

Utilize a broad focus impacting all students. Provide short-term counseling through helping students develop skills and behaviors needed for social-emotional wellness through classroom lessons, small group counseling, and individual planning. Provide short-term counseling and crisis intervention. Refer students to specialized professionals for intensive needs and long-term counseling.

Recommended Provider-to-Individual Ratio

1:250

Consider that school counselors work with all students in schools at one district.

School Psychologists

Unique Role in School

Provide a focused reach for identified students specifically in areas of motivation, specific learning strategies, childhood intellectual disabilities, psychological, socio-behavioral, and skill-based assessments, and evaluation.

Training

Education Specialist degree in school psychology

Certified by the Department of Education

Academic Support

Provide small group and individual planning to remove a variety of barriers to learning through direct support to help identified students develop skills and behaviors critical to academic success. Collaborate, consult, and provide data for teachers, families, and administration to support classroom success.

Career Support

Provide career development to identified students. Assess student abilities and social skills to assist in future career planning for specialized career and postsecondary services (i.e., vocational rehabilitation, specialized college supports).

Social-Emotional & Behavioral Support

Specialized professional to conduct risk and threat assessments and crisis intervention in individual and small group settings. Receive referrals from other professionals to assist students in need of mental health support. May also refer students to receive further specialized support.

Recommended Provider-to-Individual Ratio

1:500

Consider that school psychologists work with small groups and individuals and ideally serve one district but may serve multiple school districts.

School Social Workers

Unique Role in School

Provide a focused reach with identified students specifically in areas of social-emotional and mental health needs, and are uniquely trained to integrate the school, community, and family context into interventions and resource referrals.

Training

Master's degree in Social Work (MSW)

In rare cases should the local education agency employ school social workers with a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work, an MSW-level social worker must provide supervision.

AND

Must pass the national Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) examination.

Licensed by the Board of Social Work Examiners

Academic Support

Provide schoolwide, small group and individual support to identified students to reduce barriers to learning using interventions to improve overall student functioning, collaborate, consult, and provide data for teachers, families, and administration to support classroom success

Career Support

Provide schoolwide, small group, and individual social-emotional learning focused on skill-building to foster resiliency and job preparedness. Provide students and parents with community linkages and resources to support successful school and work transitions.

Social-Emotional & Behavioral Support

Specialized professional to provide schoolwide, small group and individual social-emotional, mental health & behavioral interventions. Conduct risk and threat assessment & provide a continuum of crisis management supports. Maximize school-based and community resources to meet student needs. May also refer students to receive further specialized support.

Recommended Provider-to-Individual Ratio

1:250

Consider that school social workers work with classrooms, small groups, individuals and families; ideally serve one district but may serve multiple districts

Community-Based Clinical Mental Health Counselors and Social Workers

Unique Role in School

Provide a focused reach for identified students needing additional mental health and behavioral supports based on clinical assessments and identified mental health disorders.

Training

Clinical Mental Health Counselors:

- Master's or doctorate degree in counseling
- Licensed by the Board of Examiners for Counselors & Marriage and Family Therapists

Clinical Mental Health Social Workers:

- Master's or doctorate degree in social work
- Licensed by the Board of Social Work Examiners

Clinicians from community mental health centers meet training and supervision requirements established by the Department of Social Services.

Academic Support

Provide individual student support to interact and intervene with students experiencing mental health crises, therefore leading to improved academic outcomes. Collaborate and consult with school counselors and families to support classroom success through building awareness of mental health.

Career Support

Provide support to identified students to be physically and mentally healthy, so they can leave their primary and secondary education ready to address further education and career goals.

Social-Emotional & Behavioral Support

Specialized professional to provide short-term and long-term individual and small-group counseling. Typically, students are referred by other professionals for social-emotional and behavioral support, such as interventions for students on an IEP. Trained to address deep-seeded issues such as co-occurring disorders, trauma or chronic distress, life changing transitions, or other significant impairments to daily functioning. May refer students to receive further mental health or medical support.

Recommended Provider-to-Individual Ratio

Not Applicable

Consider that each clinical mental health provider working through a public or private funded agency will be serving clients and districts, and providing individual and small group counseling to students with intensive needs with caseloads up to approximately 50 clients actively receiving services at any one time.

SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS AND A MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT (MTSS)

When school-based mental health providers are able to work as a mental health team, they provide a continuum of services as a team through a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS). This allows schools to support mental wellness for all students, identify those who need targeted, additional support, and identify those who need intensive support. Regardless of whether a school implements MTSS, understanding the relevance of a continuum of support is important to ensure all students receive the appropriate level of support.

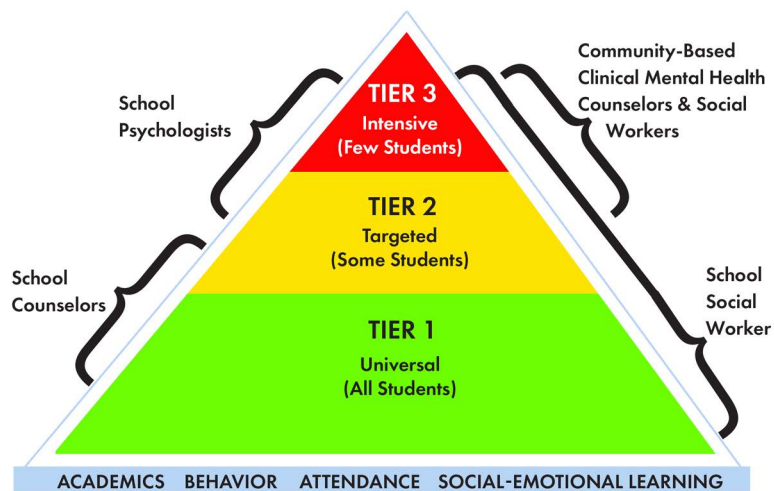
Tier 1 services focus on universal support for all students, offered through teaching, co-teaching, guest speakers, etc. The focus of Tier 1 supports is education and prevention and may be done through activities such as presentations to students on topics like self-care, substance use education, mental health awareness, and staff professional development on topics such as suicide prevention, mandatory reporting, and self-care.

Tier 2 is geared at providing targeted interventions to identified students who need extra support. Small group counseling, short-term treatment, collaboration and consultation, and referrals for additional services are modes of support.

Tier 3 services are provided for identified students in need of intensive support. Types of support include: crisis intervention, collaboration and consultation, referral for long-term individual counseling, and referral for placement in a treatment or program setting.

