Presidents Message
Summer Message 2020
by Travis Bickford

After a whirlwind spring marred by the on-going global health pandemic, I feel like I am finally catching my breath and slowing my pace by connecting with family and friends and getting in as many seacoast bike rides as I can (all while social distancing of course!). Soon, the calendar will flip to September and the new school year will be upon us. In my 14 years as a School Psychologist in the Dover School District, I have worn many hats, served on countless committees, and have made lifelong connections with colleagues. It would be an understatement to say that the upcoming year presents a mountain of uncertainty and change for education, and for the field of School Psychology. Therefore, when it came time to compose this introduction and thoughts about the future, I attempted to find a quote that would best work, besides some tagline from an apocalyptic summer movie blockbuster. After some reflection, I kept coming back to a Theodore Roosevelt quote referenced by Brené Brown in her work on vulnerability… “It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly…” - Theodore Roosevelt

In Brown’s book, Dare to Lead: Brave work, tough conversations, whole hearts, she defined vulnerability as “the emotion that we experience during times of uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure” and it is “having the courage to show up when you can’t control the outcome.” These words resonate with me as they not only aptly describe this past spring, but also the countless times association members stepped into the arena despite many unknowns. Across all corners of New Hampshire, school psychologists collaborated with administrators, educators, and support staff in order to provide quality academic and social-emotional supports for children, families, and their local communities.

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Scholarship Winner: Megan Carter
by Ryan Long

The NHASP Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce that the scholarship recipient for 2020 is Megan Carter. Megan resides in Tilton, NH. She has just completed her second year in the school psychology graduate program at Plymouth State University. One of her proudest accomplishments during her practicum at Bow Elementary School was building a self-care webpage for students, teachers, and parents which was a useful resource during remote learning. Megan has spent the past two years working as a Graduate Assistant for the School Psychology and Counselor Education Program at PSU, including managing the planning of PSU’s Diversity Institute and being part of the committee that reinvented the program’s vision, mission, and process statements. Her leadership qualities were also exemplified when she served as a NASP Student Leader this year. Megan will be completing her internship in the Timberlane Regional School District this coming year. Congratulations Megan!

In addition to applauding the scholarship recipient, we would like to take a moment to acknowledge all of this year’s applicants. Their accomplishments are commendable and we wish them all well in their future endeavors in the field of school psychology. γ

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Back to School!

New Hampshire schools may have arrived at differing attendance guidelines at this time, but we all share in the adjustment process. Back to school is a refreshing and energizing phrase for many and for some others an apprehensive and/or depressive provoking phenomenon. As School Psychologists, we recognize that individuals may fluctuate between these thoughts and feelings as well as find themselves at extreme ends of the continuum. School Psychologists often model and facilitate an accommodating attitude among the school-wide community and, therefore, encourage communication, accept emotional release, and support expression in healthy ways.

School Psychologists provide diverse services among the educational environment from leadership, testing and assessment, counseling, training, and much more. Given the tumultuous COVID-19 pandemic, it is likely that additional staff training may be needed to encourage awareness of staff, students, and family expressions of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Reminders of your school’s policy and guidelines toward mental health referrals, suicide prevention and assessment, and statewide intervention services may be helpful.

Our school communities whether on campus, remote, or hybrid may benefit from unifying activities that create a shared safe space that provides structure and familiarity during these times of uncertainty. School Psychologists have the skills to deliver systemic support and embrace cooperative and collaborative alliances to address the school-wide community. Please utilize The New Hampshire Association of School Psychologist (NHASP) https://www.nhaspweb.org/ and join as a member, come to your regional meetings, monthly Board meetings, and ongoing Professional Development groups.

Welcome Back to School!

Cindy B. Gilks, PhD, ABSNP, NH CSP
NHASP Treasurer

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History repeats itself. Came across this poem written in 1869, reprinted during 1919 Pandemic.

This is Timeless....

