

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH

Hearing Date: April 28, 2021 8:00 AM

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COMMENTS FOR: HB 3728

John Shirley

Texas Counseling Association

Bastrop, TX

I am in favor of changing the title of “Licensed Specialist in School Psychology” to “School Psychologist” to align with national standards for this profession. I strongly recommend this action and support the more appropriate job description.

Edmund Guedea, Mr.

Self, School Psychology Intern

San Antonio, TX

I am a school psychology intern and I am writing to you today because I would like to request, as would all Licensed Specialists in School Psychologists, that our title be changed from “LSSP” to just “School Psychologist.” We are the ONLY state in which are titled as such and, to be frank, it is demeaning to the rigor our work in graduate school and in practice entails. We are trained in a WIDE range of clinical practices but just practice in school settings. It is also very confusing to parents we interact with daily when we refer ourselves to LSSP as the first thing they say is “who?” Please change our titles.

Jessica Greve

Texas Association of School Psychologists

SAN ANTONIO, TX

Please support HN 3728. As a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology, the title creates much confusion in my role, which makes it harder for parents and even school staff to know what services I provide and how I can help students with disabilities. It is nearly impossible to translate in Spanish, which creates more barriers for minority students. Forty eight states in the United States identify a person in my role, with the same degree, as a school psychologist without the complications that the LSSP title in Texas creates. Students do not need unnecessary barriers to mental health services. Please support this bill to allow for the restoration of our original job title as school psychologists.

Rosa Olivares

Self- Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Mission, TX

The Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) title is a title that many times confuses the families we work with, specifically in the Rio Grande valley, where most are Spanish speaking and from a lower socioeconomic status. Having worked outside of Texas, in a state where LSSPs are able to use the School Psychologist title, allowed me to obtain first-hand knowledge regarding just how important a clear title is. The LSSP title creates a barrier to students, families, and educators accessing school psychological services in a time when mental health services are already lacking. It also limits visibility to the field of school psychology, which contributes to our critical shortage of professionals in the field. We need to make access and knowledge of our services more accessible to all students in our communities and something as simple as a title can make such a significant change. Thank you for your consideration and your time.

Rosa A. Olivares

Stephanie Martinez, Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

LSSP

San Antonio, TX

School psychologists are commonly referred to by title when national and local news outlets report on the services we deliver to students and the school community; however, in Texas, the official title is licensed specialist in school psychology. The current title causes confusion among students, parents, and staff, as well as fellow school psychologists across the nation. One school website might refer to us as school psychologists, while another school website may solely refer to us as LSSPs. This even happens within the same school district! The current title is only further complicated when translated into numerous languages.

Please support school psychologists by saying YES to H.B. 3728.

Leticia Garza

Self / Sales Manager

Harlingen, TX

I support the title School Psychologist

Denise Cummins, LSSP

Self-LSSP

League City, TX

I have worked as an LSSP for over a decade and currently supervise around 25 LSSPs for a larger district. It doesn't sound like much, but the clarification in title would be an amazing advance for our field. It would allow for more transparency with parents and teachers. I spend so much time clarifying what my credential means. No one retains the acronym or what it means. I'm constantly referred to as the LLSP or the SSP in ARD deliberations. No wonder our field is dwindling. Please consider this change. It's in the best interest of the student.

Nancy Kuykendall

Round Rock ISD

Round Rock, TX

I have been a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology for 20 years. This title has led to much confusion over the years between staff and parents. The title of School Psychologist would be a huge improvement in others understanding my job in a clear, succinct way.

Georgia Kimmel

The University of Texas at Austin

Austin, TX

I support the name change from LSSP to school psychologist

Alexandra Ortiz

Self

Uvalde, TX

Say my name!

Brooke Nichols, Ms.

Self, Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Selma, TX

Please consider voting YES to changing our title of Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) to School Psychologist. This change will provide clarity to parents, students, and staff in our jobs as others with the same schooling in many states are able to call them School Psychologists. I am a part of national and state groups that refer to us in that way. This change would better describe the wide variety of roles we have as LSSP's evaluating and serving students in special education. Thank you.

Mallory Miller

Self, Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Houston, TX

The state of Texas is the only state that uses the title Licensed Specialist in School Psychology. We have the same or more education and training as other states who call their practitioners School Psychologists. There is a mass shortage in Texas in this field and the long and confusing name isn't helping people find their way to the field or get us the respect in the field we deserve. Please change the name to School Psychologist. The national and state organizations support this name change and so should you, thank you.

