

Washington State Association of School Psychologists

2016 Spring Lecture Series

The Assessment of and Intervention for Culturally Linguistically Diverse (CLD) Populations

Registration will occur on-line through the WSASP website (www.wsasp.org) beginning mid-January. Webinars will be pre-recorded and all talks will be archived and available as digital recordings along with the presentation, powerpoints, handouts, etc. 35 clock hours will be provided. Webinars will be 2.5-3 hours in length.

The assessment of the CLD population: a fifty-year dilemma. What progress has been made, what issues remain?

Sam Ortiz, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Psychology – St. John’s University

It has been estimated that 97% of ELs have never received the type of educational programming necessary to help mitigate the potentially adverse effects that linguistic and cultural differences can have on academic performance. Yet, as a group, they continue to be over-represented in special education. Assessment often plays a role in this negative process and despite fifty years of recognition regarding the limitations of EL evaluation, the problem persists. At the heart of the problems in assessment is the fundamental concept of validity which begs the question: do our assessments of an EL represent a valid measure of a particular ability or instead simply reflect their limited English skills? The consequences of placing an EL in special education without valid evidence of a learning disability is both tragic and another aspect of validity. To make matters worse, there is no evidence that special education placement either has the capacity to or actually provides an education that can ameliorate the impact of previous inappropriate instructional programming. Until and unless ELs are no longer mistakenly identified as having disabilities when in fact they do not, there will be little impetus to improve their instruction in the general education setting or dissuade schools from using special education placement as an ineffective remedial policy.



Disproportionality in Special Education: The role of the School Psychologist

Steve Hirsch, PhD, NCSP

School Psychologist - Shoreline School District

Since enactment of the 1975 Education of Handicapped Act, special education rosters have contained disproportionately large numbers of minorities. The current study analyzed decision-making at four points or ‘gates’ in the special education process: 1) referral; 2) formal assessment; 3) eligibility; and 4) the decision to exit. The goal of the research was to assess the contribution to disproportionality at each of the gates. Disproportionality was absent at the referral stage, as minority rates of referral closely matched their proportion in the student

population. Teams, however, were more likely to refer students of Latino, Black and Native American heritage for special education testing. Assessment resulted in equal numbers of minorities and non-minorities being found eligible for services. Interestingly, the vast majority of students exited from special education were Caucasian. Is it possible that disproportionality exists, not due to increased referral of minority students, but rather, the lessened likelihood of exiting; a stopped-up funnel analogy? Do minority students have fewer options to formal Sped assessment? The 504 plan is an alternative pathway to special ed assessment, but in the Shoreline district nearly 90% of students with 504 plans are Caucasian! This workshop will explore disproportionality as a result of team decision-making.



Being an Equity-Oriented Practitioner: Introducing a framework for centering educational equity in everyday practice.

*Seena Skelton, PhD
Project Director Great Lakes Equity Center*

Creating learning environments where all students regardless of individual characteristics, personal and cultural identities, have access to, and can meaningfully participate and make progress in quality learning experiences that empowers them towards self-determination is a primary goal of educational equity. This session will present a framework that school psychologists can use to center educational equity in everyday practice.



Addressing the IDEA Exclusionary Clauses in the Evaluation of Specific Learning Disabilities with English Language Learners

*Chieh Li, Ed.D., NCSP
Associate Professor and Direct of Clinical Training – Northeastern University*

This webinar focuses on the IDEA (2004) exclusionary clauses in the evaluation of specific learning disabilities with English language learners (ELLs) relevant to school psychology. Specific cultural and linguistic considerations for evaluating ELLs in the RTI model will also be discussed. The webinar will provide tools for implementing the IDEA non-discriminatory assessment guidelines for evaluating ELLs.



Cognitive Assessment of English Language Learners

*Bryn Harris, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of School Psychology – University of Colorado Denver*

The nation is becoming increasingly diverse, and school psychologists need to be prepared for these demographic changes. One of the fastest growing populations within public schools in the United States is English language learners (NCES, 2014). School psychologists have historically encountered challenges when assessing this population in a culturally and linguistically responsive manner (Ochoa, 1999). These challenges may result in the under or overrepresentation of this population in special education. Much of this challenge is differentiating language acquisition and acculturation from atypical behaviors or development. This webinar will provide an overview regarding the language acquisition, acculturation, and educational contexts that may impact the academic and social-emotional success of English language learners (ELLs). The majority of the webinar will focus on different assessment

methods of cognitive abilities within ELL populations. Participants will learn when to use nonverbal assessments with ELLs, how to evaluate traditional cognitive measures for their linguistic demand, and when bilingual assessment of ELLs may be warranted. Assessment modifications and alternative cognitive assessments will also be briefly discussed.