And people stayed at home
And read books
And listened
And they rested
And did exercises
And made art and played
And learned new ways of being
And stopped and listened
More deeply
Someone meditated, someone prayed
Someone met their shadow
And people began to think differently
And people healed.
And in the absence of people who
Lived in ignorant ways
Dangerous, meaningless and heartless,
The earth also began to heal
And when the danger ended and
People found themselves
They grieved for the dead
And made new choices
And dreamed of new visions
And created new ways of living
And completely healed the earth.
Just as they were healed.
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Facilitated Referral, Evaluation, and Reevaluation Meetings

by Ronda Greg

The facilitation process is designed to so that a team can voluntarily communicate and problem-solve to reach consensus.

The process utilized involves one team member who is the facilitator. This team member introduces the meeting, the purpose of the meeting, and proposes a solution-based intervention on what was discussed. The proposed solution should be discussed until team members are in consensus.

The School Psychologist begins the presentation. In the case of a referral, the School Psychologist records the information on a whiteboard or other visible vehicle. The information goes into one of two columns: Strengths of the Student and Challenges for the Student.

Both columns will be prepared by the School Psychologist ahead of time. The information is only for the strengths and challenges the SP found in testing. Both are covered up with paper or some other medium until discussed. The SP uncovers the Strengths and discusses what was found in the testing to verify them. Examples are also provided. The SP then invites the parents to list the strengths they observe in their child. These are added to the list. In the event that the parents repeat an already listed strength, the SP will place a + next to that item. Next, the classroom teacher is invited to do the same. Finally, any other evaluators will follow suit.

Once the strengths have been discussed, the SP removes the paper from the Challenges and begins the discussion of the challenges revealed in the testing. The same procedure is followed as for the strengths.

All evaluators will have written reports to share with the parents if they have not already given the parents a copy of test results prior to the meeting.

Should there be an area in the discussion that may bring about a dilemma without resolution, there should be a “Parking Lot” area in which the discussed item can be placed. Before the meeting convenes, someone is designated to research each item so it can be resolved.

Staff and evaluators should be notified and prepared for this process. Once the classroom teacher, other staff, and parents have participated in this type of meeting, they will feel comfortable doing it again. The SP should take time with each invited guest, including the parents, about the process.

There is a visual component to the process that lends credibility to the results. For instance, a student may have more strengths than challenges. The challenges may be mitigated with interventions. The Team could agree to set a date for a new meeting after interventions have been tried. The student also could have more challenges than strengths found by the SP, the classroom teacher, the Special Educator in academic testing, and the Speech Pathologist. The challenges all point to a clear need for intense remediation for the student.

This process takes between an hour to 90 minutes. The focus is always on the student. This approach promotes collaboration and good will by directly addressing students’ needs.
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students’ return to learning were just some of the myriad of topics addressed by our association this year.

As uncertainty remains regarding face-to-face meetings and conferences, NHASP is moving forward and finding new opportunities to foster connectedness and collaboration. Our goal is to continue to offer professionally enriching learning experiences. Therefore, the association will host a PLC throughout the year with upcoming topics posted under the calendar tab of the NHASP website. Conferences for the fall and spring, along with mini skills presentations will also be held virtually. The association is piloting the Zoom webinar platform in order to bring these opportunities to our membership.

In addition, the NHASP executive board will continue its work on developing our strategic plan. The COVID-19 pandemic has shone a bright spotlight on the need to have comprehensive and integrated school psychological services across the state; thus, highlighting the importance and timeliness of the plan's development.

I would like to end this message by encouraging our membership to look for those spaces where they can make a contribution to NHASP, be it small or large. It may come in the form of attending a board or regional meeting, serving on a committee, writing an article for the Protocol, supporting professional development opportunities, engaging in advocacy efforts, or running for an elected board position to name just a few. For those who may be a bit hesitant or unsure about taking a risk, just remember that our organization flourishes when we can add diverse perspectives, be it from the graduate-level trainee, the early career professional, or the seasoned veteran. Please feel to contact me sharing your thoughts and stories throughout the year. And finally, to bring it back to Roosevelt’s quote, dare greatly, your efforts can make a difference for NH’s children, families, and schools.

