# The MSPA Rubric for Evaluation of School Psychologists

The Massachusetts School Psychologists Association (MSPA) has developed this rubric for the evaluation of school psychologists for adoption, in part or in whole, by Massachusetts school districts. The MSPA rubric is patterned after the DESE Specialized Instructional Support Personnel rubric: it uses the same standards, indicators and elements—plus two additional elements (I.C.4. Intervention Monitoring and Evaluation, and III.C.3. Community Connections). DESE personnel have reviewed this rubric and determined that it complies with Massachusetts requirements.

What differs from the DESE rubric is that the performance descriptors specifically address the customary activities of school psychologists. To ensure relevance to the practice of school psychology, the MSPA rubric is aligned with the Comprehensive Practice Model of the National Association of School Psychologists (2010), which outlines 10 key domains of practice.

The development of this rubric began when MSPA responded to the DESE invitation to provide input into an evaluation model that was applicable to the roles and functions of school psychologists. Given that the goal of an educational evaluation system is to define and promote "best practice" that leads to positive student outcomes, MSPA was guided by the principle that a practical and discipline-specific rubric would best serve this purpose and have the best prospect of being valued and purposefully applied by Massachusetts K-12 educators.

As it is unfeasible to meaningfully evaluate all 36 elements of this rubric, MSPA proposes that school districts select a subset of elements to be universally applied or more heavily weighted. MSPA has identified a recommended set of 21 critical elements for higher priority consideration. These elements, indicated by bold face and larger font type, were selected using the following criteria:

- *Relevance*: maximum coverage of the 10 domains of the NASP practice model;
- *Non-redundancy*: minimal overlap with other elements of the rubric;
- *Feasibility*: can be operationalized and meaningfully evaluated by a school district evaluator; and
- *Importance*: significant contribution to positive outcomes for students, and high value for the school community.

Priorities and service delivery models will understandably vary from district to district, and may evolve over time. Hence, it is expected that school districts will adapt or excerpt material from this rubric as needed. Most of this rubric can be evaluated by an administrator who is highly familiar with a school psychologist's work, supplemented by input from other consumers of school psychological services (e.g., teachers and parents). However, some items (labeled **QP**) require more technical or advanced knowledge of school psychological services, and should only be evaluated by a "qualified practitioner"

Additional resources materials to assist evaluators in the use of this rubric can be found on the MSPA website at http://www.mspa-online.com.

| Standard I:<br>Curriculum, Planning, and Assessment | Standard II:<br>Teaching All Students | Standard III:<br>Family and Community Engagement | Standard IV:<br>Professional Culture |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A. Curriculum and Planning Indicator**<br>  1. Professional Knowledge<br>  2. Child & Adolescent Development<br>  3. Plan Development | **A. Instruction Indicator**<br>  3. Meeting Diverse Needs | | |
| **B. Assessment Indicator**<br>  1. Variety of Assessment Methods | **B. Learning Environment Indicator**<br>  1. Safe Learning Environment | **B. Collaboration Indicator**<br>  2. Student Support | **B. Professional Growth Indicator**<br>  1. Professional Learning and Growth |
| **C. Analysis Indicator**<br>  1. Analysis and Conclusions<br>  2. Sharing Conclusions With Colleagues<br>  3. Sharing Conclusions With Students and Families<br>  4. Intervention Monitoring and Evaluation* | **C. Cultural Proficiency Indicator**<br>  1. Respects Differences | **C. Communication Indicator**<br>  2. Culturally Proficient Communication<br>  3. Community Connections* | **C. Collaboration Indicator**<br>  2. Professional Collaboration<br>  3. Consultation |
| | | | **D. Decision-Making Indicator**<br>  4. Decision-making |
| | | | **F. Professional Responsibilities Indicator**<br>  2. Reliability and Responsibility |

*I.C.4. and III.C.3. are elements specific to the MSPA model (not included in the DESE Specialized Instructional Support Personnel rubric).

