

School Social Worker Job Description

North Carolina

Training and Licensure:

School Social Workers are educated at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The areas of training include social work and educational topics:

- consultation
- policy
- diversity populations
- at risk
- practice
- professional ethics
- research
- social and economic justice
- family and community systems
- social work theory and practice
- group processes and leadership skills
- human behavior and development

Licensure of School Social Workers in North Carolina is handled by the Licensure Division in the Department of Public Instruction, upon recommendation of DPI-approved social work programs. Licensure requires either a bachelor's degree or a master's degree from a social work program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education and a school social work practicum experience in a public school. Individual colleges and universities will have additional and varied course requirements. The Department of Public instruction requires continuing education for all School Social Workers.

The School Social Work Licensure discussed in this section is not to be confused with any of the licenses or certifications offered under North Carolina General Statutes Chapter 90B, which are administered by the North Carolina Certification and Licensing Board for Social Work. However, qualified School Social Workers (those meeting the requirements of Chapter 90B mandates for each certification or licensure) may apply for any of the licenses or certification offered by Chapter 90B, including the Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW). If a School Social Worker also holds a LCSW, they are allowed under state law to practice clinical social work, including psychotherapy.

Supervision and Evaluation:

Ideally, School Social Work supervision occurs in two distinct areas: administrative supervision and professional practice supervision. Each of these types of supervision is critical to a School Social Worker's job performance and professional development.

Administrative Supervision:

Administrative supervision is done by the School Social Worker's immediate supervisor. This type of supervision includes monitoring of work schedules and completion of assigned tasks; and evaluating the School Social Worker's staff relationships, written reports, and presentations to the public. Some examples of the School Social Worker's behaviors and characteristics that are supported and evaluated in this area of supervision are: punctuality, work habits, writing correctness, appropriate use of language, respect for the school community, and adherence to school policy and procedures.

Professional Practice Supervision:

Because School Social Workers provide specialized services in schools, it is recommended that they receive appropriate supervision in their professional school social work practices. This area of supervision is best provided by a highly trained School Social Work professional. This supervision includes support and evaluation of school social work services for individuals and groups, consulting skills and practices, and instructional presentations to school and community groups. When School Social Workers (who have obtained the LCSW credential or are in the process of doing so) are performing clinical work, they should have supervision by another professional with the LCSW credential.

Job Description

Mission Statement:

The principle tasks of the School Social Worker are to help students and families make the best use of available opportunities and resources and to fully develop each student's individual potential. The School Social Worker brings to the educational process an understanding of the psychosocial development of children and the influences of family, community, and cultural differences as they interact with the educational process.

Further, the School Social Worker provides the necessary professional skills to assist students and communities in problem solving and conflict resolution in a safe and healthy manner. School Social Work is founded on the following premises:

Definite and identifiable reasons exist why some students are not successful in school and exhibit undesirable behavior (including at-risk factors, dropping out and truancy).

It is critical to assist families in alleviating adverse conditions in order to promote resiliency and academic success for at risk students.

It is important to assist parents in utilizing school and community resources to help children maximize their educational abilities.

Parental involvement with the school is essential to create positive academic and social outcomes for students.

It is essential that school staff listens to and respects the feelings and sensitivities of students and parents of all cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

Education becomes a successful experience for students who are helped to overcome the social and emotional problems interfering with adjustment and achievement in school.

Special education and related services must be provided for students with physical, mental, social, emotional, or other educational disabilities.

Social justice and equal opportunity for all students and families will increase educational attainment and enhance the educational experience for everyone.

Direct Services with Students:

The School Social Worker employs appropriate social work methods in situations affecting the student's educational process.

School Social Workers:

- Conduct assessment of student needs
- Promote regular school attendance
- Conduct home visits
- Promote safe, caring, and drug free schools
- Empowerment of/advocacy for students
- Provide culturally competent services
- Provide appropriate services for homeless students
- Provide individual counseling
- Facilitate group counseling
- Self-esteem
- Anger management
- Impulse control
- Social skills training
- Substance abuse prevention
- Provide crisis intervention services
- Complete social developmental case studies
- Participate in the evaluation of special education placements
- Participate in the development of behavioral modification plans
- Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBA), and Supportive Intervention Plans (SIP)
- Provide short/long-term case management services to individual students
- Referrals to community agencies
- Coordination of services with community agencies
- Coordination of services with other disciplines within the school
- Participate in transition planning for students
- Coordinate pregnancy prevention programs
- Coordinate drop out prevention programs

- Report suspected child abuse/neglect
- Provide Willie M. case management services

Direct Services with Families/Communities:

The School Social Worker employs appropriate social work methods to assure students' positive academic and social outcomes.

