



Pupil Personnel Services: School Social Work Preconditions, Program Standards, and Performance Expectations

Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Published May 2020

This publication by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing is not copyright. It may be reproduced in the public interest, but proper attribution is requested.

Commission on Teacher Credentialing
1900 Capitol Avenue
Sacramento, California 95811

[Commission on Teacher Credentialing Program Standards](#)

Preconditions adopted April 2019
Program Standards adopted April 2019
Performance Expectations adopted April 2019

Table of Contents

Pupil Personnel Services: School Social Work Preconditions	1
Common Principles, Values, and Goals of Pupil Personnel Services Preparation Programs	2
Pupil Personnel Services: School Social Work Program Standards	4
Standard 1: Program Design, Rationale, Organization, and Context	4
Standard 2: Preparing Candidates for Mastery of School Social Work Performance Expectations	4
Standard 3: Monitoring, Supporting, and Assessing Candidate Progress Toward Meeting Credential Requirements	4
Standard 4: Field Practice Experience	5
Standard 5: Determination of Candidate Competence	6
Pupil Personnel Services: School Social Work Performance Expectations	7
SSWPE 1: Ethical and Professional Behavior	7
SSWPE 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice	7
SSWPE 3: Promote Social Justice and Equity	7
SSWPE 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice	8
SSWPE 5: Engage in Policy Practice	8
SSWPE 6: Engage with Students, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities	8
SSWPE 7: Assess Students, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities	8
SSWPE 8: Intervene Collaboratively with: Students, Families, Groups, Teachers, School Staff, Organizations, and the Community	8
SSWPE 9: Evaluate Interventions with Students, Families, Groups, Teachers, School Staff, Organizations, and the Community	9
SSWPE 10: Growth and Development	9
Pupil Personnel Services Credentials Standards Glossary	10

Pupil Personnel Services: School Social Work Preconditions

1. Bachelor's Degree (Ed Code §44266)

Persons admitted to programs must have a minimum of a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university.

2. Program Curriculum

A college or university that operates a program of professional preparation shall have a curriculum that meets the appropriate requirement as follows:

A program of study for the **school social work specialization** shall be: Equivalent to a minimum of 45 semester units or 67.5 quarter units; or 675 classroom hours of postgraduate study.

3. For Intern Programs

An entity that operates an approved program of preparation for a PPS credential with an Intern option shall require each candidate who is admitted into the Intern Program to have completed sufficient coursework so that the candidate is ready for supervised practice in the schools. The Intern must be supervised and supported by both the employer and the Commission-approved program.

Common Principles, Values, and Goals of Pupil Personnel Services Preparation Programs

The statements below identify essential attributes that all Commission-approved PPS programs must incorporate to prepare candidates to effectively provide services to California students. These statements are referenced in Program Standard 1 for each of the three PPS specialty areas, and they apply to all PPS credential candidates.

Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) credential professionals include school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers and child welfare and attendance providers. PPS programs provide candidates exposure to multidisciplinary teams to foster understanding and respect the contributions and perspectives of their respective colleagues. Multidisciplinary teams collaborate together as a unified and cohesive component of the larger school system to meet the learning and developmental needs of all students.

PPS credential programs ensure that candidates develop the knowledge, skills, personal and professional dispositions to help maximize the developmental potential of all students by preparing candidates to:

- address the needs of all students by providing comprehensive and coordinated programs and services to help build safe, healthy, nurturing and effective learning environments.
- recognize that, in addition to cognitive and academic challenges, students encounter personal, social, economic and institutional challenges that can significantly impact their lives, both in and outside of school.
- promote understanding that students need individualized opportunities, services, and supports to address life's challenges, and gain personal success and achieve academically.

PPS credential programs support candidate's understandings that:

- establish educational opportunities of equity and culturally responsive practices to promote each student's academic success and well-being.
- recognize, respect, and utilize each student's strengths, experiences, and background as assets for teaching and learning.
- confront and alter institutional biases of student marginalization, deficit-based schooling, and low expectations.
- provide opportunities to develop an understanding regarding issues of discrimination, implicit bias, social justice, diversity, and knowledge of how they may contribute to, or detract from, school success.
- increase awareness of mental health programs and services to address barriers.
- a positive school culture and climate can enhance the safety and well-being of all students.