Fiona Deligonul

Self, LSSP

AUSTIN, TX

As a someone who provides mental health services in schools, this is how I have to introduce myself to parents who are worried for their child: "I'm an LSSP, a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology." Parent: "How is that different from a school psychologist?" Me: "In other states, I would be just called a school psychologist, but I received my license from a psychology board, rather than an education board, and because my degree is a specialist level degree as opposed to a doctorate level degree, they do not allow us to say "school psychologist." This is distracting and onerous. There is no danger posed to the public by my saying "I'm the school psychologist" because my license limits my practice to schools and there is no documented pitfalls by the use of this term by school psychologists in other states. To be frank, the restriction has felt almost petty all these years.

Chiharu Allen, Dr.

Self, school psychologist

College Station, TX

I support HB 3728 which will enable greater access of school psychological services in the public, charter and private schools. Texas has not seen a greater need for mental health support for our school age children going through issues such as social

isolation, anxiety and depression due to COVID to those needing significant psychological support for desire/ideation to harm self and/or others. Private psychological services for children are scarce, especially outside of large cities. Texans are not aware and thus unable to ask for help from the most accessible institution every family has access to (schools) because of our name. I've worked with many families whose queries got buried because they were asking for school counselors or incorrectly asking for SLP, LSP, LLPS, etc. or they simply did not know to ask. My husband who is a family medicine health care provider often shares that the families appear confused and cannot remember the title LSSP, when he recommends families seek help from the school system.

Safety of our children is critically important in Texas, as evidenced by the passage of SB 11 in 2019 requiring schools to provide proactive behavior threat and safety management. School psychologists are specifically trained in the prevention and intervention of mental health crisis, yet many districts, especially in less resourceful regions, did not know to involve school psychologists. I urge the committee to research the statistics of school age children in Texas who have made the outcry or completed threat to self and/or others, just this school year alone.

The basis to the opposition to the name change is outdated by at least 25 year. This started when there was little regulation and guideline in Texas for training and licensing of school psychologists and the state "grandfathered" people with graduate level training in general psychology. Today Texas has masters, specialists (masters plus), and doctoral level training programs that follow the rigorous national standards. And our licensing is strictly governed by the Texas Behavioral Health Council (BHEC). Additionally, I believe the opposition is against the BHEC's anti-competitiveness and scope of practice guidelines.

Texas is undergoing a serious shortage of school psychologists, largely due to the fact high school and college students do not know the occupation exists, even when psychology has been the most popular major for decades.

Name change, which does not cost tax payers any money, will bring great benefits to the children, adolescents, adult students, and families of Texas.

I support HB3728.

Sarah Tohlen

Self; Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Rhome, TX

I support this change!

Robert Lackey, Dr.

Self- Licensed Psychologist/LSSP

Grand Prairie, TX

My concerns as both a Licensed Psychologist and LSSP are that by changing the established title of LSSP to "school psychologist" will cause further confusion in the minds of the public. Clearly different titles would lesson the confusion for the public and delineate the differences in education and training in these two distinct occupational titles.

Kristen Wallman

Self, LSSP

Pearland, TX

Please consider changing our title from LSSP to school psychologist. I am an LSSP and have experienced many difficulties with confusion about my title and role from staff, parents, and students. All other states use the title of school psychologist. This term

accurately represents my areas of expertise and would open the door for more purveyance of mental health support for our students, which we all know is desperately needed right now. Please help our schools and communities have a clearer understanding of who we are by allowing us to use a title that accurately represents the work we are capable of. Thank you.

Nicole Price, LSSP, NCSP

Self, Education Specialist

Cypress, TX

I support the proposed name change for LSSPs to School Psychologists. In every other state we are known by that title. It helps parents, families, school staff, and other community organizations easily identify us and understand the wide breadth of skills we have. In addition, we have a high level of training, including a 60+ hour masters or specialist degree in School Psychology, 4-6 50-hour field pre-practicums during the coursework, 250 hour practicum during our last semester of classes, an internship of at least 1200 hours, and have to pass two exams-the national school psychology exam and Texas jurisprudence exam. We are highly trained individuals with a passion for helping children, families, schools, and our communities. Let our title reflect such; please pass the bill for the name change to School Psychologist. Thank you.