Greetings from your NASP Delegate!

by Kate Salvati

I am starting my 26th year as a school psychologist in NH, and have been a member of NASP (and NHASP) since graduate school. I have been involved in various capacities within NHASP over the years and am proud to now be serving as the NASP Delegate from NH. I served as a Regional Representative to the NHASP Executive Board for several years prior to serving as President of NHASP and I have served twice in that role. I have continued my involvement through various committees and advocacy activities at the state and national levels, including attending NASP Public Policy Institutes and NASP Northeast Regional Meetings. It is an honor to serve as a liaison between our state and national organizations in this new role. I will work to keep you updated regarding resources and issues that are of importance to our profession and those that we serve.

While the benefits of NASP membership are always plentiful, now more than ever, the hard work of NASP leaders has produced particularly timely and useful resources to support our work. Whether you are continuing with virtual service delivery, or have returned to some or all in-person instruction, I encourage you to review all the materials in NASP’s COVID-19 Resource Center including the “Ask the Experts” webinar series (available free to NASP members) and accompanying guidance documents on school reentry. As the new school year begins with so much uncertainty, we will all benefit from collegial support and collaboration. The NASP Member Exchange is a great place to turn to your peers to discuss specific situations and challenges. These conversations and questions will continue to be useful throughout this unique school year as we lean on each other for support and guidance.

Mark your calendars! During the week of November 9-13, 2020, schools will celebrate National School Psychology Week to highlight the important work we do to help all students thrive. This year’s theme, “The Power of Possibilities,” looks toward hope, growth, resilience, and renewal. Possibility suggests that a small seed can grow into something magnificent. Power implies that things can and will happen. When we focus on what is possible, we have hope that students will thrive. More information and resources will be made available soon.

The last few months have been filled with uncertainty and turmoil on many fronts as it has highlighted deep divisions in our country. NASP prioritized social justice in the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan with a goal to “Ensure that all children and youth are valued and that their rights and opportunities are protected in schools and communities.” There are many informative resources you can find on the NASP website at www.naspweb.org As a state association, NHASP has renewed our commitment to ensuring social justice and equitable opportunity for all of our students as we work to renew our own Strategic Plan... stay tuned!

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank Tari Selig for her exceptional leadership as our NASP Delegate for the past six years. Tari will continue to facilitate our NHASP Professional Learning Community meetings and continue her leadership in many other ways, I’m sure. While I have a lot to learn and big shoes to fill, I will do so knowing I have Tari’s support.

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NHASP Protocol

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Quick Tips
by Samantha Broadhead & Janine Johnson

Since March 2020, we have all been making adjustments. Guidelines from the CDC and our elected officials changed how we socialize with friends and family, altered the way children are educated, and threw our routines into disarray. As psychologists, educators, therapists, caregivers, friends, and neighbors we have been adjusting to how we can function in our professional and personal roles during this pandemic. Realizing that the changes to our lives were going to be long term, finding new functional and simple routines became increasingly important to our social and emotional well-being.

A group of consultants from SERESC have been creating short Quick Tips videos to support balance in these changing times. These videos, available on both Facebook and YouTube, are available to share with colleagues, school teams, families, and friends. These videos have been helpful and supportive to those who view them, and they have been fun and meaningful to those who have created them. We wanted to provide some quick summaries of key tips from some of the videos.

- **The Routines Quick Tips** video explains the value of how reliable structures are supportive and grounding. For that video presenter, improving task initiation and efficiency are often the primary reasons for her routines. The ‘Microsoft To Do’ app on her phone helps her to follow through on her routines for the day and keep track of things to add to the laundry list of tasks that can be done another time. For her kids, decorating a visual schedule in our house has helped with changes and transitions, as well as to plan fun activities together and to get excited for upcoming events.

- **A Connections Quick Tips** video highlighted strategies to support and maintain connections with students. The video identifies three primary strategies to help maintain connections to build academic success. First, educators are encouraged to not seek to totally re-invent their job in this time. Instead, seek to do the same job, just in a new format. Second, educators were encouraged to maintain the routines they use in school in whatever new format they encounter. Third, the importance of taking time to connect with students was highlighted, especially with student for whom connection are difficulty.

Other videos in the series include grounding and mindfulness-based practices to reset children at home (indoors and outdoors), social-emotional learning, and self-compassion. There are also two informative panel videos describing the impact of mask-wearing in schools including emotional implications of seeing others in masks and helping children to transition to their own masks. Please visit the SERESC Facebook or YouTube sites and pass these along to families you think may benefit.