*Standard I: Curriculum, Planning, and Assessment.* *promotes the learning and growth of all students by providing high-quality and coherent instruction, designing and administering authentic and meaningful student assessments, analyzing student performance and growth data, using this data to improve instruction, providing students with constructive feedback on an ongoing basis, and continuously refining learning objectives.*

| **Indicator I.A..** **Curriculum and Planning: Has strong knowledge specific to subject matter and/or professional responsibility; has a good grasp of child development and how students learn; and designs effective and rigorous plans for support consisting of well-structured lessons with measurable outcomes.** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **I-A. ELEMENTS** | **Unsatisfactory** | **Needs Improvement** | **Proficient** | **Exemplary** |
| **I-A-1.** **Professional Knowledge (QP)** *NASP Domain 1: Data-based decision making and accountability.* *NASP Domain 3: Interventions and instructional support to develop academic skills* *NASP Domain 4: Interventions and mental health services to develop social and life skills* | Demonstrates limited professional knowledge; relies heavily on outdated practices as opposed to current practices supported by research. | Demonstrates factual knowledge of professional practice and sometimes applies it effectively in providing services for students and educators. | **Demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of professional practice (e.g., as it relates to developing interventions, designing programs and services, interpreting research), and consistently and effectively applies it in providing services for students and educators.** | Demonstrates mastery of professional practice(e.g., as it relates to developing interventions, designing programs and services, interpreting research), and consistently and effectively applies it in providing services for students and educators (e.g., in developing academic and behavioral interventions, prevention programs; Models this practice for colleagues and/or provides training in its use. |
| **I-A-2.** **Child and Adolescent Development** *NASP Domain 3: Interventions and instructional support to develop academic skills* *NASP Domain 4: Interventions and mental health services to develop social and life skills* | Demonstrates little or no knowledge of child and adolescent development; recommends supports or strategies for students that consequently do not adequately address intended outcomes. | Demonstrates general knowledge of child and adolescent development but does not apply this knowledge when recommending supports or strategies for students. | **Demonstrates knowledge of students' developmental levels and the different ways that students learn or behave, and applies this knowledge by proposing appropriate supports and strategies for students.** | Demonstrates knowledge of students' developmental levels and the different ways that students learn or behave, and applies this knowledge by proposing appropriate supports and strategies for students that prove effective in enabling students to make significant progress toward meeting stated outcomes. |

| I-A-3.<br>**Plan Development**<br><br>*NASP Domain 1: Data-based decision making and accountability.*<br><br>*NASP Domain 2: Consultation and collaboration* | Does not actively engage with colleagues in the development of behavioral and/or academic interventions. | Develops or contributes to the development of behavioral and/or academic interventions that fails to strategically account for individual differences. | **In collaboration with team members or colleagues, develops or contributes to the timely development of well designed, behavioral and/or academic interventions while accounting for individual differences based on biological, cultural, and social influences.** | In collaboration with team members or colleagues, develops or contributes to the timely development of well designed, measurable behavioral and/or academic interventions while accounting for individual differences based on biological, cultural, and social influences; Provides specific, measurable goals with which to evaluate plan effectiveness. |
|---|---|---|---|---|

| Indicator I-B. Assessment: Uses a variety of informal and formal methods of assessment to measure student learning, growth, and understanding to develop differentiated and enhanced learning experiences and improve future instruction. | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1-B. ELEMENTS** | **Unsatisfactory** | **Needs Improvement** | **Proficient** | **Exemplary** |
| I-B-1.<br>**Variety of Assessment Methods (QP)**<br><br>*NASP Domain 1: Data-based decision making and accountability*<br><br>*NASP Domain 8: Diversity in Development and Learning* | Assesses student learning, behavior, and development using a limited and unvarying set of assessment methods, without consideration of student differences in culture, language, level of functioning, and referral concerns. | Assesses student learning, behavior, and development using a limited repertoire of assessment methods, without full consideration of student differences in culture, language, level of functioning, and referral concerns. | **Strategically selects from a variety of assessment methods (i.e., review of records, observation interview/ rating scales, and testing) to assess student learning, behavior, and development to account for student differences in culture, language, level of functioning, and referral concerns.** | Strategically selects from a variety of assessment methods (i.e., review of records, observation interview/ rating scales, and testing) to assess student learning, behavior, and development to account for student differences in culture, language, level of functioning, and referral concerns Informs, encourages, or trains colleagues in the use of assessment measures that are responsive to student differences. |