Joy Beard

Self - LSSP

Pearland, TX

I am encouraging you to support the change of title from LSSP to school psychologist. Not only would this move toward matching the title used for this profession in other states, but will help decrease confusion and help promote the work school psychologist can do. LSSP is a long title and the meaning is often lost in the acronym. Being able to use the title school psychologist will allow more clarity and understanding for parents, teachers, and school staff to who we are and all the ways we can help support the well-being and education of students.

Minerva Adame

Empower3 Nonprofit

Austin, TX

I support the name change from LSSP to school psychologist. The new name is straightforward and provides clarity to the community, school, and families.

Janelle James

Self

Colleyville, TX

I strongly advocate for the title of LSSP be changed to School Psychologist. With 30 years in practice and holding different titles, the title LSSP is confusing for parents and teachers. When explaining the title LSSP I always have to state that it's the Texas term for School Psychologist and then there is understanding. In other states I would be called a School Psychologist as that best explains what I do. Please change this title back to what best communicates what our role is a school. Thank you for considering what is in the best interest for the LSSP but for those we provide services to.

Valerie Quinones, Ms

TASP

El campo, TX

HB 3728 is up for hearing Wednesday, April 28, in the Public Health Committee. HB 3728, relating to a school psychologist licensed under the Occupations Code, seeks to change our title from LSSP to school psychologists. This simple change would provide more clarity and understanding for parents, students, and colleagues in our profession. Our national and state groups employ the term school psychologist, as it communicates the level of expertise and training LSSPs must meet. As a group, we provide collaborative services to support students, teachers, and school staff. Based on our training and experiences, LSSPs also support students' mental health needs, which continues to be a significant concern. The term School Psychologist succinctly summarizes the wide variety of challenges we support daily.

Please consider voting YES on HB 3728. Thank you for your consideration.

Rene Hernandez

Self, LSSP

Denton, TX

Good morning!

I am an LSSP (Licensed Specialist in School Psychology) in Denton, Texas. HB 3728 is up for hearing Wednesday, April 28, in the Public Health Committee. HB 3728, relating to a school psychologist licensed under the Occupations Code, seeks to change our title from LSSP to school psychologists. This simple change would provide more clarity and understanding for parents, students, and colleagues in our profession. Our national and state groups employ the term school psychologist, as it communicates the level of expertise and training LSSPs must meet. As a group, we provide collaborative services to support students, teachers, and school staff. Based on our training and experiences, LSSPs also support students' mental health needs, which continues to be a significant concern. The term School Psychologist succinctly summarizes the wide variety of challenges we support daily.

Please consider voting YES on HB 3728. Thank you for your consideration.

Thank you,

Rene Hernandez, MSCP, LSSP

Tracey Galloway

Self/LSSP

Tyler, TX

To Whom It May Concern:

I am an LSSP (Licensed Specialist in School Psychology) in Winona, Texas. HB 3728 is up for hearing Wednesday, April 28, in the Public Health Committee. HB 3728, relating to a school psychologist licensed under the Occupations Code, seeks to change our title from LSSP to school psychologists. This simple change would provide more clarity and understanding for parents, students, and colleagues in our profession. Our national and state groups employ the term school psychologist, as it communicates the level of expertise and training LSSPs must meet. As a group, we provide collaborative services to support students, teachers, and school staff. Based on our training and experiences, LSSPs also support students' mental health needs, which continues to be a significant concern. The term School Psychologist succinctly summarizes the wide variety of challenges we support daily.

Please consider voting YES on HB 3728. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, Tracey Galloway

Carolyn Rodriguez Neisius, LSSP, LPC

Self, Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Colleyville, TX

I work for a school district as an LSSP. This title is a disservice to students, parents and school staff (The public) because it is not clear what my role is. If I say LSSP, it is just letters with no meaning. If I say the entire title, its quite long and wordy and I think people miss the point. I have worked in Colorado and Florida where I was called a school psychologist. In those states, the title: "Psychologist" was protected and I couldn't use the word without the word "School" in front to refer to my position. This makes sense and would benefit schools, especially now after Covid, there is a great need for my services.

Gulden Esat

Texas Association of School Psychologists

Sugar Land, TX

We, school psychologists, deserve to be recognized with our proper title. Most of the time parents and students do not understand what LSSP entails. This will bring clarity to the responsibilities of our profession and increase the trust the parents invest in us because the title will help distinguish us from the teachers and administrators, and increase the likelihood of a collaborative relationship especially with respect to IEP.