More videos are in the works now as we consider the vast implications of returning to learn in-person, remote and hybrid models. We will continue to highlight key tips from those videos in future articles.

*Samantha Broadhead is a School Psychologist consultant for SERESC and Janine Johnson is an Occupational Therapist consultant for SERESC.*

The NHASP Listserv NHASPlist@yahoo.com, the NASP Membership Exchange and other NASP online Communities, and the NASP Listserv, formerly hosted on Yahoo, but now on Google School-Psychology-Listserv-2020@googlegroups.com, are amazing resources for our profession. These networks are filled with tremendous expertise and colleagues eager to share their knowledge, experience and resources. The range of questions is broad and the level of discourse informed and intelligent. I am always amazed at the work that that school psychologists around the country are doing, the solutions they have developed for challenging situations, the resources they have developed for so many aspects of the work we do, and their willingness to share them with anyone who asks. Equally impressive is how often questions are answered by distinguished leaders and authors in the field. You can reach out to all of these people. If you do contact individuals from the listserv, do so privately, generally by replying to the person rather than to the list.

A more informal approach to networking exists through email, texting, messaging, and other direct communication systems. I think

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Evaluating Students in the Age of COVID-19
by: Nate Jones

As school psychologists, we are faced with the challenging task of continuing to complete appropriate evaluations of our students while maintaining needed health and safety protocols due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In many situations, we will have to adjust standardized assessment procedures in some fashion to minimize the risk of virus transmissions. We also must, however, always seek to stay as true to the standardized administration procedures as possible.

Throughout decisions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, school psychologist differentiate between the broad concept of an evaluation designed gather information and present findings on an individual student and specific assessment procedures that can provide the data that informs an evaluation. Deciding to complete an evaluation with a student does not necessarily mean that we have decided to complete specific assessments with the student. It is often just as appropriate to use data sources such as a file review, observations, and consultations to inform our evaluation as it is to use specific individualized assessments. The appropriate approach to each evaluation should be determined on a case by case basis considering both the educational needs of the student and the health and safety factors of COVID-19. Effective discussions of these decisions are needed so that the student’s family, and when appropriate the student themselves, can make informed decisions regarding their consent for an evaluation.

When considering adjustments to standardized assessment procedures and completion of our evaluations, several key factors emerge. These include:

Further enhancing our process for determining which students should be evaluated, developing good evaluation questions, and using those questions to make specific decisions on how an evaluation will be completed.

Identifying needed help and safety procedures for each individual case

Recognizing the impact on the results and interpretation of our assessments due to differences between the procedures used in an individual case and the method in which that assessment tool was standardized.

Effectively communicating adjustments and their impact for each individual student to the school team and family.

**Evaluation questions**

During disposition of referral and other evaluation planning meetings, it is important for school psychologists to promote two key conversations. The first is a conversation about what else could be done through general education instead of proceeding with an evaluation. Second, once a team determines to move forward with evaluation, we must support the team identifying specific referral questions. Having clear and actionable evaluation questions will help the team to determine how to best design each individual evaluation plan.

Three primary types are there for questions can be identified. These include:

- Whether the student will meet criteria for specific special education disability areas?
- The intensity of the student’s educational needs compared to their peers?
- The determination of which educational interventions are most appropriate?

**Health and Safety Procedures**

At this time, the COVID-19 virus is primarily considered to be a droplet transmitted disease. There are some situations, such as singing, coughing, yelling, medical procedures, and other similar activities where the virus can become aerosolized and it remained in the air for extended periods of time. Primary mitigation procedures in public schools at this time, however, continue to focus on preventing droplet-based transmission through ventilation with fresh air and protective devices such as masks, face shields, and transparent walls between individuals. Additionally, good hand hygiene practices continue to be needed to reduce possible surface transmission.

**Ventilation:** When working with individual students, school psychologists must work in rooms that have appropriate ventilation with fresh air. This can include opening windows and doors and having high quality HVAC systems that provide a high rate of fresh air to the room. We should not work with students in rooms but have no openings to other spaces and / no other access to fresh air.