School Social Workers:

- Promote parental involvement in the schools
- Promote parental involvement in school conferences
- Promote parental responsibility for regular school attendance
- Conduct home visits
- Conduct family needs assessments
- Promote safe, caring, and drug free schools
- Empowerment of/advocacy for families
- Provide culturally competent services
- Provide appropriate services/referrals for homeless families
- Provide crisis intervention services
- Refer to community agencies
- Facilitate parent groups
- Parenting skills
- Substance abuse awareness
- Special needs children
- Child abuse prevention
- Appropriate discipline
- Assist families with the interpretation of school policies and procedures
- Collaborate with community agencies
- Collaborate with support personnel within the school
- Participate in case conferences with other school specialists
- Participate in the identification and resolution of school-wide/community needs
- Interpret the School Social Work role to the community
- Serve as a liaison between the school/family/community

- Participate in referrals and case management of students/families involved in the court system
- Serve on school-based committee meetings
- Serve on community interagency teams and other task force teams relevant to School Social Work (Child Fatality Team, Child Protection Team, Governor's One-on-One Board)
- Serve on the school Crisis Team to promote a safe school environment
- Promote a safe, caring, and drug free school environment

Program Planning and Evaluation:

The School Social Worker facilitates, participates in, and provides input for system wide, school based, and departmental program planning, evaluation, and development of policies. All program planning and evaluation activities are done in accordance with state and federal laws, regulations and school board policies.

School Social Workers:

- Conduct individual and/or system-wide surveys to assess the school and/or community needs
- Implement appropriate programs, groups and initiatives to target at-risk populations (according to the assessment)
- Plan individual school and/or system-wide programs to promote a positive and caring school climate
- Collaborate with community agencies to coordinate services within the school system

Advocacy:

The School Social Worker operates as an advocate with all community populations utilizing skills that respect issues of cultural and ethnic diversity and equity for every student and family.

School Social Workers:

- Facilitate the implementation of federal and state education regulations
- Address child abuse and neglect, due process, and liability issues
- Advocate for school environments to operate in the best interests of children
- Encourage parents to be actively involved in their children's educational experiences
- Adhere to the National Association of Social Workers code of ethical behavior and professional practice.(see attachment)

Consultation and Education:

The School Social Worker provides specialized consultative services to school staff, community agencies and other professionals. Services are designed to assist families, students, and educational professionals in providing quality interventions, which allow students to reach their highest educational, developmental and social potential.

School Social Workers Consult in Such Areas as:

- Preventive interventions
- Classroom management

- Child abuse and neglect
- Mental health and emotional impairments
- Family and psychosocial functioning
- Parent involvement
- Maintenance of caring, safe and drug-free learning environments
- Identification of barriers to educational achievement

Professional Practice, Development and Management:

The School Social Worker shows evidence of professional growth, development and management and adheres to a professional code of ethics.

The School Social Workers:

- Adhere to the values and ethics of the social work profession and use the NASW Standards for School Social Work Services and Code of Ethics as guides in decision-making model professional behaviors that contribute to addressing the needs of students, families, and the school community. When necessary and appropriate, actively seek the supervision of a school social work supervisor or another School Social Work professional
- Keep abreast of current community resources and determine how these resources may be beneficial to the student, her/his family, and the family's involvement in the academic process
- Understand, and practice in accordance with, federal, state, and local laws, statutes, and/or policies that relate to students and families; such as, child protection/child abuse, special education, attendance, education rights and privacy
- Consult with school personnel to encourage compliance with laws, statutes, and policies
- Assume responsibility for her/his own continued professional development
- With support from the LEA, maintain professional materials for professional growth and development; including periodicals, books, and software
- Practice professional renewal through a variety of means; such as, attending regional and national conferences, participating in professional organizations, and remaining abreast of current research and literature
- Expand and exchange knowledge through consultation with coordinators, specialists, psychologists, counselors, and other colleagues
- Contribute to the development of the profession by educating and supervising social work interns
- Evaluate, interpret, and perform research with specific application to student, family, and community issues
- Develop and maintain skills that increase the social worker's initiative and effectiveness in working in school settings
- Manage time based on school social worker-to-student ratios; advocate for worker-to-student ratios consistent with those developed by the National Council of State Consultants for School Social Work Services

- Maintain accurate and appropriate case records and documentation
- Maintain a statistical, demographic breakdown of current caseload