| Indicator I.C. | Analysis: Analyzes data from assessments, draws conclusions, and shares them appropriately. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **I-C. ELEMENTS** | Unsatisfactory | Needs Improvement | Proficient | Exemplary |
| **1-C-1.**<br>**Analysis and Conclusions (QP)**<br><br>*NASP Domain 1: Data-based decision making and accountability* | Reports assessment results without explaining their relevance to educational performance and needs or to recommendations . | Relates assessment findings to educational performance and needs, but recommendations lack specificity or relevance. | **Skillfully interprets assessment findings, and relates them to educational performance and needs, and to recommendations.** | Skillfully interprets assessment findings, and relates them to educational performance and needs, and to recommendations Consistently provides valuable insights and child-specific, evidence based recommendations. |
| **I-C-2.**<br>**Sharing Conclusions With Colleagues**<br><br>*NASP Domain 3: Consultation and Collaboration*<br><br>*NASP Domain 4: Interventions and mental health services to develop social and life skills* | Rarely shares relevant student information with colleagues or engages them in effective collaboration that supports improved student learning and/or development. | Only occasionally shares relevant student information with colleagues or engages them in effective collaboration that supports improved student learning and/or development. | **Presents key, relevant findings to colleagues clearly, respectfully, and in sufficient detail to promote effective collaboration that supports improved student learning and/or development.** | Presents key, relevant findings to colleagues clearly, respectfully, and in sufficient detail to promote effective collaboration that supports improved student learning and/or development Takes initiative to review and explain findings before and/or after team meetings as needed to ensure optimal communication and coordination among colleagues |
| **I.C.3.**<br>**Sharing Conclusions With Students and Families**<br><br>*NASP Domain 7: Family-School Collaboration Services* | Provides minimally required findings; offers little or no strategies or supports to promote student learning and development. | Provides required findings and some strategies and supports to promote student learning and development; minimally engages students and families to promote student learning and development. | **Presents key, relevant assessment findings to students and families in a clear, concise, non-technical, respectful manner, and engages them in constructive conversation to promote student learning and development.** | Presents key, relevant assessment findings to students and parents in a clear, concise, non-technical, respectful manner, and engages them in constructive conversation to promote student learning and development.; provides additional opportunities for presenting and discussing findings as needed. |

| I-C-4.<br>**Intervention Monitoring and Evaluation**<br><br>*NASP Domain 9: Research and Program Evaluation* | Does not follow up on assessment recommendations or interventions by checking with colleagues or by collecting data. | Follows up on some assessment recommendations and interventions by checking with colleagues about their effectiveness. | **Facilitates or assists with data collection to determine the effectiveness of interventions devised in collaboration with colleagues and/or of recommendations proposed in assessment of students.** | Facilitates or assists with data collection to determine the effectiveness of interventions devised in collaboration with colleagues and/or of recommendations proposed in assessment of students;<br>Uses data to revise interventions and/or recommendations as needed. |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |

**Standard II: Teaching All Students.** *Promotes the learning and growth of all students through instructional practices that establish high expectations, create a safe and effective classroom environment, and demonstrate cultural proficiency.*

| Indicator II-A. | Instruction: Uses instructional and clinical practices that reflect high expectations regarding content and quality of effort and work; engage all students; and are personalized to accommodate diverse learning styles, needs, interests, and levels of readiness. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **II-A. Elements** | **Unsatisfactory** | **Needs Improvement** | **Proficient** | **Exemplary** |
| **II-A-3. Meeting Diverse Needs** *NASP Domain 3: Interventions and instructional support to develop academic skills* *NASP Domain 8: Diversity in Development and Learning* | Uses limited and/or inappropriate practices and/or supports to accommodate differences. | May use some appropriate practices and/or supports to accommodate differences, but fails to address an adequate range of differences. | **Uses professional practices and supports that promote effective functioning for individuals, families, and schools with diverse characteristics, learning needs, cultures, and backgrounds and across multiple contexts.** | Uses professional practices and supports that promote effective functioning for individuals, families, and schools with diverse characteristics, learning needs, cultures, and backgrounds and across multiple contexts. |

| Indicator II-B. | Learning Environment: Creates and maintains a safe and collaborative learning environment that motivates students to take academic risks, challenge themselves, and claim ownership of their learning. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| II-B. Elements | Unsatisfactory | Needs Improvement | Proficient | Exemplary |
| II-B-1. Safe Learning Environment *NASP Domain 4: Interventions and mental health services to develop social and life skills* *NASP Domain 6: Preventive and Responsive Services* | Maintains a physical environment that is unsafe or does not support student learning. Uses inappropriate or ineffective rituals, routines, and/or responses to reinforce positive behavior or respond to behaviors that interfere with students' learning. | May create and maintain a safe physical environment but inconsistently maintains rituals, routines, and responses needed to prevent and/or stop behaviors that interfere with all students' learning. | **Works with others to develop evidence-based routines and interventions that create and maintain a safe physical, social and intellectual environment where students take academic and pro-social risks and most behaviors that interfere with learning are addressed.** | Uses rituals, routines, and proactive responses that create and maintain a safe physical and intellectual environment where students take academic risks and play an active role—individually and collectively—in preventing behaviors that interfere with learning. Is able to model this element. |

| Indicator II-C. | Cultural Proficiency: Actively creates and maintains an environment in which students' diverse backgrounds, identities, strengths, and challenges are respected. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| II-C. Elements | Unsatisfactory | Needs Improvement | Proficient | Exemplary |
| II-C-1. Respects Differences *NASP Domain 6: Preventive and Responsive Services* *NASP Domain 8: Diversity in Development and Learning* | Establishes an environment in which students demonstrate limited respect for individual differences. | Establishes an environment in which students generally demonstrate respect for individual differences. | **Consistently uses strategies and provides services that are likely to enable students to demonstrate respect for and affirm their own and others' differences related to background, identity, language, strengths, and challenges.** | Establishes an environment in which students respect and affirm their own and others' differences and are supported to share and explore differences and similarities related to background, identity, language, strengths, and challenges. Is able to model this element. |

| Indicator II-D. | Expectations. Plans and implements lessons and/or supports that set clear and high expectations and also make knowledge, information, and/or supports accessible to all students. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| III-A. Elements | Unsatisfactory | Needs Improvement | Proficient | Exemplary |

**Standard III: Family and Community Engagement.** *Promotes the learning and growth of all students through effective partnerships with families, caregivers, community members, and organizations.*

| Indicator III-A. | Engagement: Welcomes and encourages every family to become active participants in the classroom and school community. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| III-A. Elements | Unsatisfactory | Needs Improvement | Proficient | Exemplary |

| Indicator III-B. | Collaboration: Collaborates with families to create and implement strategies for supporting student learning and development both at home and at school. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| III-B. Elements | Unsatisfactory | Needs Improvement | Proficient | Exemplary |
| **III-B-2.** <br> **Student Support** <br><br> *NASP Domain 2: Consultation and collaboration* <br><br> *NASP Domain 7 Family-School Collaboration Services* | Rarely, if ever, communicates with parents on ways to support learning and development at home or at school. | Sends home occasional suggestions on how parents can support learning and development at home or at school. | **Regularly communicates with, and seeks collaborative input from, parents to create, share, and/or identify strategies for supporting learning and development at school and home.** | Regularly communicates with and seeks collaborative input from, parents to share and/or identify strategies for supporting learning and development at school and home, successfully encourages most families to use at least one of these strategies, and seeks out evidence of their impact. Is able to model this element. |