Christy Chapman, Dr.

Texas Association of School Psychologists

Lubbock, TX

My name is Dr. Christy Chapman. I have PhD in Educational Psychology and School Psychology. I am licensed in the state of Texas, which unlike every other state in the US with licensed school psychologists, does not allow me to use the title of the degrees that I attended post-secondary education for almost 12 years to earn. I work in a large urban school district as the Lead LSSP, and when we go around the table and I say my title, people just smile and nod as they have no idea what I do when they hear LSSP. Especially considering the time that we are living in during Covid and the significant decline in mental health that I have witnessed in our students and staff this school year, I want them to hear that they can come to a School Psychologist who is there to support them with resources and 12 years of education who can provide counseling, assessment, intervention, risk assessment, behavior support and so many other needed supports to our campuses and students. In addition to being an LSSP, I am the parent of a child with autism. I came into this career because of him, because I wanted to support other students and families who needed a School Psychologist by their side to navigate public education and to get them the help they need to thrive and become successful adults. Parents don't know who we are. Staff members don't know who we are. We really need people to be able to say our name, know that we exist and be able to reach out for our help. Please help us to do that by passing this bill and allowing us to call ourselves by the title we have earned, School Psychologist. Thank you for your consideration.

Jeralyn Barta, Mrs.

TASP

Moulton, TX

I agree that the title LSSP should be changed to school psychologist as rightly that is the more appropriate title and represents the work that is done.

Jessicca Allen

Self - LSSP

Marble Falls, TX

This bill would bring Texas in line with the title used in 48 of the other states in our nation. This simple change would provide more clarity and understanding for parents, students, and colleagues in our profession. Our national and state groups employ the term school psychologist, as it communicates the level of expertise and training LSSPs must meet. As a group, we provide collaborative services to support students, teachers, and school staff. Based on our training and experiences, LSSPs also support students' mental health needs, which continues to be a significant concern. The term School Psychologist succinctly summarizes the wide variety of challenges we support daily.

Please consider voting YES on HB 3728. Thank you for your consideration.

Sherrilyn Smith

Self

Montgomery, TX

Please consider the name change from Licensed Specialist in School Psychology to School Psychologist because the scope and depth of our profession centers upon the emotional/social needs of the students we serve and the title of School Psychologist bridges the gap between what our roles are in schools and how our roles can be strengthened with this title change.

Candice Tharp

Self, Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

New Braunfels, TX

I am a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) in New Braunfels and a constituent of Texas House District 21. I'm writing today to ask you to support HB 3728, relating to school psychologists licensed under the Occupations Code, which seeks to change our title from LSSP to school psychologist. As LSSPs we frequently face frustrations with the understanding of our title. Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) is a confusing title to parents and professionals within the school system. They often ask what that means, what our credentials are, and even challenge our evaluations because they are unclear about our qualifications. The title School Psychologist clearly states who we are and what we do for children. In addition, Texas is one of only two states (the second being Arkansas) that does not allow the title School Psychologist. The rationale is both outdated and irrational at the current time. We are facing a critical shortage of LSSPs in Texas and those in our field repeatedly report that they either leave Texas for a different state or choose not to come to Texas to practice as school psychologists because of the limitations imposed by our title. At a time when we need as many school psychologists as possible, we cannot afford to lose these professionals.

Janice Opella, LSSP

self

Cedar Creek, TX

I strongly urge you to support the title change from Licensed Specialist in School Psychology to School Psychologist. The LSSP title is confusing for parents and other professionals. We Are School Psychologists! We are not only educated in all areas of Psychology, but also in the extensive regulations and laws regarding providing services in the public schools (of which there are many). We provide individualized evaluations for all areas of disability within the IDEIA as well as counseling, designing behavior intervention plans, conducting Functional Behavioral Assessments and providing training and support to teachers and parents. Other disciplines have clearer titles (Licensed Professional Counselors, Speech Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists and Physical Therapists). This doesn't cost anything and will make it clear who we are.

Janice Opella, M.Ed. LSSP, LPA

Tammy Smith, LSSP

Self- LSSP

AZLE, TX

Parents and students do not understand what a LSSP is and does. However, their understanding is increased when we say it is like a school psychologist. Other states use the title "school psychologist" and it needs to be consistent. We should be called what we are and that is a school psychologist.