Where School-Based Mental Health Providers Spend Most of Their Time within MTSS

School-based mental health providers provide services throughout all three tiers of support; however, they each spend a majority of their time within specific tiers. This graphic is meant to show a general sense of the main tiers of support specific school-based mental health providers spend their time. Time spent within a specific tier may differ depending on assigned roles and responsibilities by the school. Although not featured in this graphic but worth noting, additional partners work with schools to provide universal prevention services such as prevention agencies, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), and more.



More specific examples on each school-based mental health provider's role within MTSS is featured in each provider's section within this document.

SCHOOL COUNSELORS

School counselors support all students to be successful with a focus on academic achievement, career development, and social-emotional development. School counselors provide a broad reach across all students.



Unique Training:

School counselors complete a master's program with coursework related to:

- History of school counseling and the education system
- Counseling theory
- Human growth and development
- Social and cultural diversity
- Career development
- Group counseling
- Counseling children and adolescents
- Organization and implementation of a comprehensive school counseling program
- Legal and ethical issues for counselors
- 600-hour internship in elementary, middle, and high school setting



Qualifications:

- Hold a School Counselor Endorsement through the South Dakota Department of Education, which requires a master's degree in school counseling OR master's degree in counseling or higher in counseling with one year of supervision by a mental school counselor and must pass the state-designated school counselor test
- May also carry national certification as National Certified School Counselor (NCSC)
- Fulfill continuing education requirements through professional development
- Uphold American School Counselor Association (ASCA) ethical and professional standards



Recommended Individual-to-Provider Ratio:

Consider that school counselors work with all students in schools at one district. According to the American School Counselor Association the ratio of students to school counselors is 250:1.

250:1

School Counselor's Role within MTSS:

School counselors spend a majority of their time providing services in Tiers 1 and 2. However, they do provide services across all three tiers.

Tier 1

School counselors provide classroom instruction, schoolwide programs, and individual student planning.

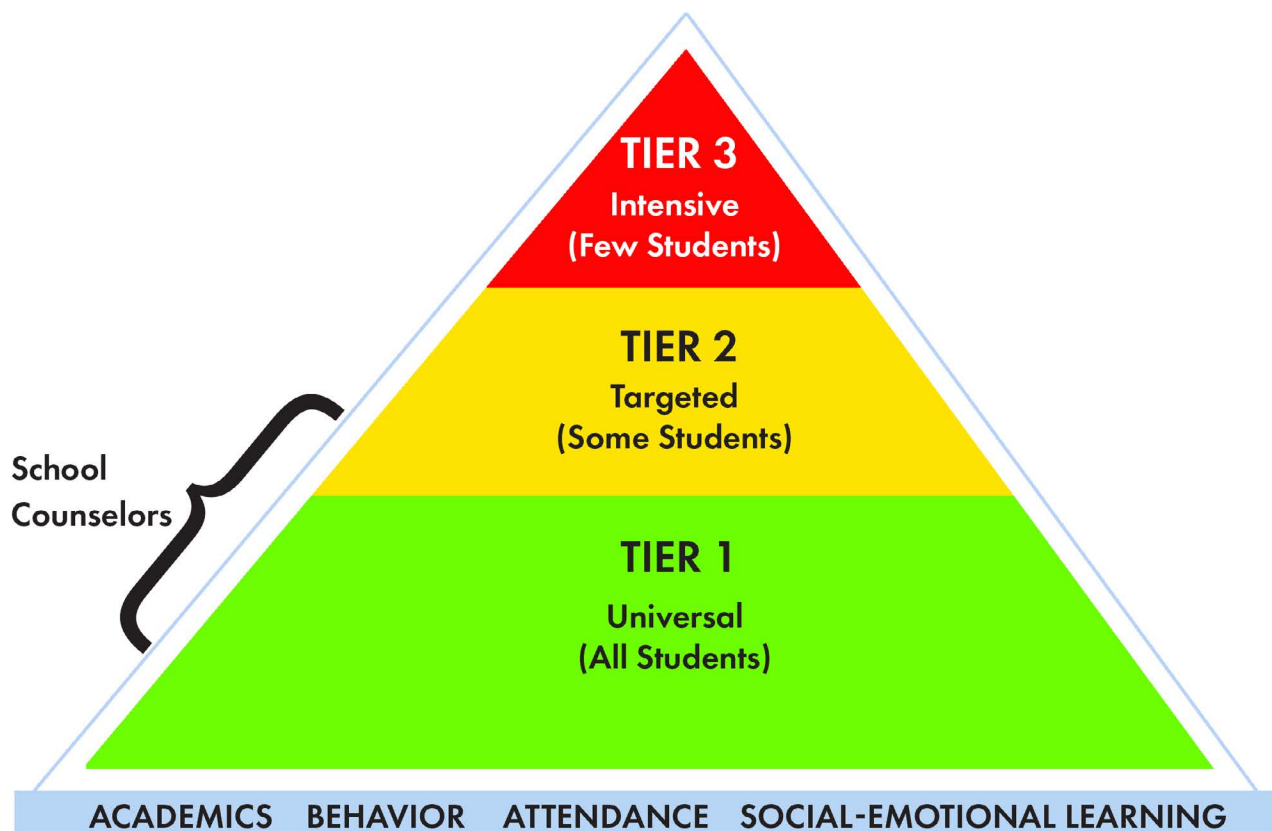
Example Tier 1 activities: Conduct Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) workshops with all seniors; and provide support for teaching social-emotional curriculum to all students and ensure teachers are reinforcing and demonstrating skills with students.

Tier 2

Using data and referrals, school counselors spend some time in Tier 2 with some students who need additional needs using small and large group counseling, short-term individual counseling, consultation and collaboration with teachers and staff, family support, and/or referral to in-school resources. Example Tier 2 activity: Facilitate short-term, friendship skills small group counseling for 3rd graders who received three or more discipline referrals within the quarter.

Tier 3

School counselors spend less time working with a few students in Tier 3, as this involves short-term, solution-focused, individual counseling for students to address life-changing events and unresolved challenges. If unresolved, or students need longer-term counseling, school counselors refer students in Tier 3 to outside resources. Example Tier 3 activity: Provide short-term, individual counseling with a 7th grader who is not meeting requirements for grade promotion after interventions.



School Counselor's Role:

School counselors are certified educators who improve student success for all students by implementing a comprehensive school counseling program that improves student outcomes. School counselors are employed at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, as well as district supervisory positions. School counselors work to maximize student success, promoting access and equity for all students. As vital members of the school leadership team, school counselors create a school culture of success for all.