| Indicator III-C. | Communication: Engages in regular, two-way, and culturally proficient communication with families about student learning, behavior and wellness. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **III-C. Elements** | **Unsatisfactory** | **Needs Improvement** | **Proficient** | **Exemplary** |
| **III-C-2. Culturally Proficient Communication**<br><br>*NASP Domain 7 Family-School Collaboration Services*<br><br>*NASP Domain 8: Diversity in Development and Learning* | Makes few attempts to respond to different family cultural issues, contexts, and other factors that have an impact on family-school partnerships, and/or responds inappropriately or disrespectfully. | May communicate respectfully and make efforts to take into account different families' cultural issues, contexts, and other factors that have an impact on family-school partnerships but does so inconsistently or does not demonstrate understanding and sensitivity to the differences. | **Always communicates respectfully with families and demonstrates understanding of and sensitivity to diverse cultural issues, contexts, and other factors that have an impact on family-school partnerships, and addresses these factors when communicating with families.** | Always communicates respectfully with families and demonstrates understanding and appreciation of diverse cultural issues, contexts, and other factors that have an impact on family-school partnerships, and addresses these factors when communicating with families. Is able to model this element. |
| **III-C-3 Community Connections**<br><br>*NASP Domain 6: Preventive and Responsive Services* | Makes few attempts to inform families about community-based supports and programs as additional prevention or interventions strategies. | Provides general information to families about community-based supports and programs as additional prevention or intervention strategies; may occasionally assist families in accessing the support. | **Assists families in accessing appropriate community-based supports and programs as additional prevention or intervention strategies; regularly acts as a liaison and/or collaborator between the school and community-based support or program.** | Assists families in accessing appropriate community-based supports and programs as additional prevention or intervention strategies; regularly acts as a liaison and/or collaborator between the school and community-based support or program. Is able to model this element. |

**Standard IV: Professional Culture.** *Promotes the learning and growth of all students through ethical, culturally proficient, skilled, and collaborative practice.*

| Indicator IV-A. | Reflection: Demonstrates the capacity to reflect on and improve the educator's own practice, using informal means as well as meetings with teams and work groups to gather information, analyze data, examine issues, set meaningful goals, and develop new approaches in order to improve teaching and learning. | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **IV-A. Elements** | **Unsatisfactory** | **Needs Improvement** | **Proficient** | **Exemplary** |

| Indicator IV-B. | Professional Growth: Actively pursues professional development and learning opportunities to improve quality of practice or build the expertise and experience to assume different instructional and leadership roles. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| IV-B. Elements | Unsatisfactory | Needs Improvement | Proficient | Exemplary |
| **IV-B-1. Professional Learning and Growth** *NASP Domain 10: Legal, Ethical and Professional Practice* | Fails to participate in any professional development and learning opportunities to improve practice and/or applies little new learning to practice. | Inconsistently participates in required professional development and learning activities and/or inconsistently or inappropriately applies new learning to improve practice. | **Consistently seeks out and applies, when appropriate, ideas for improving practice from supervisors, colleagues, professional development activities, and other resources to gain expertise and/or assume different instruction and leadership responsibilities, and maintains professional development requirements needed for DESE certification/licensure.** | Consistently seeks out professional development and learning opportunities that improve practice and build expertise of self and other educators in instruction, academic support, and leadership (through the use of supervision and mentorship opportunities) and maintains professional development requirements needed for DESE certification/licensure. Is able to model this element. |