Catherine Parker

Self/LSSP

Little Elm, TX

I am in support of changing my professional title from LSSP to school psychologist.

Griselda Landeros Wells, Dr.

Self

Los Fresnos, TX

It is imperative to get Texas LSSPs the same title of 'School Psychologist' as all other States. The LSSP title is confusing to parents and both school staff and mental health workers outside of the school setting. The training and skill set obtained by LSSPs is that of a School Psychologist and we should be recognized as such.

Sarah Ireton

Self

Alvarado, TX

I urge you to vote "yes" to HB 3728 which would change our title from "Licensed Specialist in School Psychology" (which can often lead to confusion for parents and staff) to "School Psychologist" which is far more succinct. Thank you for your time and consideration!

Christina Stanford

LSSPs

Huntsville, TX

Hi,

I am an LSSP and support H.B. 3728.

School psychologists like myself work with students, families, educators, administrators, and communities to ensure all of our students have the supports they need to be successful. We provide direct and indirect interventions to support student social-emotional learning, mental and behavioral health, and academic success. In Texas, school psychologists are not allowed to use their title. Instead, Occupations Code requires us to use Licensed Specialist in School Psychology, abbreviated to LSSP.

Unfortunately, a majority of educational professionals, parents, students, and the community are unaware of what LSSP means. As such, the confusion over our title may hinder a student's ability to access school psychological services.

Approximately 80% of students who need mental health supports do not receive them. Research shows that students are more likely to receive mental health supports if the supports are offered at school. According to The Collaborative Task Force on Public School Mental Health Services Year 1 Report dated November 2, 2020, "Many rural and small districts may have no mental health professionals available in the school or community, as none of these positions are mandated." Additionally, "school psychologists and social workers are present in only a small proportion of Texas schools."

It may also hinder the ability for fellow school psychologists, in Texas and around the nation, to contact us about transfer students or job opportunities. Texas is facing a shortage of school psychologists. For the 2020-2021, the current ratio is 1 school psychologist for every 2,627 students in Texas; whereas the national recommended ratio is 1:500.

Support for the use of the title "school psychologist" is found in both federal law (300.308(b)) and state law (Texas Education Code 21.003(b)). 48 out of 50 states allow for the use of the title "school psychologist" in their credentialing and educator licensing language with the exact same credentialing standards as Texas currently has.

Specialist-level graduate education consists of 3 years of full-time graduate study in a recognized school psychology program, the accrual of 60 or more graduate credits, and the completion of a minimum of 1 academic year (minimum of 1,200 hours, of which at least 600 hours must be in a school setting) of supervised internship experience. Doctoral- and specialist-level school psychologists whose graduate preparation merit a state-level credential of school psychologist, and who practice in schools under that credential, should use the title "school psychologist" as their professional designation.

Jennifer Charney, LSSP/LPA

Self -school psychology

Dallas, TX

Please change the name from licensed specialist in school psychology to school psychologist. Not only is our title a mouthful and no one understands what we do, with this title our support and input is often minimized in a school setting. Our training is 60 plus hours of graduate work and a year long internship. We have expertise in the areas of child development, assessment, behavior interventions and consultation. We would love the same name that 48 other states use so that we have authority and can help provide more help to Texas students.

Anahita Khosraviyani, Mrs.

Self, LSSP

PLANO, TX

We are requesting a title change from LSSP to School Psychologist to provide transparency to those we serve and to be recognized as others across the country.

Richelle Whittaker, Dr

Self- Self-employed

Pearland, TX

Many parents don't know what an LSSP is but are more familiar with the term school psychologist, so it only makes sense that it's how we refer to ourselves. In addition, other states utilize the term school psychologist for master level professionals. I am asking that we change the title to reduce confusion and align ourselves with other professionals in other states.

Tara Stevens, Dr.

Self, Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Lubbock, TX

The change from LSSP to school psychologist is needed to clearly delineate not only who can practice psychology in schools, but also the specialized nature of the services provided by LSSPs. Parents, teachers, and administrators, but especially parents of children with disabilities, interact with multiple professionals and staff who provide some type of important support service for students. Because services (e.g., counseling, behavior intervention) and titles (e.g., specialist, counselor, interventionist) often overlap, parents and school staff do not always understand who has the specialized training in psychology. Training does significantly differ and matters when working with vulnerable populations of children and their families.

