

Legislative Priorities Statement

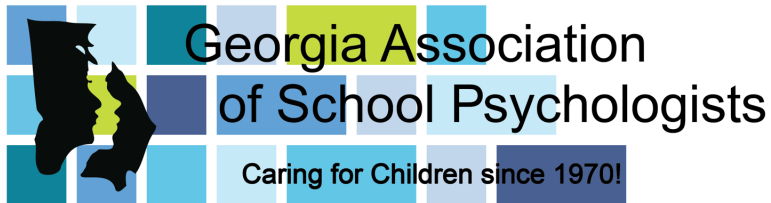
The Georgia Association of School Psychologists (GASP) is committed to advocating for the needs of School Psychologists in our state. We believe that all students deserve access to the critical services that School Psychologists provide, including:

- Mental health assessments and interventions
- Crisis prevention and intervention
- Behavior support and intervention
- Special education evaluation and programming
- Consultation and collaboration with teachers, administrators, parents, and other professionals

Unfortunately, there is a severe shortage of School Psychologists in Georgia. Georgia currently has a funding ratio of one school psychologist to 2,475 students, far exceeding the national recommended ratio of 1:500. This shortage is exacerbated by the fact that Georgia has not adjusted the School Psychologist to student ratio in over 20 years.

GASP is working to address the School Psychologist shortage through a number of legislative initiatives, including:

1. Addressing the School Psychologist shortage by:
 - Listing School Psychologists as a critical shortage field and apply loan forgiveness.
 - Reducing the School Psychologist to student ratio
 - Retirement Reciprocity for School Psychologists
 - Increase funding for School Psychologist training programs: This would help to increase the number of School Psychologists in the pipeline.
 - Reciprocity for out-of-state School Psychologists: This would allow School Psychologists who are licensed in other states to practice in Georgia without having to go through the entire licensing process again.
2. Increasing funding for School Psychologist salaries and professional development
3. Expanding the scope of School Psychologists as practitioners:
 - School Psychologists are highly trained professionals who are qualified to provide a wide range of mental health services to students. However, current Georgia law restricts their scope of practice, limiting their ability to meet the needs of their students.



- GASP is advocating for legislation that would expand the scope of practice for School Psychologists, allowing them to provide more comprehensive services to students.

This shortage has a significant impact on students, as School Psychologists play a vital role in providing mental health services, evaluating students for disabilities, and supporting academic and behavioral interventions. This shortage significantly limits the ability of School Psychologists to meet the needs of all students during a time when students' challenges and barriers are at all-time high.

Call to Action

We urge all School Psychologists and supporters of public education to get involved in our legislative and advocacy efforts. Your voice matters! Here are a few ways you can help:

- Contact your [congressman](#), [senator](#) and [state legislator](#) to let them know that you support reciprocity for out-of-state School Psychologists, expanding the scope of work of School Psychologists as practitioners. Encourage your legislator to support increased funding for School Psychologists and other initiatives to improve the profession.
- Attend [GASP events](#) and meetings to learn more about our advocacy efforts and how you can get involved.
- Follow GASP on [social media platforms](#) and the website to stay up to date.
- Donate to GASP to support our advocacy work.
- Join the GASP Legislative Committee. Please email us at Gaspadvocacy1970@gmail.com to get involved. We need YOU!

Together, we can make a difference in the lives of Georgia's students by ensuring that they have access to the critical services they need to succeed in school and in life.