School counselors help all students to⁷:

- Apply academic achievement strategies
- Manage emotions and apply interpersonal skills
- Plan for postsecondary options (higher education, military, workforce)

School counselors help all students through:

- Individual student academic planning and goal setting
- School counseling classroom lessons based on student success standards
- Short-term counseling to students
- Providing resources to referrals to long-term support
- Collaboration with families, teachers, administrators, and the community for student success
- Advocacy for students at individual education plan meetings and other student-focused meetings
- Data analysis to identify student issues, needs, and challenges
- Acting as a systems change agent to improve equity and access, achievement, and opportunities for all students
- Coordinate and facilitate programs (mentor, peer support, conflict resolution, and anger management programs) to assist students in developing prosocial behaviors
- Serve as a mediator for student/student, student/teacher, and student/family conflicts

School counselors support school communities by:

- Sharing strategies for supporting student achievement with parents, teachers, and other educators
- Facilitating communication between the school, families, and community mental health services
- Consultation with families, teachers, and administration to understand developmentally appropriate student behavior
- Providing information and support to families navigating postsecondary options with their students (i.e., scholarships, college admission, career)
- Supporting teachers in creating positive classroom environments with consideration of noncognitive factors that contribute to student success
- Removing barriers to the successful implementation of school-family-community partnerships
- Informing the school community of relevant community resources
- Working with administrators in the development and implementation of schoolwide prevention activities and programs
- Being a neutral and resourceful consultant, mediator, and student advocate in the discipline process
- Providing staff development on classroom management, student behavior, and discipline strategies

⁷ "Who Are School Counselors?" American School Counselor Association (ASCA), <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/getmedia/ee8b2e1b-d021-4575-982c-c84402cb2cd2/Role-Statement.pdf>

Appropriate vs. Inappropriate Duties⁸:

Appropriate Activities for School Counselors



- Advisement and appraisal for academic planning
- Orientation, coordination, and academic advising for new students
- Interpreting cognitive, aptitude, and achievement tests
- Providing counseling to students who are tardy or absent
- Providing counseling to students who have disciplinary problems
- Providing short-term individual and small-group counseling services to students
- Consulting with teachers to schedule and present school counseling curriculum lessons based on developmental needs and needs identified through data
- Interpreting student records
- Analyzing grade-point averages in relationship to achievement
- Consulting with teachers about building classroom connections, effective classroom management, and the role of the noncognitive factors in student success
- Protecting student records and information per state and federal regulations
- Consulting with the school principal to identify and resolve student issues, needs, and problems
- Advocating for students at individual education plan meetings, student study teams, and school attendance review boards, as necessary
- Analyzing disaggregated schoolwide and school counseling program data

Inappropriate Activities for School Counselors



- Building the master schedule
- Coordinating paperwork and data entry for all new students
- Coordinating cognitive, aptitude, and achievement testing programs
- Signing excuses for students who are tardy or absent
- Performing disciplinary actions or assigning discipline consequences
- Providing long-term counseling in schools to address psychological disorders
- Covering classes when teachers are absent or to create teacher planning time
- Maintaining student records
- Computing grade-point averages
- Supervising classrooms or common areas
- Keeping clerical records
- Assisting with duties in the principal's office
- Coordinating schoolwide individual education plans, 504 plans, student study teams, response to intervention plans, MTSS, and school attendance review boards
- Serving as a data entry clerk

⁸ "Appropriate and Inappropriate Activities for School Counselors." American School Counselor Association (ASCA), <https://schoolcounselor.org/getmedia/8fe536c2-7a32-4102-8ce7-42e9b0683b3b/appropriate-activities-of-school-counselors.pdf>.

Additional Resources:

- [Who Are School Counselors?](#)
- [Department of Education School Counselor Certification](#)
- [Guidance Counselor vs. School Counselor](#)
- [ASCA Appropriate and Inappropriate Activities for School Counselors](#)
- [ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors](#)
- [ASCA Student Standards: Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success](#)
- [ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies](#)
- [Multi-Tiered, Multi-Domain Systems of Supports \(MTMDSS\) for School Counselors](#)
- Professional Associations
 - [American School Counselor Association](#)
 - [South Dakota School Counselor Association](#)
 - [South Dakota Counseling Association](#)
- School Counseling Graduate Programs in South Dakota
 - [Northern State University](#)
 - [South Dakota State University](#)
 - [University of South Dakota](#)

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

School psychologists provide a focused reach for identified students specifically in areas of motivation, specific learning strategies, childhood intellectual disabilities, psychological, socio-behavioral, and skill-based assessments, and evaluation.



Unique Training:

School psychologists complete a master's program with coursework related to:

- Preparation in mental health and educational interventions
- Child development
- Learning, behaviors, motivation
- Curriculum and instruction
- Assessment
- Consultation and collaboration
- School law and systems
- 600-hour practicum
- Year-long supervised internship of 1200 hours



Qualifications:

- Hold a School Psychologist Endorsement through the South Dakota Department of Education, which requires a minimum of education specialist degree in school psychology
- May also carry national certification of Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP)
- Fulfill continuing education requirements through professional development
- Uphold National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) standards for practice and ethics



Recommended Individual-to-Provider Ratio:

Consider that school psychologists work with small groups and individuals and ideally serve one district but may serve multiple school districts. According to the National Association of School Psychologists, the ratio of students to school psychologists should be 500:1.

500:1

School Psychologist's Role within MTSS:

School psychologists spend a majority of their time providing services in Tiers 2 and 3. However, they do provide services across all three tiers.

