



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

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Estimates of the School Psychology Workforce

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Number of credentialed school psychologists in the US: 35,400

There were approximately 38,000 *credentialed* school psychologists in the U.S. in the 2004-05 school year (Center for Mental Health Services, 2002). Taking into account graduates entering the field, retirements, and attrition (Curtis, Grier, & Hunley, 2004), the estimated number of *credentialed* school psychologists in the U.S. in 2008 is 35,400.

Number of practicing school psychologists in the US: 28,500

Approximately 80.4% of NASP regular members are practicing school psychologists in their primary employment (Curtis et al., 2008). Assuming this percentage is also true for non-NASP school psychologists, there are an estimated 28,500 *practicing* school psychologists in the U.S. in 2008 (80.4% of 35,400). This figure does not include school psychologists who hold secondary employment positions as practitioners.

Number of credentialed school psychologists with primary employment in public schools: 29,400

About 83.1% of school psychologists have their primary employment in public schools (Curtis et al., 2008). Applying this percentage to the total number of school psychologists yields approximately 29,400. Note that this figure includes administrators.

Number of practicing school psychologists credentialed by state departments of education: 26,700

Approximately 93.8% of practitioners are credentialed by state departments of education (Curtis et al., 2008). Applying this percentage to the total number of practicing school psychologists yields approximately 26,700.

Number of practicing school psychologists licensed by state boards of psychology: 8,700

Approximately 30.6% of practitioners are licensed through a state board of psychology (Curtis et al., 2008). Applying this percentage to the total number of practicing school psychologists yields approximately 8,700.

Number of practicing school psychologists with doctoral degrees: 7,000

About 24.4% of practitioners have doctoral degrees (Curtis et al., 2008). This estimate was made by applying this percentages to the total number of practicing school psychologists.

Number of practicing school psychologists engaged in independent practice: 1,450 (primary employment) and 3,040 (secondary employment)

Among NASP regular members, 4.1% are in independent practice in their primary employment and 8.6% in their secondary employment (Curtis et al., 2008). The numbers in independent practice were calculated by applying these percentages to the total number of credentialed school psychologists.

Number of licensed, practicing school psychologists engaged in independent practice as their primary employment: 883 (licensed at the doctoral level) and 285 (licensed at the non-doctoral level)

Approximately 3.1% of practicing school psychologists are licensed at the doctoral level and engaged in independent practice as their primary employment, and 0.1% are licensed at the non-doctoral level and engaged in independent practice as their primary employment (NASP, 2008). These percentages were applied to the total number of practicing school psychologists.

Current estimated shortage of practicing school psychologists: 9,000

See the calculations by Curtis, Grier, and Hunley (2004).

Ratio of school psychologists to students: 1 to 1,482

This ratio is from survey responses from school psychologists practicing in public schools during the 2004-05 school year (Curtis et al., 2008). A second estimate can be calculated by dividing the total public school enrollment in 2005 of 49,113,000 (U.S. Department of Education, 2008) by the estimated number of school psychologists in public schools. This calculation yields an estimate of 1 to 1,671.

Number of additional school psychologists needed to meet the NASP recommended school psychologist-to-students ratio of 1 to 1,000 (NASP, 2000, p. 54): 19,700

Dividing the total student enrollment of 49,113,000 (U.S. Department of Education, 2008) by 1,000 yields 49,113 school psychologists. Thus, approximately 19,700 additional school psychologists are needed now to meet the recommended ratio.

Number of school psychologists graduating from training programs each year: 1,900

Approximately 1,900 students graduate from school psychology programs each year and, on average, approximately 1,750 new school psychologists graduate and enter the field each year (Curtis, Grier, & Hunley, 2004).

Limitations

1. The number of credentialed school psychologists used in making calculations was estimated from data provided by the leaders of state school psychology associations.
2. There are inherent limitations to survey methods that need to be considered with regard to the NASP membership survey (see Curtis, Grier, & Hunley, 2004).
3. In the absence of other empirical evidence, the characteristics of non-NASP school psychologists were assumed to be similar to those of NASP members.
4. None of the estimates are based upon empirical data collected after 2005.

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