**Space:** School psychologists also need to complete assessment in rooms where they can be 6 or more feet from the student. This will generally mean a room that has at least 15 feet or more between walls to allow for proper space between students and sufficient space for chairs and moving about.

**PPE:** Most assessment completed by school psychologists can be performed using a face mask, face shield, and potentially a transparent wall. Some school psychologists are also opting to wear gowns or other similar personal covering that can be changed between students. The use of gloves is not recommended unless you will be touching a student for a prolonged period of time. Effective hand hygiene with improve hand sanitizer or soap and water washing is

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Evaluating Students

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recommended over the wearing of gloves.

Recommended Assessment Procedures

When performing an assessment with an individual student, the following steps are recommended:

Sanitize all assessment materials to the extent possible. Note, it is not believed that paper-based assessment materials, such as stimulus books, can be sufficiently sanitized to eliminate the change of the virus being present. Hand hygiene is critical here.

Collect all the materials that the student will need to physically engage with themselves, such as response booklets, scrap paper, pencils, word reading cards, and so forth. Place all those materials in a single folder or envelope to be provided to the student.

Offer to meet the student either virtually or outside so that the student can see you while not wearing PPE. Don your PPE so they can see what you look like while wearing it before working with you on the assessment.

On the day of the assessment, great the student and, after initial hand sanitizing, explain the use of PPE and the evaluation process. Then, provide the student with their packet of materials. Throughout the evaluation, each time materials are exchanged between evaluator and the student, be sure to sanitize your hands.

Consider grouping, when appropriate, subtests that involve similar PPE so that the number of times you have to change your PPE can be minimized. It is important, however, to avoid changing subtests order when it has been done for a reason, such as long term memory testing.

When administering booklet-based tasks where you need to be relatively close to the student, such as matrices or vocabulary, so you can see where they are pointing and /or to control the manipulation of materials, wear both a face mask and a face shield and request the student wear a face mask. When wearing a face shield and face mask, you can consider being 3-6 feet from the student.

When administering subtests that allow you only one opportunity for oral expression of information, such as working memory tasks, consider wearing just a face shield so the student can still see your mouth as you speak the information. During these tasks, remain at least 6 feet from the student.

When administering tasks allow the student only one opportunity to verbally express information, such as oral reading fluency, consider wearing both a face mask and a face shield and allowing the student to remove their face mask to improve your ability to understand what they are saying. During these tasks, remain at least 6 feet from the student.

For other types for assessment tasks, we must determine the most appropriate PPE and other procedures.

After the evaluation session is completed, request the student return their assessment material packet to you. Place this packet and all other material that might have been impacted by the virus in a zip lock bag or other container.

When you score or otherwise touch the materials, always consider the materials to be potentially carrying the virus and follow good hand hygiene procedures. It is not likely that paper based materials used during assessment can be up appropriately sanitized. Therefore, every time you touch materials, sanitize your hands before, during, and after your use of the materials.

Interpretations

Any adjustments to the standardized administration procedures can impact the accuracy of results of that assessment. School psychologist must be mindful of the difference between the experiences of the student they are assessing and experiences of the students during the standardization of the assessment.

Two key factors in this difference emerge:

The overall educational experience of the student since the COVID-19 pandemic began may be different enough from students during the standardization of the assessment that their performance may not be interpretable in the usual way. A student’s performance on any assessment, including an individually administered assessment or a rating scale can be impacted by:

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Evaluating Students

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Different educational experiences since the pandemic began.

Differences in the student’s capacity to perform specific skills at a given time due to external factors such as stress and trauma.

Actual skill differences for the student.

The differences in the specific experience of these students during your assessment from the experience of students during the standardization process impact the results in many ways. School psychologists need to consider how each adjustment differs from standardization and how this impacts the results.

Communication

Effective and accurate communication of changes to standardized administration procedures and their impact is critical. All educators first need to be competent in making these decisions and adjustments, and then we must strive to be confident in how we communicate. Confident presentations of this information that clearly demonstrate a confidence and preparedness by the educational team can be a key support in promoting engagement and trust with all team members.

Additionally, ethical standards by the National Association of school psychologists specifically referenced the need to describe all adjustments to standardized medication procedures in our written work and in our oral presentations.