PPS programs support a multidisciplinary PPS team to prepare candidates to provide prevention as well as timely and relevant interventions. Through the use of a cultural humility framework PPS programs support candidate's understanding of the ways in which ethnic, cultural, socioeconomic, and environmental factors can influence learning, and achievement. PPS Programs support candidate's growth as PPS professionals who work both individually and collectively to develop and support successful learning and promote the healthy development and resilience of all students.

Pupil Personnel Services: School Social Work Program Standards

Standard 1: Program Design, Rationale, Organization, and Context

Pupil Personnel Services School Social Work programs prepare candidates to develop the knowledge, skills, dispositions and abilities necessary to perform as highly skilled school social workers for all students. The program offers candidates a program that is consistent with the [*Common Principles, Values and Goals*](#) of Pupil Personnel Service Programs. Programs provide candidates the opportunity to develop and practice skills related to the understanding of the laws, policies, procedures, and unique service environment of the California public school system. Programs include a developmental interrelated set of courses and practical learning experiences that are aligned to the mission and goals of each school social work program, address the profession's purpose, are grounded in core professional values, and are informed by program context. Programs are further influenced by their communities, which are informed by their historical, political, economic, environmental, social, cultural, demographic, local and regional contexts. Additional factors include new knowledge, technology, and ideas that may have a bearing on contemporary and future school social work education, practice, and research.

Standard 2: Preparing Candidates for Mastery of School Social Work Performance Expectations

The School Social Work Performance Expectations (SSWPEs) describe the set of professional knowledge, skill, and abilities expected of beginning level practitioner in order to effectively support all students.

The program's organized coursework and field experience provide multiple opportunities for candidates to learn, apply, and reflect on each of the School Social Work-Performance Expectations. As candidates progress through the program, pedagogical assignments are increasingly complex and challenging. The scope of assignments address (a) the SSWPEs as they apply to the areas to be authorized by the credential and (b) program-based assessments.

Standard 3: Monitoring, Supporting, and Assessing Candidate Progress Toward Meeting Credential Requirements

Faculty, program supervisors and district-employed supervisors monitor and support each candidate toward mastering SSWPEs. The program uses evidence-based assessment instruments to guide and support candidates to understand and address areas for personal and academic improvement, and to help candidates develop the knowledge, skills, dispositions and abilities necessary to perform as highly skilled school social workers. Qualified faculty members are assigned and available to advise applicants and candidates about their academic, professional and personal development, and to assist each candidate's professional placement. The program provides support and assistance to candidates and only retains candidates who are suited for entry into or advancement as school social workers. The school social work program provides reasonable accommodations for those with special needs, including accessible academic programs and field experiences.

Standard 4: Field Practice Experience

Candidates will complete a minimum of 1000 hours of field experience including at least 450 hours in public pre-schools, elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, district level and alternative schools. Candidates must work in multiple public school levels and the distribution of hours should be decided in collaboration with the candidate, field supervisor, and university supervisor.

The school social work program assigns qualified field supervisors. PPS School Social Work (PPS/SSW) candidates should have a broad base of experiences including but not limited to: families and students identified as eligible for Free and Reduced Priced Meals, English Language Learners, Homeless, Foster Youth, Students in need of Special Education and Section 504 plans, students who have been expelled from school, sexual minority youth (LGBTQ+), and students with mental health needs. The program should provide the candidate with direct contact with students and families that is sufficient to demonstrate competency in the School Social Work Performance Expectations.

Field Education Requirements must include:

1. Program faculty have contact with the candidate and site field supervisor at least twice during the academic year to assess the candidate's progress and to provide additional support and training as needed.
2. The program provides preparation and continuing education for field experience supervisors/instructors on program requirements, models of supervision, and the SSW PEs, in collaboration with site supervisors/field instructors. Site Supervisors/field instructors share responsibility for the quality of field experience, design of field experiences, quality of progress, and written evaluation and verification of candidate competence.