Tier 1

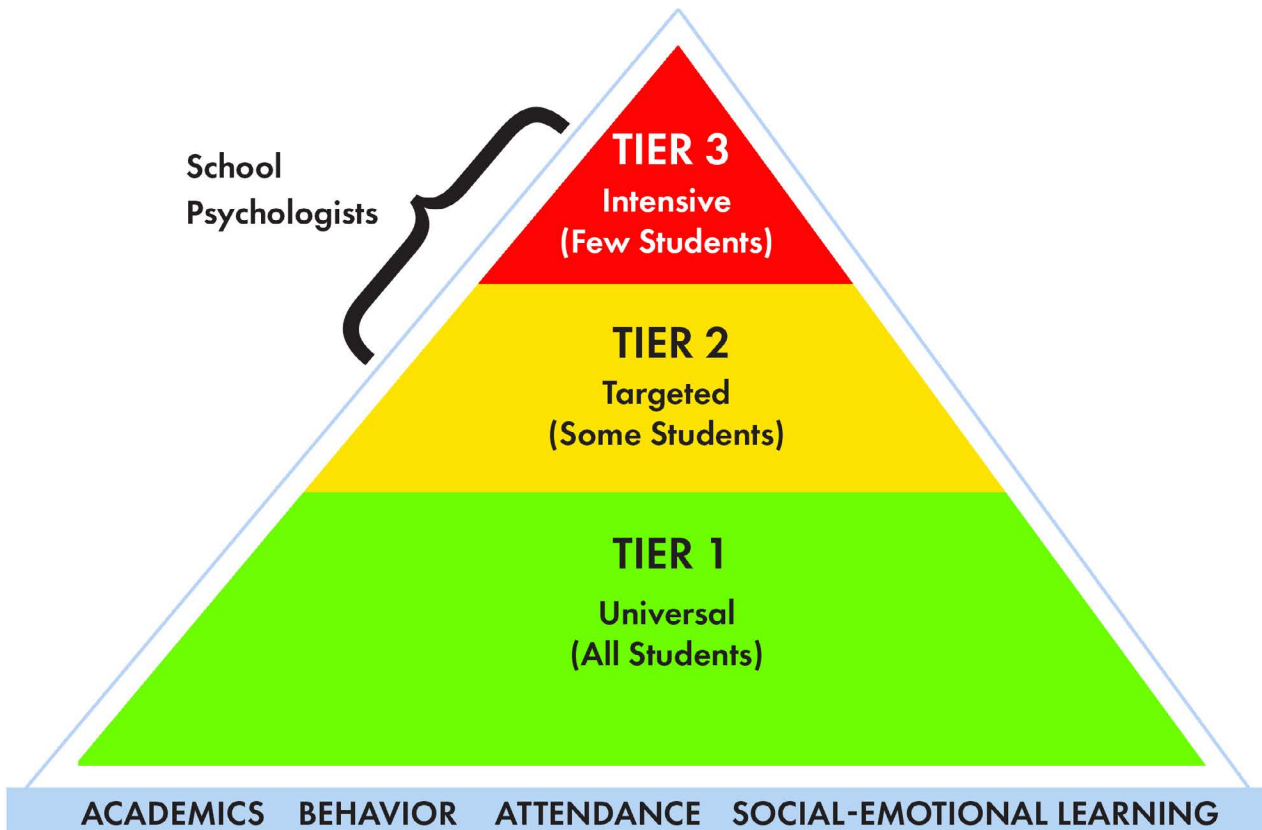
School psychologists provide prevention and collaboration efforts for academic, behavior, and safety to all students. Example Tier 1 activity: Provide professional development to teachers on behavioral supports for students in the classroom.

Tier 2

School psychologists provide targeted academic and social/behavioral interventions at Tier 2. Example Tier 2 activities: Teacher consultation on classroom management strategies; and targeted interventions, either individually or small group, as indicated by data from academic or behavior screening, or parent or teacher referral.

Tier 3

School psychologists provide specialized assessment, typically for special education evaluations, and referral/support for students receiving outside mental health support with continuity of care for Tier 3. Example Tier 3 activity: Administer a formal behavior assessment and work with a team to conduct a functional behavior assessment and design an individual intervention and help the team gather data and monitor progress of behavior progress for a student.



School Psychologist's Role⁹:

School psychologists work with teachers to:

- Identify and resolve academic barriers to learning
- Design and implement student progress monitoring systems
- Design and implement academic and behavioral interventions
- Support effective individualized instruction
- Create positive classroom environments
- Motivate all students to engage in learning

School psychologists work with community providers to:

- Coordinate the delivery of services to students and their families in and outside of school
- Help students transition to and from school and community learning environments, such as residential treatment or juvenile justice programs

School psychologists work with administrators to:

- Collect and analyze data related to school improvement, student outcomes, and accountability requirements
- Implement school-wide prevention programs that help maintain positive school climates conducive to learning
- Promote school policies and practices that ensure the safety of all students by reducing school violence, bullying, and harassment
- Respond to crises by providing leadership, direct services, and coordination with needed community services
- Design, implement, and garner support for comprehensive school mental health programming

Where school psychologists work:

The majority of school psychologists work in schools; however, they may practice in a variety of settings including¹⁰:

- Public and private schools
- Universities
- School-based mental health and mental health centers
- Community-based day-treatment or residential clinics and hospitals
- Juvenile justice centers
- Private practice, with appropriate licensure

⁹ "The Profession of School Psychology." *School Psych 101*, <https://schoolpsych101.weebly.com/the-profession-of-school-psychology.html>

¹⁰ "Who are School Psychologists." *National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)*, <https://www.nasponline.org/about-school-psychology/who-are-school-psychologists>

Appropriate vs. Inappropriate Duties:

Appropriate Activities for School Psychologists



- Consult and collaborate with teachers to support classroom engagement, management, and academic factors important for student success
- Analyze disaggregated schoolwide data to support academic growth of all students
- Provide short-term individual and small group counseling as well as mental health supports to students
- Consult with the school principal to identify and resolve student issues, needs, and problems
- Provide professional development to teachers and staff regarding student academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs
- Advocate for students at individual education plan meetings, student study teams, and school attendance review boards, as necessary

Inappropriate Activities for School Psychologists



- Maintain student records
- Cover classes when teachers are absent or to create teacher planning time
- Supervise classrooms or common areas
- Keep clerical records
- Assist with duties in the principal's office
- Student discipline

Additional Resources:

- [Who Are School Psychologists?](#)
- [School Psychologist Endorsement Requirements \(ARSD 24:28:27:03\)](#)
- [National Association of School Psychologists \(NASP\) Professional Standards](#)
- Professional Associations
 - [National Association of School Psychologists](#)
 - [South Dakota Association of School Psychologists](#)
- School Psychology Graduate or Doctorate Program in South Dakota
 - [University of South Dakota](#)

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS

School social workers provide a focused reach with identified students specifically in areas of social-emotional and mental health needs, and are uniquely trained to integrate the school, community, and family context into interventions and resources referrals.