During disposition of referral and other evaluation planning meetings, school psychologists should support all of the evaluators on the team in discussing with the family, and the student when appropriate, how their assessments might be adjusted and what this might mean for the student. Providing families with this information is critical in supporting their ability to make informed decisions and provide informed consent on assessment plans.

When we write our reports of our evaluations, including information about the adjustments is critical. Including information on the adjustments in multiple portions of report is appropriate, this can include the reason for referral and purpose of the evaluation, the validity statement on the results, as well as in conclusions and recommendations.

In evaluation review meetings, the success of the different adjustments and their impact on the student should be explained. School psychologists are encouraged to support other team members who may not be as confident and experienced in explaining some of this information so that families and all team members have an understanding of the results of the assessment.

Conclusions

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to massive changes in how we provide education in our country. Educational teams continue to have to comply with special education laws, including the child find and evaluation requirements for our students who we suspect may require special education.

This article highlights many of the primary considerations for assessments during COVID-19, but many additional factors exist. School psychologists are encouraged to be mindful throughout all the assessments we complete and continue to seek out further information and resources on how to complete our assessments appropriately.

Giving the extensive training and experience in evaluation for school psychologists, we should be leaders in our buildings for discussions around how to evaluate and assess students most appropriately at this time. Designing appropriate by evaluation plans, determining whether a student should be assessed, selecting the appropriate health and safety measures, and understand their impact on the evaluation results are all critical roles for the school psychologist. Finally, effectively communicating all this information to school team members and student’s families is critical for supporting appropriate decision-making and for each individual student.

Notes

Dr. Jones is a NH certified school psychologist, NH licensed psychologist, and a BCBA with SERESC, based in Bedford, NH. He provides evaluation, consultation, and professional development to school districts around NH through SERESC, located in Bedford, NH. Information in this article is largely based on the work of a multidisciplinary team of consultants from SERESC who completed an extensive evaluation guidelines project this past summer. Those interested can download these guidelines from www.seresc.net/resources. Dr. Jones has provided professional development on these guidelines to school districts across NH this fall.

All information contained in this article should be considered as recommendations for practice. Individual school psychologists should work with families, school teams, and school administrators to determine the most appropriate approach for each student, and how to comply with policies and procedures from each district. Additionally, as information regarding COVID-19 continues to evolve and school psychologists should remain mindful of new information and adjust our assessment procedures as needed.
The Demilitarization of Schools

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Recruiters tend to accentuate the positive aspects of military life while omitting any references to the negative aspects.

When we see old newsreels of Japan and Germany in the late 30s and early 40s, we notice young children with strident expressions wearing uniforms, carrying guns, and marching with precision. We all remember the young Austrian, Rolf, in The Sound of Music who gave up a loving relationship for membership in the Third Reich, and the Kamikaze pilots who went to their deaths without ever having had a romance. When we see these images, we are aghast at the indoctrination that a militaristic society can impose on its youth. Yet when we see our own children marching in uniform with guns as part of the Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps, we celebrate their patriotism and presumed character formation.

Despite the word “officer” in the program’s title, the vast majority of students lured into the military by this program end up as enlistees or what is known as “cannon fodder”. In spite of the military’s insistence that JROTC is not a recruiting tool, JROTC has proven to be just that based on follow-up research of JROTC participants. JROTC also has used a curriculum that is antithetical to diversity.

For example, the Army JROTC textbook LET 3, p. 185, says that “Fortunately for the Army, the government policy of pushing the Indians farther west then wiping them out was carried out successfully.” Local school districts have no control over the JROTC curriculum and that undermines local control. In other words, JROTC instructors enjoy what all other high school teachers are denied - academic freedom. According to the Committee for Conscientious Objectors, school boards across the country are rejecting JROTC because they are too controversial, too likely to promote violence, too expensive, too controlled by Washington, too discriminatory, and too much at odds with the goal of creating critically-thinking students in gun-free schools. Money for college is often used as a lure but only a small number of JROTC graduates receive it. Also, there is no evidence that the program lowers drug use or prevents students from dropping out of school. A disproportionate amount of time is spent marching as if this activity somehow magically transforms individual characters simply by its repetition. JROTC with its curriculum of war has no place in a world that needs to find new and better ways to get along. Because it runs counter to a culture of peace, it must go the way of the dinosaur. Only a curriculum of peace will develop individuals capable of creating authentic and lasting world peace.

