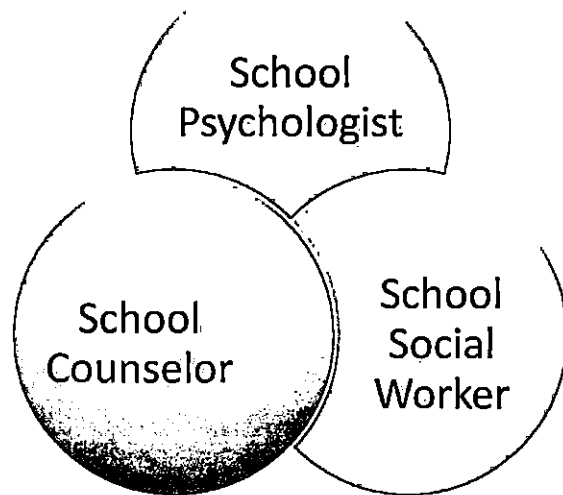


What are the differences between a School Counselor, Social Worker, and School Psychologist?



The roles of the school counselor, social worker, and school psychologist are similar but different at the same time. The goal is universally the same in that school counselors, social workers, and school psychologists all fall under the mental health umbrella and are looking to improve overall behavior, social-emotional functioning, and academic success with the students with whom they work. There are different expectations in their daily activities and services to students that each role provides, but they are all considered mental health providers in the school setting.

School Counselor	Social Worker	School Psychologist
Recommended Ratio		
The recommended ratio for school counselors to students is 1:250 .	The recommended ratio for school social workers to student is 1:400 .	The recommended ratio for school psychologists to students is 1:500-700 .
Credentials		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master's Degree in Educational Counseling (60+ credit hrs) + 700 internship hours. • Pass a licensing exam through the State to obtain a Special Service Provider license. • Renew state license every 5 years + continuing education coursework/professional development. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master's Degree in Social Work (30 credit hrs) + 600 internship hours. • Pass a licensing exam through the State to obtain a Special Service Provider license. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most positions require Educational Specialist (MS & Specialist) Degree (60 credit hrs). A doctorate in school psychology (600 hrs) is not required but is looked upon more favorably for employability. • Pass a licensing exam through the State to obtain a Special Service Provider license.



<p>BRIEF solution-focused counseling (Tier III). (Not therapy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps students who are struggling to make positive behavioral choices. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducts suicide and threat assessments according to district policy. 	<p>and their families, including counseling, case management, and crisis intervention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess home, school personal, and community factors that may impact a particular student's learning. Provides special education consultation, case management, process coordination, and related services. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducts suicide and threat assessments according to district policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducts assessments and screenings, intelligence tests, determines eligibility for special education services, and provides referrals for external assistance for identified students. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducts suicide and threat assessments according to district policy.
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Employment Setting

<p>High schools generally have counseling staff; some middle schools do as well; elementary schools are more limited, and it is a case-by-case basis whether one is assigned. Often in the lower grades, one may be shared among several schools or another position such as school psychologist or social worker.</p>	<p>Some social workers will serve more than one building in a district. Usually there is either a social worker or a psychologist in a building but not both.</p>	<p>Most psychologists will serve several buildings in a district. Usually there is either a social worker or a psychologist in a building but not both.</p>
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For more information, please contact Tonette Salazar, CSCA lobbyist at Tonette@t2salazar.com or 720.231.1425

Credit: Jennifer Quintana, CO School Counselors' Association, Elementary School VP and Counselor at Mapleton Elementary School