



ISSWA

IOWA SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS' ASSOCIATION

OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK SERVICES

School social workers play a vital role connecting home, school, and community in a unified effort to support students in the educational setting. Working collaboratively with other specialized instructional support personnel (SISP), school social workers provide a skilled spectrum of services ranging from engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation of outcomes related to the students, families, schools, and communities they serve. Research on school social work has confirmed that school social work interventions improve students' emotional and behavioral problems (Allen-Meares et al., 2013; Franklin et al., 2013) and have a positive effect on academic outcomes (Alvarez et al., 2009; Franklin et al., 2013). As licensed mental health professionals and practitioners, most school social workers in Iowa are dually licensed by the Board of Social Work (BoSW) and the Board of Educational Examiners (BoEE) to provide evidence-informed knowledge, skills, and abilities mapped to the national school social worker practice model (Frey et al., 2013).

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA NATIONAL PRACTICE MODEL

| Provide evidence-based education, behavior & mental health services | Promote a school climate and culture conducive to student learning & teaching excellence | Maximize access to school-based & community-based resources |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement multi-tiered programs and practices ● Monitor progress ● Evaluate service effectiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promote effective school policies and administrative procedures ● Enhance professional capacity of school personnel ● Facilitate engagement between student, family, school, and community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promote a continuum of services ● Mobilize resources and promote assets ● Provide innovative leadership, interdisciplinary collaboration, systems coordination, and professional consultation |

EVIDENCE-INFORMED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS SERVING GENERAL AND SPECIAL EDUCATION SETTINGS IN IOWA THROUGH A MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT

| Special Education Funded Service Examples | General Education Funded Services Examples |
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| <p>Tier 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaborate with district leaders/multidisciplinary teams to contribute to the development of policies and practices within an MTSS model which may include: climate and culture, academics, SEBMH, safety, crisis intervention, suicide awareness, active shooter ● Provide innovative school social work leadership, interdisciplinary collaboration, systems coordination, and professional consultation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attend school board meetings, serve on community boards, join ISSWA/SSWAA, serve on educational leadership teams, attend state, regional, and national school social work conferences, know your local & state representatives, personalize action alerts from ISSWA/SSWAA ● Develop and provide professional learning to AEA and LEA staff on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strategies to support students with SEBMH needs ○ Classroom management practices ○ Suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention strategies ○ Academic strategies ○ Development of MTSS systems and practices ● Serve as an external coach for PBIS/MTSS for SEBMH ● Provide guidance on resources to districts on evidence-based SEL curriculum | <p>Tier 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaborate with district leaders/multidisciplinary teams to contribute to the development of policies and practices within an MTSS model which may include: climate and culture, academics, SEBMH, safety, crisis intervention, suicide awareness, active shooter ● Provide innovative school social work leadership, interdisciplinary collaboration, systems coordination, and professional consultation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attend school board meetings, serve on community boards, join ISSWA/SSWAA, serve on educational leadership teams, attend state, regional, and national school social work conferences, know your local & state representatives, personalize action alerts from ISSWA/SSWAA ● Develop and provide SEBMH professional learning for school personnel on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strategies to support students with SEBMH needs ○ Classroom management practices ○ Suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention strategies ● Serve on building level universal student support teams |

Special Education Funded Service Examples

- Model adherence to appropriate laws, school policies, procedures, and professional ethics that impact the provision of school social work services
- Evaluate the effectiveness of services, of a program, or practice for meeting student needs using multiple data points
 - Analyze school social work services, school systems, school-based community services, advocate for educational equity, advocate for inclusive curriculum, etc.
- Coach, collaborate, and consult with all school personnel to enhance academic and social emotional learning
- Facilitate and strengthen home/school/community partnerships

Tier 2

- Collaborate with school and community stakeholders such as families, teachers, administrators, school counselors, IEP teams, community providers/agencies to promote coordination of services for at-risk students
- Provide input to families on social skill development at home
- May participate on tier II student assistance teams to
 - Analyze data to determine which students are in need of tier II interventions and services
 - Identify interventions matched to student need
 - Evaluate the effectiveness and fidelity of tier II interventions for meeting the student needs using multiple data sources

Tier 3

- Participate on tier III student assistance teams to
 - Analyze data to determine which students are in need of tier III interventions and services
 - Identify interventions matched to student need
 - Collaborate in the creation of individualized support plans (such as safety plan, behavior contract, 504 plan, general education SEBMH support plan, IEP services)
 - Coordinate provision of intensive student supports
 - Evaluate the effectiveness and fidelity of tier III interventions for meeting the student needs using multiple data sources
- Attend & facilitate disability suspect meetings and complete related documentation
- Administer, score, and interpret academic and/or SEBMH individual assessments and communicate results to educational teams for individuals being considered for special education entitlement.
- Collaborate with school and community stakeholders such as families, teachers, administrators, school counselors, para educators, IEP team members, AEA personnel, and community providers/agencies to promote coordination of special education services
- Conduct individualized function-based assessments and develop behavior intervention plans
- Collaborate on student progress monitoring by determining appropriate assessment instruments and creating progress monitoring tools.
- Monitor fidelity of special education service implementation and documentation to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations, AEA procedures, and district developed special education plans
- Collaborate with and/or provide coaching to special education teachers, administrators, and general education teachers regarding student progress, data-based decision-making, IEP services, and documentation.