Qualifications, Training and Responsibilities of Site Field Supervisors/Field Instructors

The program assigns qualified supervisors/field instructors and provides field experience based on the program's design. Supervisor/field instructor qualifications, training and responsibilities must include, but are not limited to the following:

1. A PPS/SSW candidate must be supervised by someone who holds a PPS credential in School Social Work, or an MSW with another PPS credential, and a minimum of two years post MSW experience. In those instances where the supervisor of record does not have a PPS/SSW credential in School Social Work, the approved university program will ensure that the SSW Performance Expectations are reinforced and incorporated into the field experience. In addition, a valid CWA authorization is required in those settings where the candidate will accrue hours and experience toward the CWA authorization.
2. The field supervisor/field instructor is responsible to complete field instructor training which includes models of supervision, the SSW Performance Expectations, and program fieldwork requirements. Both, the university and the field supervisor/instructor share responsibility for the quality of field experience, the design of field experiences, evaluation of the candidate, and verification of candidate competence.

3. Candidates must meet with their field supervisor for a minimum of one (1) hour of individual supervision per week. The field supervisor/field instructor must be accessible to the candidate at all times while the candidate is accruing fieldwork hours. The field experience requires 450 clock hours in a public Pre-K-12 school, and candidates must be supervised by a professional who holds a valid PPS SSW credential.

Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA) Authorization (Only for Candidates who elect to earn a CWA Authorization)

If a candidate seeks to obtain the CWA authorization, a minimum of 150 clock hours of supervised school-based field experience engaging in supervised practice in the following areas: student attendance, student enrollment and discipline, educational records, parent engagement, and legal and ethical compliance related to pupil services.

Standard 5: Determination of Candidate Competence

The school social work program implements well-designed, scientifically based methods to assess the knowledge, skills and abilities of candidates (SSWPEs), and collects assessment data to determine that candidates attain adequate competence and integrate competencies across all areas of training.

Prior to recommending candidates for the School Social Work Credential, one or more persons who are responsible for the program determine that candidates have satisfied each performance expectation and completed all requirements for the credential. This determination is based on thorough documentation and written verification by at least one district supervisor and one institutional supervisor. Candidates have also documented that they have earned an appropriate graduate degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education.

Pupil Personnel Services: School Social Work Performance Expectations

SSWPE 1: Ethical and Professional Behavior

1. Understand professional ethics and make decisions by using relevant school district laws and regulations, and models for ethical decision-making that are appropriate for school settings by striving to become and remain proficient in professional practice and advance the values, ethics, knowledge, and mission of the school social work profession.
2. Understand and apply all applicable federal and state laws and regulations. (for example, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act {FERPA}, HIPAA, ADA, IDEA, ESSA) as well as federal and state rules and regulations related to confidentiality, specifically with regards to minor consent laws as they relate to practice in educational settings.
3. Utilize technology ethically and appropriately, to promote client safety and to protect the confidentiality of clients.
4. Understand and apply the relevant laws related to minors from the Education Code, Welfare and Institution Code including Child Abuse Reporting, Code of Regulations, and Penal Code.

SSWPE 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

1. Understand how social identity, intersectionality, socioeconomic status, citizenship status, resiliency, human development, community-based factors, and ecological factors are related to differential student performance and achievement, particularly with groups that have been historically marginalized.
2. Utilize this understanding with students, caregivers and families, teachers, school staff, school district employees, administrators, and the programs and resources of the community to advocate for more culturally responsive services in the school community.
3. Engage in cultural humility through on-going self-reflective practice, use of client feedback, supervision, consultation, and evaluation.

SSWPE 3: Promote Social Justice and Equity

1. Promote social justice, human rights, equity, and inclusion with all students and their families, especially with underserved and marginalized groups of students, by critically examining existing programs and resources, and the distribution of resources.
2. Understand school disciplinary practices, with particular attention to the historically disproportionate way they have been applied, and advocate for consistent, equitable, fair, positive, and restorative enforcement.
3. Work collaboratively with teachers, school personnel, administrators, and other members of the multidisciplinary team to promote a climate and culture conducive to student connection/engagement with the school by addressing barriers and advocating for equitable services for all students, families, and their communities.

SSWPE 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

1. Use data to inform practice, such as school system records and other information to identify and raise awareness of systematic racism and social injustice, chronic absenteeism, differential student performance, mental health, and disciplinary practices.
2. Utilize feedback and identify trends to inform practice with students, families, and groups; and to inform research on school social work practice outcomes that impact the school community.
3. Research and identify effective practices to inform specific school-based interventions, including the use of strategies to re-engage disconnected students to the educational process.