Emily Lehning

Self, LSSP

Pflugerville, TX

I am an LSSP (Licensed Specialist in School Psychology) in Pflugerville, Texas. HB 3728, relating to a school psychologist licensed under the Occupations Code, seeks to change our title from LSSP to school psychologists. This simple change would provide more clarity and understanding for parents, students, and colleagues in our profession. Our national and state groups employ the term school psychologist, as it communicates the level of expertise and training LSSPs must meet. As a group, we provide collaborative services to support students, teachers, and school staff. Based on our training and experiences, LSSPs also support students' mental health needs, which continues to be a significant concern. The term School Psychologist succinctly summarizes the wide variety of challenges we support daily. Please consider voting YES on HB 3728. Thank you for your consideration.

Rachel Team

LSSPs

Abilene, TX

The LSSP title creates a barrier to students, families, and educators accessing school psychological services in a time when mental health services are already lacking. It also limits visibility to the field of school psychology, which contributes to our critical shortage of professionals in the field.

Kristen Mainor, Dr.

Self - professor

Waco, TX

I support the title change from LSSP to school psychologist.

Reagan Miller, LSSP

Clifton ISD

Clifton, TX

A change in title would be so beneficial to our profession! It would bring Texas professionals unity to our national organization and also give more clarity to the people we work with and the families we represent about who we are and what we do!

Jo Henderson-Tussing

TASP

Rusk, TX

Please pass to give appropriate title of School Psychologist to those currently titled LSSPs. Will provide clarify duties and help parents understand functions of School Pdychologists.

Chandra Scales, Ms.

Conroe Independent School District

Conroe, TX

In carrying out duties that impact students, families, and schools, it would be more likely for others to understand our role if we used the term "school psychologist." With the term Licensed Specialist in School Psychology, the title often becomes abbreviated to LSSP because of how lengthy it is. When others refer to us as an LSSP, the description is lost. There is power in a name. We work hard every day to help our communities and having the title that suits our job would enhance our ability to network, thereby deepening our impact. Please vote YES to this bill.

Paloma Lozano

Self, LSSP

Houston, TX

I support this title name change so that there is no confusion regarding my role in the school system. In my short time as an LSSP, I have been confused countless times with Speech Language Pathologists and even counselors. With the title change, it will be clear to all others what my role is, and I believe it will create a stronger level of trust between parents of students and LSSPs, primarily because they will know and understand from the get go who we are, instead of being confused when we introduce ourselves to them. As a bilingual LSSP, I also would appreciate using a title that can be translated and understood by others from diverse backgrounds. Thank you.

Amy Shatila, LSSP

self - Licensed Specialist in School Psychology, Nationally Certified School Psychologist

Austin, TX

I am writing in support of updating the title of Licensed Specialists in School Psychology (LSSP) to School Psychologist. I have served as an LSSP for several years and am also credentialed in California as a School Psychologist. As a person who has used both titles, I can speak firsthand to the benefits of using the term School Psychologist. Our families who speak languages other than English can more easily understand the term School Psychologist, as Licensed Specialist in School Psychology does not translate easily into many other languages (including Spanish). We are one of the only states to use this title, which causes confusion within the profession and minimizes the outstanding training and practice of our LSSPs in Texas. Please consider updating this terminology from Licensed Specialist in School Psychology to School Psychologist.

Thank you for your time.

Amy Shatila

Judy Anderson, Dr.

self/Licensed Specialist in School Psychology, Nationally Certified School Psychologist

Plano, TX

The profession of school psychology warrants the title, School Psychologist, upon completion of all required coursework and licensing requirements. Changing the title for those of us in the field of school psychology will mirror our colleagues throughout the nation. Of greater importance is the clarity the name change provides to the public.

Kristen Hassett

Self

Houston, TX

I've previously emailed committee members. I strongly support House Bill 3728.

Amber Morgan

Self, LSSP

Pflugerville, TX

Please consider changing the title of Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) to a more parent-friendly and understandable title of School Psychologist. This clarifies our services and is much more descriptive of what we actually do in the school setting. The title of School Psychologist is overwhelmingly used in other states as it should be in Texas to foster continuity. Thank you for your time and consideration!