General Education Funded Services Examples

- Model adherence to appropriate laws, school policies, procedures, and professional ethics that impact the provision of school social work services
- Evaluate the effectiveness of services, of a program, or practice for meeting student needs using multiple data points
 - Analyze school social work services, school systems, school-based community services, advocate for educational equity, advocate for inclusive curriculum, etc.
- Attend inter-agency community meetings to stay knowledgeable of community resources and contribute to community-wide service planning
- Coach, collaborate, and consult with all school personnel to enhance academic and social emotional learning
- Facilitate and strengthen home/school/community partnerships
- Provide universal interventions that address SEBMH needs

Tier 2

- Collaborate with school and community stakeholders such as families, teachers, administrators, school counselors, IEP teams, AEA personnel, community providers/agencies to promote coordination of services for at-risk students
- Conduct home-visits
- Provide input to families on social skill development at home
- Participate on tier II student assistance teams to
 - Analyze data to determine which students are in need of tier II interventions and services
 - Identify interventions matched to student need
 - Coordinate provision of supplemental student supports
 - Evaluate the effectiveness and fidelity of tier II interventions for meeting the student needs using multiple data sources
- Provide supplemental SEBMH skill development to individuals or groups matched to student need

Tier 3

- Collaborate with school and community stakeholders such as families, teachers, administrators, school counselors, IEP teams, AEA personnel, community providers/agencies to promote coordination of services for at-risk students
- Participate on tier III student assistance teams to
 - Analyze data to determine which students are in need of tier III interventions and services
 - Identify interventions matched to student need
 - Create individualized support plans (such as safety plan, behavior contract, 504 plan, general education SEBMH support plan)
 - Coordinate provision of intensive student supports
 - Evaluate the effectiveness and fidelity of tier III interventions for meeting the student needs using multiple data sources
- Provide individual counseling and group counseling

Special Education Funded Service Examples

- Conduct behavior and/or academic reevaluations
- Assist with student transitions (from IFSP to an IEP, between buildings and post-secondary)
- Conduct home-visits
- Sign monthly Medicaid forms
- Complete and/or consult on Manifestation Determinations
- Participate in district, regional, and agency-directed professional learning
- Participate on Crisis Response Team
- Provide Conflict Resolution/Mediation services
- Provide individual social work services documented in the IEP: "Provides behavioral, social, emotional, developmental and educational assessment and direct services through counseling in the home, school and community"
- Provide social work services not documented in the IEP

General Education Funded Services Examples

- Participate on district/building Crisis Response Team
- Review student records, conduct interviews and complete individualized SEBMH assessments
- Perform suicide risk assessments and coordinate post-vention support plans
- Conduct crisis assessments such as threat assessments, abuse/neglect, homelessness, etc.

DETERMINATION OF NEED: WORKLOAD VERSUS CASELOAD APPROACH

As the landscape of school-based mental health services continues to evolve, so too must the process by which schools and districts both understand and respond to the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of their students and school community. Stagnate claims that specific ratios for specialized instructional support personnel from various professional groups simply do not have the research evidence to support their claims (Hyson, Knick, Leifgren, McCoy & Ochocki, 2013). When considering the collective student support service program needs, a school or district would be better positioned to prevent and respond to student needs by conducting a mental health needs assessment (American Institute of Research [AIR], 2017). Utilizing data-driven decision-making that incorporates multiple stakeholders and considers services programming driven by a workload approach (AIR, 2017; Whitmore, 2017). Workload approaches to student support staffing ensure that the continuum of activities provided within the student services program is staffed appropriately to meet the needs identified in the school or district's mental health assessment while also ensuring compliance with applicable local, state, and federal mandates (Whitmore, 2017).

The following factors are helpful considerations for schools and districts to consider when constructing their needs assessment and considering workload responsibilities for school social workers.*

Percentage of students qualified/identified/experiencing:

- Special education/IEPs
- English language learner (EL)
- McKinney-Vento (homelessness or high mobility)
- Foster Care
- Free and reduced lunch (F&R)
- Mental health diagnosis
- Significant social/emotional/behavioral needs

School or district factors such as:

- Academic achievement/achievement gaps
- Attendance data
- Behavioral data (office discipline referrals, suspensions, etc.)
- Bullying/harassment incidents
- Risk management data (threats of harm to self or others)
- Parental involvement

*Adopted with permission from the Minnesota School Social Workers Association

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