SSWPE 5: Engage in Policy Practice

1. Identify the needs of the school community and subsequently advocate for policies, programs, and strategies to address those needs.
2. Understand and critically analyze district, local, state, and federal policies, practices, procedures, and funding sources. Understand how they may impact chronic absenteeism, crisis intervention, and assessment of threats, school safety, school discipline, school climate, restorative practices, social emotional supports, and trauma-informed schools.

SSWPE 6: Engage with Students, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

1. Engage and develop effective relationships with students, families, school personnel, and other PPS service providers, and the school community.
2. Facilitate effective and appropriate communication, coordination, collaboration, and advocacy planning with teachers, and other learning support providers, including other PPS professionals, as needed to address student needs.
3. Provide caring and supportive relationships, establish high expectations, and create innovative opportunities for students to be involved and contribute to the school community.
4. Assist the school in providing a range of culturally responsive opportunities, services, and supports, as well as positive practices to reinforce regular attendance, including strategies to re-engage emotionally, behaviorally, and academically disconnected students.

SSWPE 7: Assess Students, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

1. Assess the social and emotional needs, strengths, risks and protective factors of students and families.
2. Assess the existing services of the school, [e.g., Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), school mental health programs, plans for students with disabilities, community-based programs, multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS)] to improve student learning, behavior, achievement, and well-being.
3. Utilize consultation and review school-based data as a method of assessing students' needs to help identify patterns of behavior, attendance, achievement, and other factors that may require intervention.

SSWPE 8: Intervene Collaboratively with: Students, Families, Groups, Teachers, School Staff, Organizations, and the Community

1. Select evidence informed social work interventions including counseling, case management, group work, community organization, and crisis intervention methods that fit the ecological perspective with students and families.
2. Consult and collaborate with the PPS team and others in the school community to promote positive discipline, trauma-informed practices, and culturally-responsive practices that contribute to social and emotional well-being.
3. Demonstrate skills in advocacy, collaborative consultation, case management, and coordinating services as part of multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) that enhance school climate, wellness, and attendance improvement interventions.
4. Participate in activities to raise the awareness of the school community to the effects of truancy and dropping out. Identify students with attendance barriers as early as possible and initiate appropriate actions and interventions to re-engage disconnected students and families to the educational process.
5. Collaborate with the PPS team and other school personnel and community support providers to plan and implement systematic school safety models that address positive school climate which include crisis prevention, intervention, and postvention (MTSS).

SSWPE 9: Evaluate Interventions with Students, Families, Groups, Teachers, School Staff, Organizations, and the Community

1. Understand and utilize quantitative and/or qualitative data and feedback from students, teachers, caregivers, and other providers in an on-going way to evaluate practices and modify approaches as appropriate.
2. Understand and utilize aggregate client and school staff feedback and objective data to evaluate micro, mezzo, and macro/school-wide outcomes, including school climate.
3. Understand and utilize disaggregated data to evaluate intervention outcomes with groups of students, which can inform future practices.

SSWPE 10: Growth and Development

1. Understand typical and atypical growth and development through a strength-based and ecological perspective. Incorporate relevant theories, research, and other information related to students' strengths and challenges that affect learning in school, family, and community environments.
2. Understand the effects of health, mental health, developmental factors, language, cultural variables, diversity, socioeconomic status, spirituality, the impact of trauma and oppression, factors of resiliency and different abilities on student development.
3. Utilize this understanding to inform engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation of outcomes.

Pupil Personnel Services Credentials Standards Glossary

Academic Tiered Systems of Support: Students who are not yet proficient academically are provided with targeted instruction and interventions at increasing levels of intensity and specificity in addition to quality core instruction to accelerate the rate of learning. Similarly, students who do not respond consistently to whole class and school-wide positive behavior systems are provided with additional supports and behavior interventions until he/she shows adequate progress.

Accountability Systems: A set of policies and practices used to measure and hold schools and districts responsible for raising student achievement for all students and to prompt and support improvement where necessary.

Adequate Competence: Sufficient skill, knowledge, and experience for the purpose of meeting program requirements.

A-G Requirements: The sequence of courses required to be eligible for acceptance to meet minimum academic requirements for potential entry into a California public university.

A-G Courses: High school courses used to meet A-G requirements for potential entry to a California public university.

Andragogical: Approach, methods, and principles used in adult learning theory that details some of the ways in which adults learn differently than children.