Unique Training:

School social workers complete a master's program with coursework related to:

- Theories of social work practice (including Ecological Theory and Strengths Perspective)
- Social work practice research and methods
- Social policy and program development
- Evidence based practice and research
- Cultural responsiveness
- Ideally, inclusion of courses specific to school social work practice and special education
- History and philosophy of social work
- Mental health assessment and treatment
- Human behavior in the social environment
- Diversity and social justice in rural and urban communities
- Advanced practice with individuals, children, and families
- Minimum 500-hour practicum in social work setting
- Once a master's degree in social work (MSW) is completed and licensing exam for Certified Social Worker has been passed, an additional two years of supervision (3,000 hours) in a supervised clinical setting and secondary licensing exam is required if the individual seeks private, independent practice (CSW-PIP) licensure



Qualifications:

- Hold a master's degree in social work (MSW) AND pass the National Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) exam to become licensed in the state
- Local education agencies should ensure that school social workers have an MSW degree from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)
- In rare cases, should the local education agency employ school social workers with a bachelor's degree in social work (BSW), an MSW-level social worker MUST provide supervision
- Become licensed by the South Dakota Board of Social Work Examiners, based on level of education and experience
- MSW: Training and skills to provide services beyond case management through advanced clinical mental health practice, and may also be trained in a specialty area, such as school social work. Master level school social workers under clinical supervision or holding a clinical license have received instructional hours in evidence-based theory, practices, and curricula through clinical coursework and post-MSW supervision to competently practice mental health/behavioral assessments, interventions, evaluations, and diagnoses.
- BSW: The bachelor-level social worker is prepared for practice of mental health case management
- Fulfill continuing education requirements through professional development required by the South Dakota Board of Social Work

- Uphold National Standards for School Social Work, provided by the National Association of Social Workers
- Uphold ethical standards through the National Association of Social Workers and Midwest School Social Work Council
- May earn the National Certified School Social Worker™, an advanced practice certification available to the School Social Work Association of America similar to the national certification for teachers



Recommended Individual-to-Provider Ratio:

Consider that school social workers work with classrooms, small groups, individuals, and families; ideally serve one district but may serve multiple districts. According to the National Association of Social Workers, and supported by the School Social Work Association of America, the ratio of students to school social workers should be 250:1, except when the student population requires more intensive services; then it should be 50:1.

250:1

School Social Worker's Role within MTSS:

School social workers have the training and are involved in providing interventions within all three tiers equally using data to inform eligibility and extent of need for their services across all three tiers of support while also collaborating with other specialized instructional support personnel.

Tier 1

School social workers provide Tier 1 services such as:

- Programmatic assessments (i.e. needs assessments, readiness assessments, etc.) to determine necessary interventions and/or readiness for universal social-emotional learning
- Psychoeducation
- Consultation and recommendations surrounding trauma-sensitive practices for schools
- Plan and implement family engagement activities
- Facilitation of restorative practices
- Professional development for teachers and staff
- Implementation of culturally responsive practices across the school
- Participate on the leadership team to speak about policies, programs, and current events related to social-emotional needs of students

Example Tier 1 activity: Provide bullying prevention training to all students.

Tier 2

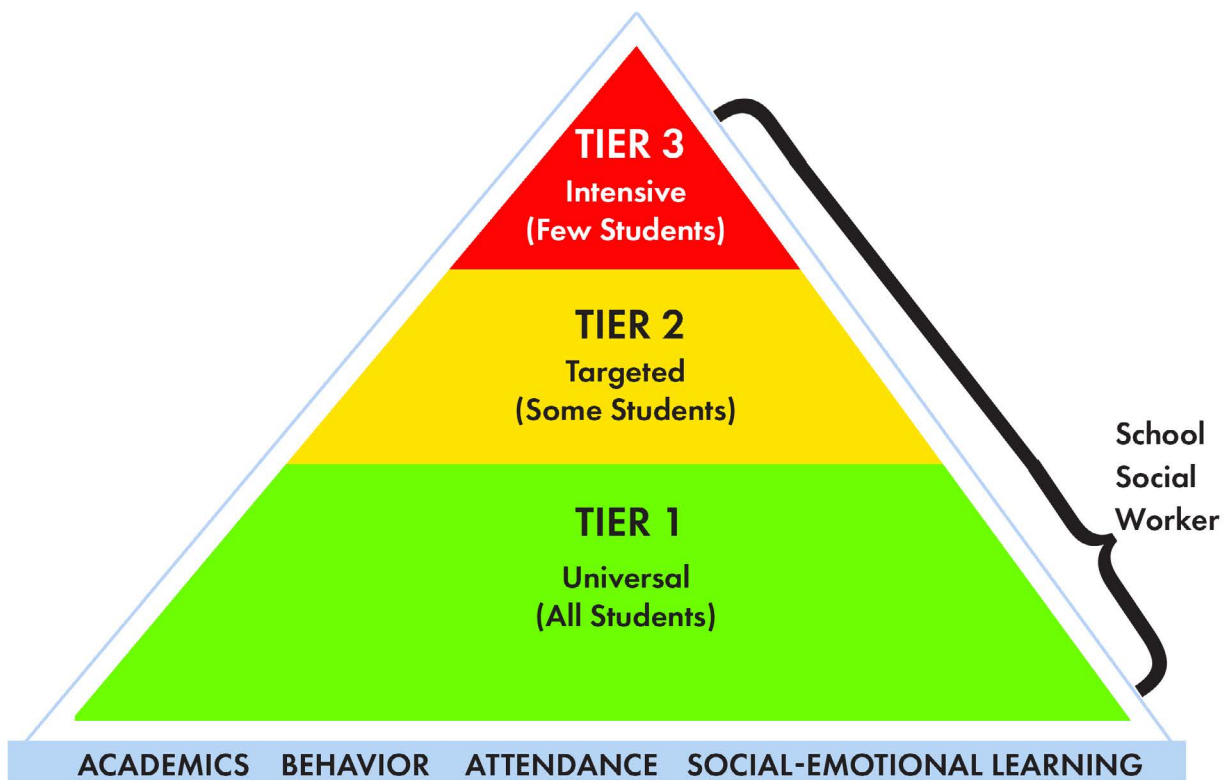
Within Tier 2, school social workers provide services and referrals for students and their families in order to solve problems and prevent long-term needs. Tier 2 services provided by a school social worker may include, but are not limited to:

- Short-term therapeutic group work
- Individual and/or classroom behavioral modification support
- Teacher consultation
- Establishing mentoring or other programs

School social workers use data to determine the extent to which services in Tier 2 are helping the student(s) to develop. Example Tier 2 activity: Provide short-term, small group counseling to work on social skill building.

Tier 3

School social workers provide more intensive support in Tier 3 by utilizing therapeutic approaches. These therapies are meant to reduce barriers to academic and school-related achievement. When services provided in Tier 3 do not diminish the student's discrepancies or needs, then school social workers may be part of the evaluation team that is determining whether a student qualifies for special education or 504 plan. School social workers may be part of an interdisciplinary team that provide special education services for students whose social-emotional needs interfere with their functioning in school. Example Tier 3 activity: Assist with evaluation team to determine if a student qualifies for an IEP or 504 plan.