| Indicator IV-C. | Collaboration: Collaborates effectively with colleagues on a wide range of tasks. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| IV-C. Elements | Unsatisfactory | Needs Improvement | Proficient | Exemplary |
| **IV-C-1. Professional Collaboration** *NASP Domain 2: Consultation and collaboration* *NASP Domain 5: School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning* | Rarely and/or ineffectively collaborates with colleagues; conversations often lack focus on student performance and/or development. | Does not consistently collaborate with colleagues in ways that create and maintain a multitiered continuum of services to support attainment of student goals. | **Consistently and effectively collaborates with colleagues through shared planning and/or informal conversation to create and maintain a multitiered continuum of services to analyze student performance and plan appropriate interventions, which will support each students' attainment of academic, social, emotional, and behavioral goals at both the classroom and school level.** | Facilitates effective collaboration with and among colleagues through shared planning and/or informal conversation to create, and maintain a multitiered continuum of services to analyze student performance and plan appropriate interventions, which will support each students' attainment of academic, social, emotional, and behavioral goals at both the classroom and school level. Is able to model and teach this element. |

| IV-C. Elements | Unsatisfactory | Needs Improvement | Proficient | Exemplary |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **IV-C-2.** **Consultation** *NASP Domain 2: Consultation and collaboration* *NASP Domain 5: School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning* | Does not demonstrate a facility for using a problem-solving process and regularly provides inappropriate advice. Does not provide advice and expertise to general education teachers or other colleagues unless prompted to do so; and/or fails to offer advice when appropriate. | Inconsistently uses a problem-solving process to collaborate and consult with colleagues. At times provides advice that is inappropriate or poorly formulated and/or implemented to effectively address student needs. | **Consistently uses a problem-solving process to effectively collaborate and consult with colleagues through shared planning, implementation, and evaluation of appropriate and targeted academic, behavioral, and social/emotional interventions at the individual, classroom, or school level.** | Is able to model and consistently use a problem-solving process to effectively collaborate and consult with colleagues through shared planning, implementation, and evaluation of successfully created appropriate and effective targeted academic, behavioral, and social/emotional interventions at the individual, classroom, or school level. |

| Indicator IV-D. | Decision-Making: Becomes involved in schoolwide decision making, and takes an active role in school improvement planning. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **IV-D. Elements** | **Unsatisfactory** | **Needs Improvement** | **Proficient** | **Exemplary** |
| **IV-D-1.** **Decision-Making** *NASP Domain 5: School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning* *NASP Domain 9: Research and Program Evaluation* | Participates in planning and decision making at the school, department, and/or grade level only when asked and fails to demonstrate knowledge of relevant evidence based interventions and programs. | May participate in planning and decision making at the school, department, and/or grade level but inconsistently applies knowledge of evidence based interventions and programs. | **Applies knowledge of evidence based interventions in the planning and development of existing school based programs and services.** | Uses data in the evaluation of existing programs and services while using knowledge of evidence based interventions to plan, develop and facilitate the creation of new programs and services. |

| Indicator IV-E. | Shared Responsibility: Shares responsibility for the performance of all students within the school. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| IV-E. Elements | Unsatisfactory | Needs Improvement | Proficient | Exemplary |

| Indicator IV-F. Professional Responsibilities: Is ethical and reliable, and meets routine responsibilities consistently. | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| IV-F. Elements | Unsatisfactory | Needs Improvement | Proficient | Exemplary |
| IV-F-2.<br>Reliability &<br>Responsibility | Frequently misses or is late to assignments, makes errors in records/**record keeping**, and/or misses paperwork deadlines; frequently late or absent. | Occasionally misses or is late to assignments, completes work late, and/or makes errors in records/**record keeping**. | **Consistently fulfills professional responsibilities; is consistently punctual and reliable with paperwork/record keeping, duties, and assignments; and is rarely late to school.** | Consistently fulfills all professional responsibilities to high standards. Is able to model this element. |