The presence of police in schools also appears to be counter-productive.

A few studies have tried to nail down the effects of school police on students. They offer evidence that the presence of school police does increase suspensions and arrests, particularly for relatively young students, while providing no clear verdict on whether police reduce in-school crime or major conflict.

Meanwhile, if you ask students what they think of school police, surveys reveal generally positive views — but feelings are notably more negative among Black students, who are more likely than other students to be arrested in school (Barnum, 2020).

Also, …

arrest rates of children increased substantially after schools received federal grants to hire police officers, starting in 1999. Each additional officer led to about 2.5 extra in-school arrests annually of children between ages 7 and 14. There was also some evidence that additional police meant older students were more likely to be arrested both in and out of school… the addition of school police officers in Texas led to a 6% increase in disciplinary actions — including suspensions — for middle school students. These suspensions were largely in response to relatively low-level offenses, and Black students were most affected… when middle or high schools hired more police, students were 1.7 percentage points less likely to graduate high school, compared to similar students in the same district in other years. More police also led to slightly lower college enrollment rates (Barnum, 2020).

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The New Three Rs

The Gates Foundation asserts globally competitive schools need a new Three Rs: rigor, relevance, and relationships. Schools should engage all students with a rigorous curriculum, offer coursework that is relevant to their lives and aspirations, and foster strong relationships between students and adults. The foundation has invested about one billion dollars to promote the new three Rs and the redesign of American high schools. Learn more at gatesfoundation.org (Tavanger, H.S. (2009). Growing up global. Ballantine Books.)
The Demilitarization of Schools

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School psychologists, working with school counselors and others, are uniquely positioned to transform schools into places where mental health, productivity, creativity, aesthetic appreciation, problem-solving, empathy, compassion, cooperation, critical thinking, the arts, and service to the community are valued and practiced. Therefore, school psychologists, in collaboration with others, can help actualize the following suggestions:

1. Ban military recruitment in schools
2. Replace JROTC with Peace and Social Justice Studies with a focus on communication and conflict resolution skills
3. Eliminate the school resource officer program and return these responsibilities to teachers, school principals, school psychologists, behavior management specialists, mental health workers, school counselors, and school social workers. More of these specialists may need to be hired in some schools.
4. Develop a Parent Education Resource Center and Parent Involvement Program that includes ongoing parent education classes
5. Develop a service learning program
6. Ensure that the arts have a strong presence in schools
7. Substitute the Pledge of Allegiance with readings from the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights and the World Pledge
8. For high school students, require Howard Zinn's A people's history of the U.S. in all history classes
9. Establish Robert Muller's World Core Curriculum in all schools
10. Integrate critical thinking skills in all school subjects
11. Assess the school climate and make appropriate improvements to it

Our goal must be to have a kinder and gentler society and world, and what we have been doing so far has not brought us to it. In fact, things are worse than ever as indicated by school shootings, incivility by elected officials, road rage, the increase of membership in hate groups, increased public surveillance, attacks on minorities, and the killing of unarmed people by the police. Actions speak louder than words. We are either part of the solution or part of the problem. No action too small can be discounted. Silence is the voice of complicity. What better outcome could there be than to have the world a better place after we are gone due to our presence and actions in it?

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Fall


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The Demilitarization of Schools