School Social Worker's Role¹¹:

School Social Worker Services to Students:

- Counseling (individual or group) and crisis intervention when needed
- Mobilizing family, school, and community resources to enable the child to learn as effectively as possible in his or her education program
- Assisting in developing positive behavioral intervention strategies utilizing social justice principles and restorative practices
- Developing intervention strategies to develop social-emotional skills and increase academic success

School Social Worker Services to Parent/Families:

- Engaging parents in the educational system
- Alleviating family stress to enable the child to function more effectively in school and community
- Assisting parents to access programs available to students with various needs
- Assisting parents in accessing and utilizing school and community resources

School Social Worker Services to School Personnel:

- Providing staff with essential knowledge and skills through consultation and staff in-service to better understand factors affecting a student's performance and behavior
- Assessing students with mental health concerns
- Assisting teachers with behavior management and positive behavioral supports
- Work with other specialized support personnel to provide a coordinated approach to counseling and interventions

School Social Worker Services to Districts:

- Assist with developing positive school climate and safety/crisis plans
- Promote and develop appropriate trauma-informed practices and culturally appropriate practices
- Addressing systemic needs such as dropout prevention, students experiencing homelessness, students in foster care, racial inequities, etc.
- Coordinate systems of care to provide wraparound services

¹¹"School Social Work Services." School Social Work Association of America <https://www.sswaa.org/school-social-work>.

Appropriate vs. Inappropriate Duties:

Appropriate Activities for School Social Worker



- School social workers utilize Tier 1, 2, and 3 approaches to: provide evidence-based education, behavior, and mental health services, promote a school climate and culture conducive to student learning and teaching excellence, and maximize access to school-based and community-based resources.
- Provide evidence-based education, behavior, and mental health services:
 - Implement needs assessments for schoolwide climate/culture to promote and develop multi-tiered trauma-informed and culturally-responsive practices
 - Conduct bio-psychosocial assessments and social histories to identify and support student educational needs
 - Provide therapeutic support to students struggling to function in the school setting
 - Use data-based decision making to determine which students qualify for school-based services
 - Measure student outcomes and evaluate service effectiveness
 - Implement restorative practices (anti-punitive discipline) to combat the school-to-prison pipeline
 - Complete risk assessments, crisis intervention services, and referrals on behalf of students
 - Lead “problem solving teams” and other interdisciplinary teams to support student(s)’ growth
- Promote a school climate and culture conducive to student learning and teaching excellence:
 - Promote effective school policies and administrative procedures
 - Evaluate and provide leadership and support for implementation of building/district crisis plans
 - Advocate for marginalized students in order to work towards closing achievement gaps, increasing inclusionary practices, dropout prevention, students experiencing homelessness or foster care placements, and addressing other systemic needs
 - Share aggregate data with school administrators and the school board to demonstrate the impact of school social work services on student success
 - Provide teacher and staff consultation, problem-solving, and professional development on topics such as trauma, mental health, child/adolescent development, and interventions that are culturally informed
 - Facilitate engagement between staff, family, school, and community
 - Provide education and coaching to parents regarding student educational rights
 - Conduct home visits to establish or improve school-family relationship/partnership
- Maximize access to school-based and community-based resources:
 - Promote a continuum of services, provide referrals, mobilize resources that promote assets and ensure culturally responsive referrals
 - Provide innovative leadership, interdisciplinary collaboration, systems coordination, and professional consultation

Inappropriate Activities for School Social Worker



- Provide only Tier 3 services
- Act as a substitute teacher, cafeteria monitor, driver, student scheduler, career services provider, and/or monitor for bus or playground duty
- Administer progress monitoring and/or state assessments
- Assume role of disciplinarian
- Provide therapeutic support to students who are succeeding in school but may have recognized challenges in the home or community; in these instances, school social workers should provide referrals
- Address/school zone verifications
- Home visits to deliver paperwork or to investigate the home/family environment

Additional Resources:

- [School Social Workers' Role in Addressing Students' Mental Health Needs and Increasing Academic Achievement](#)
- [South Dakota Board of Social Work Examiners](#)
- [School Social Work Practice Model](#)
- [School Social Work Services](#)
- [NASW Standards for School Social Workers](#)
- [SSWAA National SEL Standards](#)
- [National Association of Social Workers \(NASW\) Code of Ethics](#)
- [Midwest School Social Work Council Supplemental Ethical Standards for School Social Work Practice](#)
- [National Certified School Social Worker](#)
- Professional Associations
 - [School Social Work Association of America](#)
 - [National Association of Social Workers](#)
 - [National Association of Social Workers - South Dakota Chapter](#)
- Graduate Program in Social Work in South Dakota
 - [University of South Dakota](#)

COMMUNITY-BASED CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS AND SOCIAL WORKERS

Community-based clinical mental health counselors and social workers provide a focused reach for identified students needing additional mental health and behavioral supports based on clinical assessments and identified mental health disorders.



Unique Training:

Community-based clinical mental health counselors complete a master's program with coursework related to:

- Psychopharmacology
- Legal and ethical considerations for clinical mental health providers
- Assessments and diagnosis
- Counseling theory
- Human growth and development
- Social and cultural diversity
- Group counseling
- 600-hour internship in a clinical mental health setting
- Once a master's degree is completed, providers complete a license exam followed by an additional two years of supervised clinical practice and an advanced licensing exam to obtain licensure

Community-based clinical mental health social workers complete a master's program with coursework related to:

- History and philosophy of social work
- Mental health assessment and treatment
- Human behavior in the social environment
- Diversity and social justice in rural and urban communities
- Advanced practice with individuals, children, and families
- Minimum 500-hour practicum in social work setting
- Once a master's degree in social work (MSW) is completed and licensing board for Certified Social Worker has been passed, an additional two years of supervision (3,000 hours) in a supervised clinical setting and secondary licensing exam is required if the individual seeks private, independent practice (CSW-PIP) licensure

Clinicians working at a community mental health center have at least an associate's degree to provide intake, case management, family education and support, liaison services, direct assistance, psychosocial rehabilitative services, and recovery support services. Clinicians hold a master's degree in psychology, social work, counseling or nursing, or a bachelor's degree in a human services field and two years of related experience to provide therapy. Both levels work under the supervision of a clinical supervisor who holds a license and has two years of supervised, postgraduate clinical experience in a mental health setting. Clinicians from community mental health centers provide a comprehensive array of interventions for students meeting criteria for serious emotional disturbance¹².

¹² "Serious emotional disturbance defined." South Dakota Codified Law 27A-15-1.1 https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/Codified_Laws/2051315

**Qualifications:**

- Community-based clinical mental health counselors hold a master's or doctorate degree in counseling and may seek licensure through the South Dakota Board of Examiners for Counselors & Marriage and Family Therapists
 - Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)
 - Licensed Professional Counselor-Mental Health (LPC-MH)
- Community-based clinical mental health social workers hold a master's or doctorate degree in social work and may seek licensure through the South Dakota Board of Examiners of Social Workers:
- Certified Social Worker to engage in Private, Independent Practice (CSW-PIP)
- Clinicians from community mental health centers meet training and supervision requirements established by the South Dakota Department of Social Services
- Fulfill continuing education requirements through professional development
- Uphold professional code of ethics, depending on type of provider

**Recommended Individual-to-Provider Ratio:**

Consider that each clinical mental health provider working through a public or private funded agency will be serving clients and districts, and providing individual and small group counseling to students with intensive needs with caseloads up to approximately 50 clients actively receiving services at any one time.