Career/Transitional Learning: Major transition point when a student moves from school to career; also focuses on learning about pathways to college and career education.

Community Agencies: Private or public nonprofit organization that facilitates and coordinates access to services for youth.

Culminating Field Experience: Provides candidates the opportunity to demonstrate the full range of skills acquired during formal training, and to continue acquiring additional knowledge and skills most appropriately gained through prior supervised professional experience.

Cultural Competence: Having an awareness of one's own cultural identity and views about difference, and the ability to learn cultural and community norms of others.

Cultural Humility: An understanding and respectful attitude toward individuals of other cultures through reflection, self-awareness and openness to learning.

Culturally-Responsive Practices: Recognizing and incorporating the resources and strengths all students bring into the classroom and ensuring that learning experiences are relevant to all students.

Deficit-based Schooling: System's tendency to focus on the perceived weaknesses of individuals or groups instead of strengths.

Evidence-based Assessment Instruments: The use of research and theory to guide the selection of the tool used for assessment such as inventories, surveys, questionnaires as well other instruments to screen for and identify issues.

Field Based Opportunities: Opportunities offered in the field to allow candidates to make observations and apply knowledge from program coursework.

Implicit Bias: The attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.

Mapping School-based Resources: Making decisions and provide insight into the location, distribution, and availability of resources in schools to assist school communities to identify and align resources, promote collaborative planning and instruction, and enhance options for students at high risk of school failure.

Models of Supervision: Three primary models of supervision: developmental, integrated, and orientation-specific based on the idea that individuals are continually growing.

Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS): Multi-tiered system of support is an integrated, comprehensive framework that focuses on the prevention, early identification, early intervention, support and postvention that is necessary for all students to learn, engage and thrive. MTSS encompasses both response to instruction and intervention and PBIS, and systematically addresses support for all students.

Planning Document for Field Experience: Document that provides a detailed plan of the expectations, objectives, details, and purpose of each field experience.

Practicum: Planned, supervised, and evaluated practical work experience placement to emphasize application of knowledge and counseling skills learned in the program which allows students to demonstrate their counseling skills under close supervision in a realistic setting.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS): An evidence-based three-tiered framework for improving and integrating all of the data, systems, and practices affecting student outcomes every day to create a successful school environment for all students.

Prevention and Intervention Practices: Practices designed to meet the social/emotional/behavioral needs of students for prevention and early intervention often part of a Response to Instruction and Intervention model and MTSS Framework.

Professional Dispositions: Professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators and school social workers interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities.

Pupil Learning Theory: Theory that describes how students absorb, process, and retain knowledge during learning.

Qualified Faculty: Faculty at an Institution of Higher Education who meets the Higher Learning Commission criteria or the Council on Social Work Education criteria or the with appropriate expertise in the subject they teach.

Restorative Practices: Promoting inclusiveness, relationship-building, and problem-solving for conflict resolution, improved school climate and stronger social and emotional skills.

Section 504 Plan: A plan developed to ensure that a child with a disability identified under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 receives accommodations and supports that ensure equal access to the learning environment.

Self-Care Plan: An intervention tool that helps individuals enhance their health and well-being.

School Climate: School climate refers to the quality and character of school life based on patterns of students', parents' and school personnel's experience of school life.

School Culture: Refers to the way teachers and other staff members work together and the set of beliefs, values, and assumptions they share.

Site Supervisor/Field Instructor/Site Field Instructor: Provides candidates with supervision, evaluation, preparation, and mentoring on site of clinical placement. School-based site supervisors hold the appropriate PPS credential. Supervisors in alternative settings have the appropriate credential or license for that setting. All site supervisors have a minimum of 3 years of credentialed or licensed experience. For School Social Work, the minimum requirement is 2 years with a master's degree in social work, in addition to the pupil personnel services credential in School Social Work. For School Counseling, the minimum requirement is 2 years of experience as a school counselor with a master's degree in a counseling related field and a credential authorizing school counseling.

Social Justice: Full and equal participation of all groups in society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs.

Student Marginalization: Treatment of a student as unimportant, insignificant or of lower standing due to cultural differences, knowledge gaps, or socioeconomic status.

Trauma-Informed Care Practices: Structured treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma to provide care to individuals exposed to trauma.

University Supervision Requirements: Supervision requirements of the university for candidates enrolled in their graduate preparation program.