by Leo R. Sandy

After my enlistment in the Navy was over, I went to college where I joined the anti-war movement in the 60s. After college, I taught for one year at the middle school level. Because my consciousness was raised in college, I felt uncomfortable having students say the pledge of allegiance every morning. When they said it, their eyes were half-closed and they seemed to be in a zombie-like state. After a critical analysis of this situation, I decided to forego the pledge and replace it with readings from the U.S. Constitution including the Bill of Rights. I read short sections over the year and promoted discussion of them. The students agreed that this was a great improvement over the mindless recitation of the pledge. To this day, I am sure that very few students even know what they are pledging to. How does one show allegiance to a flag and to the country it stands for? What if that country is committing genocide? That does warrant our continued allegiance? Does the pledge mean not trying to overthrow the government? If so, good. unless the government is oppressing its citizens. Does it mean uncritical obedience? Does it mean paying your taxes? The pledge should have a list of exactly what allegiance means so that people know what they are pledging to. Better yet, it should be abandoned like all oaths that are relics of a militaristic past. The pledge is a subliminal form of nationalism designed to inculcate uncritical obedience to authority. According to Gandhi, “Nationalism is no longer the highest concept. The supreme concept is a world community.” Another problem with the pledge is “liberty and justice for all”. This is a bold-faced lie as shown in Michelle Alexander’s book, The new Jim Crow. A more honest statement would be “striving for liberty and justice for all”. Another problem is “one nation, under God”. Under God was added to the Pledge on June 14, 1954 to counter “Godless” Communism. There are people who take this statement literally as if only the U.S. is under God while all other countries are not. Either all countries are under God depending on the existence of God or none is. Forcing children to say the pledge with this insertion is a gross violation of church/state separation. Many children have faced punishment for refusing to say the pledge, and this is a violation of their constitutional rights but they don’t know this. A related phenomenon occurred in the 60s when American flags were added to the uniforms of all policemen to counter the anti-American sentiment that came out of the resistance to the Vietnam War.

An expanded perspective on loyalty is from the award winning 1916 Moral Code for Children:

I will be loyal to family and civilization. In loyalty, I will do my best to help the friendly relations of our country with every other country, and to give to everyone in every land the best possible chance. I will seek truth and wisdom; I will work and achieve, if I can, some good for the civilization into which I have been born.

If I try simply to be loyal to my family, I may be disloyal to my school. If I try simply to be loyal to my school, I may be disloyal to my town, my state and my country. If I try simply to be loyal to my town, state and country, I may be disloyal to humanity. I will try above all things else to be loyal to humanity; then I shall surely be loyal to my country, my state and my town, to my school and to my family. And this loyalty to humanity will keep me faithful to civilization (1916 Moral Code).

The following pledge by Lillian Mellen Gensler relates to this cosmopolitan sense of loyalty:

I pledge allegiance to the world
To care for earth and sea and air
With peace and freedom everywhere

In addition to nationalism, promoted through the pledge of allegiance, there are three other forms of militarization: military recruitment, JROTC, and the constant presence of police officers in schools.

Schools are a primary site for socialization into societies that support war, and the United States is no exception. The tradition of military recruiters visiting high schools is deeply ingrained in the United States, with many schools logging visits from the military every second or third day school is in session (Harding & Kershner 2018, 326). “Military science” classes, with instructor salaries split between local school districts and the Pentagon, are now so prevalent that in 10 states one out of every three public high schools offers such instruction (Goldman et al. 2017). … the U.S. military’s presence in public schools is expanding, and a leading policy think tank (is) advocating for the establishment of yet more high school “military science” programs (Goldman et al. 2017 (Kershner & Harding, 2019).

Abajian (2013, ii) “found that many U.S. schools effectively create a ‘school-to-military pipeline.’ …(whereby) recruiters are urged to achieve ‘school ownership’ and to convert educational institutions into ‘forward operating bases’ from which they can more effectively launch ‘aggressive assaults’ on high school juniors” (Kershner & Harding, 2019). The targets of recruiters tend to be from poor, minority areas: “while high schools in wealthy suburban school districts typically restrict visits from recruiters to only two or three times a year, in some low-income urban communities the military is on campus two or three times a week” (Harding and Kershner 2018, p. 326). Fifty-four percent of JROTC participants nationwide are students of color. The military targets low-income schools the same way tobacco and alcohol companies do. The results are equally deadly. It is no accident that fifty percent of combat troops are people of color. Also, the ASVAB test is a key element in the Pentagon’s recruiting strategy, as it allows the military to collect the kinds of data that will allow their recruiters to customize a sales pitch to students” (Kershner & Harding, 2019).
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**Delegates for Submission**
Upcoming issues of Protocol will have the following deadlines for submission of articles, news and announcements:

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