Understanding Cultural Validity in Testing

Michael Orosco, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Special Education – University of Kansas

Assessment plays a powerful role in the education process in the United States and historically has been based on a narrow view of cognition that fails to take into account the social and cultural nature of learning (i.e., lack of cultural validity). The conceptual relevance of cultural validity is supported by the research that sociocultural experiences shape a student's cognition. To attain cultural validity, the process of assessment must consider how a student's sociocultural context influences the ways in which they make sense of items and the ways in which they process this information. The purpose of this talk is to discuss the concept of cultural validity and how cultural and linguistic background influences the ways in which a student interprets assessment items and the cognitive activities used in completing those items.



The Good, The Bad, and the Unethical: Ethical Issues for School Psychologists

Phil Koester, M.Ed., NCSP

School Psychologist – Ferndale School District

Historically, most associations' ethical standards speak to the Good, - What should professionals do to be ethical. They should be good communicators, good collaborators, good service providers etc. The Washington State Code of Conduct was implemented in the early 1990s and represents the Bad – what you should not do e.g. falsification of data, abandonment of generally recognized professional standards etc. The Code specifies different levels of sanctions and their burden of proof. School Psychologists are certified by OSPI and unethical behavior can be punished by the OSPI's Office of Professional Practice (OPP). Punishment comes in one of three forms: revocation of one's certificate, suspension of one's certificate, or a reprimand. How do the NASP ethical standards and Code of Conduct coexist? What are the implications for professional practice?



When the Minority is the Majority: Perspectives from and Issues Arising in School Districts that are not Predominately White

Tracy Wilson, M.Ed. – Executive Director Special Services – Pasco School District

Pedro Gonzalez, M.Ed. – Bilingual School Psychologist – Pasco School District

Norm Dorpat - School Psychologist – Chief Leschi Schools, Puyallup

Tracy Wilson has worked in the Special Education field as a teacher and administrator since 1991, all but 2 years in the Pasco School District. Pedro has worked in the Pasco School District as a bilingual school psychologist since 2004.. Currently , the Pasco School District is around 70% Hispanic , a total school population around 17,000 students with 12 % special education eligible. Over the past 10 years, the district has doubled in size and proportionately so has the special services enrollment. Our indicator data several years ago began showing an

increase in SLD/Hispanic disproportionality. With a majority of the district of minority status, ongoing research and training for referral and eligibility decisions has long been the work of the Pasco School District Special Education Department. Lessons learned, practices used, and ongoing challenges on identification of language based disabilities for ELD students would be shared during the webinar.



Evaluation of ELL Students for the Possibility of Special Education Qualification

Steve Gill, M.Ed.

School Psychologist – Kent School District

This webinar will first focus on the data and research that helps individuals to adjust or change the mindsets of the staff they are working with, with regards to the history and learning characteristics of language learners. Additionally, this same information might help some of the individuals in attendance modify their own beliefs and mindsets. Then, the webinar will discuss some of the data individuals need to examine in order to understand the likelihood students in their schools are casualties of ineffective systems or might be reasonable candidates for special education evaluation. The webinar will take time to evaluate how to integrate data from a pre-referral process into a special education evaluation. Finally, the discussion will focus on setting an agreed upon standard to meet or exceed with regards to appropriate data needed for a special education evaluation of a language learner.



Tiered supports for culturally and linguistically diverse students

Dacis McCoy, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Behavior Analysis – University of Cincinnati

Wallace Larkin, M.Ed.

Many schools in the United States are currently facing the task of serving culturally and linguistically diverse students with a wide range of academic, social, and behavior support needs. There is an emerging research base on interventions targeting English Language Learners (ELLs) at the class-wide, targeted, and individualized levels. The aim of this presentation is to bridge the gap between research and practice, with a focus on the role of the school psychologist in promoting best practice for ELL students.

Registration

All registration is to take place online at www.wsasp.org

Fees

WSASP Members	Full Series - Regular members	\$250
	Full Series - Student/Retired Members	\$125
Non-Members	Full Series	\$350

Clock Hours

Participants, upon completing an evaluation for the full series (max 35 hours) will be issued a clock hour verification form.

Reciprocity with other state certification offices must be petitioned prior to the start of the series.

Available of clock hours is directly linked to registration (no sharing series participations between two or more participants). Clock hours will only be available after last webinar is broadcast.