Not Applicable

Community-Based Clinical Mental Health Counselors and Social Worker's Role in MTSS:

Community-based clinical mental health counselors & social workers spend a majority of their time providing services in Tiers 2 and 3. However, they do provide services across all three tiers.

Tier 1

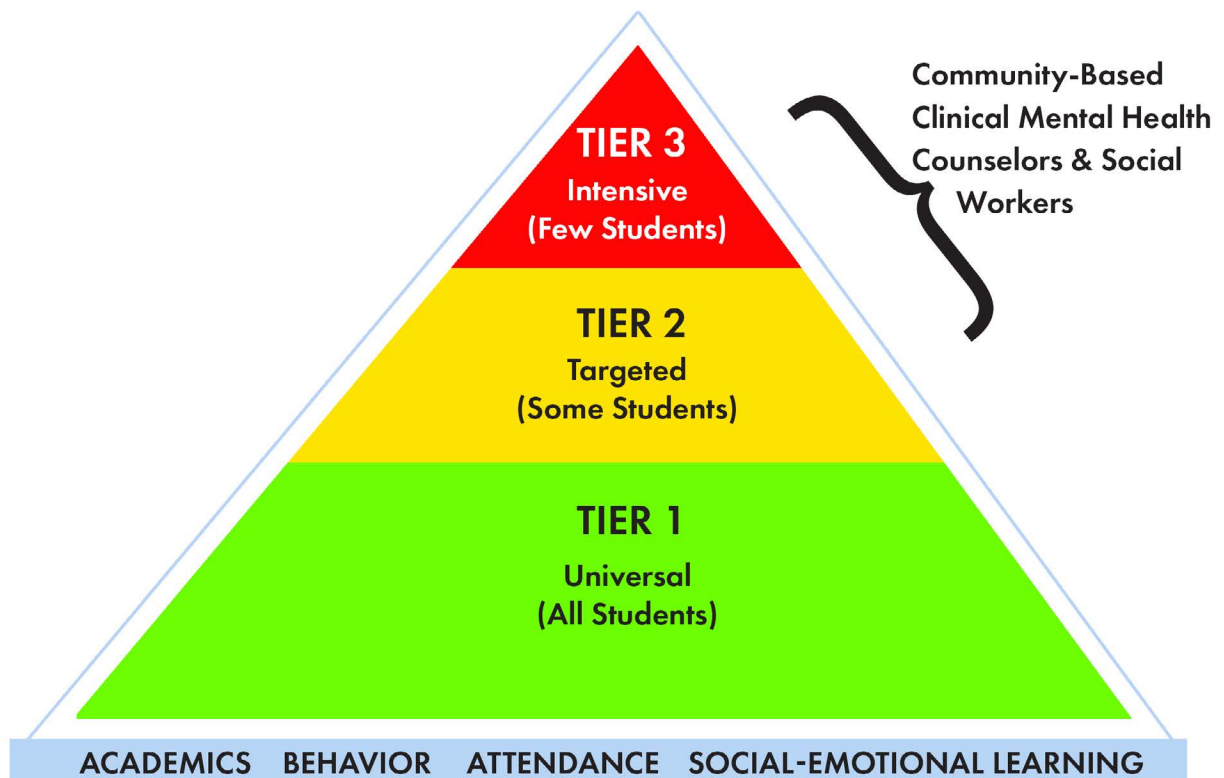
Community-based clinical mental health clinicians provide prevention and collaboration efforts that benefit all students. Example Tier 1 activity: Provide teacher professional development on trauma.

Tier 2

Community-based clinical mental health clinicians provide consultation with educators and small group counseling services to targeted students. Example Tier 2 activity: Provide small group counseling for grief.

Tier 3

Community-based clinical mental health clinicians provide more intensive support through individual counseling for identified students needing additional mental health and behavioral support as well as crisis intervention. They also provide referrals for students who need placement into a treatment setting. Example Tier 3 activity: Provide long-term, individual counseling with a student who has post-traumatic stress disorder.



Appropriate vs. Inappropriate Duties

Appropriate Activities for Community-Based Clinical Mental Health Counselors and Social Workers



- Provide short-term and long-term individual, family, and small-group counseling to identified students needing additional mental health and behavioral supports
- Administer and interpret clinical assessments with students as part of therapeutic appraisal
- Focus on the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental illness, emotional, and other behavioral disturbances
- Provide professional development for school staff
- Be a part of the school's crisis plan
- Collaborate with teachers, administrators, and other school personnel to plan appropriate treatment and assist school personnel to respond therapeutically regarding the student's mental illness

Inappropriate Activities for Community-Based Clinical Mental Health Counselors and Social Workers



- Provide broad counseling services to all students at one school
- Provide classroom observations of any student
- Facilitate classroom lessons or prevention services

Additional Resources

- [Community Mental Health Centers Staff Credentials \(ARSD 67:62:06:03\)](#)
- [South Dakota Regional Community Mental Health Centers](#)
- Community-Based Clinical Mental Health Counseling Resources:
 - [What is a Counselor?](#)
 - [South Dakota Board of Examiners for Counselors & Marriage and Family Therapists](#)
 - [ACA Code of Ethics](#)
 - [AMHCA Standards for the Practice of Clinical Mental Health Counseling](#)
- Professional Associations
 - [American Counseling Association](#)
 - [South Dakota Counseling Association](#)
 - [South Dakota Mental Health Counseling Association](#)
- Graduate and/or Doctorate Programs in South Dakota
 - [Northern State University](#)
 - [South Dakota State University](#)
 - [University of South Dakota](#)
- Community-Based Clinical Mental Health Social Work Resources:
 - [South Dakota Board of Social Work Examiners](#)
 - [NASW Standards for Clinical Social Work in Social Work Practice](#)
 - [NASW Code of Ethics](#)
- Professional Associations
 - [National Association of Social Workers](#)
 - [National Association of Social Workers - South Dakota Chapter](#)
- Graduate Program in Social Work in South Dakota
 - [University of South Dakota](#)

REFERENCES

Mental Health Facts

- Mental Health by the Numbers <https://nami.org/mhstats>
- Treatment Options <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/youth-mental-health/treatment-options-youth-mental-health-disorders>
- Facts & Stats on South Dakota Suicide Prevention <https://sdsuicideprevention.org/about-suicide/facts-stats>
- How the Pandemic Has Affected Teen Mental Health <https://mottpoll.org/reports/how-pandemic-has-impacted-teen-mental-health>
- Comprehensive School-Based Mental and Behavioral Health Services and School Psychologists <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/mental-health/school-psychology-and-mental-health/comprehensive-school-based-mental-and-behavioral-health-services-and-school-psychologists>
- A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/systems-level-prevention/a-framework-for-safe-and-successful-schools>

School Counselors

- Who Are School Counselors? <https://schoolcounselor.org/getmedia/a0e5b299-5798-4a1c-b4f9-59f99a9c81c0/SC-Infographic.pdf>
- Department of Education School Counselor Certification <https://doe.sd.gov/certification/counselor.aspx>
- Guidance Counselor vs. School Counselor <https://schoolcounselor.org/getmedia/c8d97962-905f-4a33-958b-744a770d71c6/Guidance-Counselor-vs-School-Counselor.pdf>
- ASCA Appropriate and Inappropriate Activities for School Counselors <https://schoolcounselor.org/getmedia/8fe536c2-7a32-4102-8ce7-42e9b0683b3b/appropriate-activities-of-school-counselors.pdf>
- ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors [https://schoolcounselor.org/About-School-Counseling/Ethical-Legal-Responsibilities/ASCA-Ethical-Standards-for-School-Counselors-\(1\)](https://schoolcounselor.org/About-School-Counseling/Ethical-Legal-Responsibilities/ASCA-Ethical-Standards-for-School-Counselors-(1))
- ASCA Student Standards: Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success <https://schoolcounselor.org/getmedia/7428a787-a452-4abb-afec-d78ec77870cd/Mindsets-Behaviors.pdf>
- ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies <https://schoolcounselor.org/getmedia/a8d59c2c-51de-4ec3-a565-a3235f3b93c3/SC-Competencies.pdf>
- Multi-Tiered, Multi-Domain Systems of Supports (MTMDSS) for School Counselors <https://vimeo.com/263614932>
- Professional Associations
 - American School Counselor Association <https://schoolcounselor.org/>
 - South Dakota School Counselor Association <http://www.sdschoolcounselors.com/>
 - South Dakota Counseling Association <https://www.sdounseling.org/>
- Graduate Programs in South Dakota
 - Northern State University <https://www.northern.edu/programs/graduate/counseling-masters>
 - South Dakota State University https://catalog.sdstate.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=43&poid=10128
 - University of South Dakota <https://www.usd.edu/education/cpe/counseling>

School Psychologists

- Who Are School Psychologists? <https://www.nasponline.org/about-school-psychology/who-are-school-psychologists>
- School Psychologist Endorsement Requirements (ARSD 24:28:27:03) <https://sdlegislature.gov/Rules/Administrative/39103>
- National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Professional Standards <https://www.nasponline.org/standards-and-certification/professional-ethics>
- Professional Associations
 - National Association of School Psychologists <https://www.nasponline.org/>
 - South Dakota Association of School Psychologists <https://sites.google.com/view/sdasp/home>
- Graduate or Doctorate Program in South Dakota
 - University of South Dakota <https://www.usd.edu/education/cpe/school-psychology>

School Social Workers

- School Social Workers' Role in Addressing Students' Mental Health Needs and Increasing Academic Achievement https://aab82939-3e7b-497d-8f30-a85373757e29.filesusr.com/ugd/486e55_5c7e1bd8a31e4400895dd1c6bb77d1d0.pdf
- South Dakota Board of Social Work Examiners <https://dss.sd.gov/licensingboards/socialwork/social.aspx>
- School Social Work Practice Model https://aab82939-3e7b-497d-8f30-a85373757e29.filesusr.com/ugd/486e55_bc9b15d583264806a8664c192d82853f.pdf
- School Social Work Services <https://www.sswaa.org/school-social-work>
- NASW Standards for School Social Workers https://aab82939-3e7b-497d-8f30-a85373757e29.filesusr.com/ugd/426a18_e21a4e36a3014434988a27f95945fb01.pdf
- SSWAA National SEL Standards https://aab82939-3e7b-497d-8f30-a85373757e29.filesusr.com/ugd/426a18_966d8eb4f4a94f62974304c077c1a619.pdf
- National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>
- Midwest School Social Work Council Supplemental Ethical Standards for School Social Work Practice https://aab82939-3e7b-497d-8f30-a85373757e29.filesusr.com/ugd/426a18_b28e09dcf-05342b694a1b16627adb886.pdf
- National Certified School Social Worker <https://www.sswaa.org/national-certification>
- Professional Associations
 - School Social Work Association of America <https://www.sswaa.org/>
 - National Association of Social Workers <https://www.socialworkers.org/>
 - National Association of Social Workers - South Dakota Chapter <https://naswsd.socialworkers.org>
- Graduate Program in South Dakota
 - University of South Dakota <https://www.usd.edu/health-sciences/social-work/graduate>

Community-Based Clinical Mental Health Counselors & Social Workers

- Community Mental Health Centers Staff Credentials (ARSD 67:62:06:03) <https://sdlegislature.gov/Rules/Administrative/38589>
- South Dakota Regional Community Mental Health Centers https://dss.sd.gov/formsandpubs/docs/BH/cmhc_flyer.pdf
- Serious Emotional Disturbance Defined (SDCL 27A-15-1.1) https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/Codified_Laws/2051315
- Community-Based Clinical Mental Health Counseling Resources:
 - What is a Counselor? <https://www.sdounseling.org/what-is-a-counselor->
 - South Dakota Board of Examiners for Counselors & Marriage and Family Therapists <https://dss.sd.gov/licensingboards/counselors/counselors.aspx>
 - ACA Code of Ethics https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/2014-code-of-ethics-finaladdressc97d33f16116603abcacff0000bee5e7.pdf?sfvrsn=5d-6b532c_0
 - AMHCA Standards for the Practice of Clinical Mental Health Counseling <https://www.amhca.org/publications/standards>
- Professional Associations
 - American Counseling Association <https://www.counseling.org/>
 - South Dakota Counseling Association <https://www.sdounseling.org/>
 - South Dakota Mental Health Counseling Association <https://www.sdounseling.org/sdmhca>
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 - South Dakota State University https://catalog.sdstate.edu/preview_program.php?caid=43&poaid=10125
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 - South Dakota Board of Social Work Examiners <https://dss.sd.gov/licensingboards/socialwork/social.aspx>
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