Megan Frazier

Self/Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Kingwood, TX

I am a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP). When I tell students, parents, members of the community, and even some school staff my title, they often don't have an understanding of what that means or what my role is. However, when other people describe me as a "school psychologist", people have a better understanding of what that means and what my role is. It is important for others to understand what my role is so that people can access the mental health services I provide. LSSPs are the only professionals licensed by the state to provide psychological services within the public school system. 48 of 50 states use the title "School Psychologist" for people who are licensed to provide psychological services in public schools. For these reasons, I believe that LSSPs should be able to use the title "School Psychologist."

Best Regards,

Megan Frazier, LSSP

Sharon Dalton, LSSP

self - Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Houston, TX

Please vote to allow LSSPs to use the title "School Psychologist" as virtually every other state does. The title Licensed Specialist in School Psychology is very confusing to parents. It sounds as if we have just a "certificate" or some other lesser level of education. When in reality we have a specialist degree which is actually higher than the master's degree requirements. Thank you

for helping "School Psychologists" reach more students and their families.

Chia-chen Lin, Ms.

Self - LSSP

Aubrey, TX

Changing the current title of Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) to "School Psychologist" in Texas

Maureen Hicks Damm, LSSP

self; school psychologist

Austin, TX

I am an LSSP and a member of the Texas Association of School Psychologists, an association that represents school psychologists across Texas. I support H.B. 3728.

School psychologists like myself work with students, families, educators, administrators, and communities to ensure all of our students have the supports they need to be successful. We provide direct and indirect interventions to support student social-emotional learning, mental and behavioral health, and academic success. In Texas, school psychologists are not allowed to use their title. Instead, Occupations Code requires us to use Licensed Specialist in School Psychology, abbreviated to LSSP. Unfortunately, a majority of educational professionals, parents, students, and the community are unaware of what LSSP means. As such, the confusion over our title may hinder a student's ability to access school psychological services.

I have earned the Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) credential, and in 48 other states, school psychologists, who do what I do and have had the extensive graduate training (69 hours) I have, are able to call themselves school psychologists. Other groups may say that by being able to call ourselves school psychologists, we will confuse the public even further about our skills and abilities and sully the name of non-school psychologists. We are licensed by the same board as non-school psychologists, and we have an ethical obligation to not practice beyond our scope. There are repercussions for doing so. Any school psychologist I know would not practice beyond their scope, and they are fully aware of what that means. We are highly trained and skilled practitioners who seek to help students reach their potential academically, mentally, and emotionally. By allowing us to legally call ourselves school psychologists, we will only increase transparency and understanding of how we can best help our students and our community. This is why I support H.B. 3728. Maureen Hicks Damm, LSSP, NCSP

Eugene Stanley

Self

Conroe, TX

Previous years when consideration was given to changing the licensure title of Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) to school psychologist, the argument has been made that would be misleading. I counter argue introducing oneself as LSSP confuses most folks regarding what that title means; however introducing oneself as "school psychologist" alleviates any confusion. Please vote yes to change the licensure name from Licensed Specialist in School Psychology to School Psychologist.

Jacqueline Pelayo, LSSP

HISD

Spring, TX

I also advocate and hope the title changes to School

psychologist only.

Kenneth Denton

Self; LSSP

Amarillo, TX

This change is long overdue, not only to align Texas with national standards, but also to improve services and clarity for public schools. The change has been suppressed by those who claim it will be confusing and wish to make it seem like the title of “psychologist” is one owned by doctoral practitioners. Both are false. I have my doctorate degree, and I overwhelmingly support this change. The public much better understand the role of a school “psychologist” than an “LSSP.” Those in opposition are protecting what they view as their rightful title at the expense of ours. We are school psychologists. There is a massive shortage in school psychological services and school psychologists nationwide. Licensed Psychologists cannot meet this need on their own. We are not in direct competition, so please make this change to improve the clarity and professional identity in support of the hardworking practitioners who are serving our children.

Joshua Gooden, LSSP

AIM

Missouri City, TX

I am in support of changing the LSSP title to “school psychologist”

Betty Gravelin

self

San Antonio, TX

I believe changing the name to school psychologist will assist parents and the community and avoid confusion with other professionals within the school system such as SLP, ATP, LS, etc.

Sandra Zeringue

Self

Friendswood, TX

Please consider affording me the opportunity to be called a school psychologist as is done in other states. I maintain national certification as a school psychologist and must adhere to professional development requirements as well as ethical and professional requirements. I take my role and responsibilities very seriously attaining more than the required professional development hours demanded by state and national offices.

Sandra Luhrsen, Mrs.

self

Pearland, TX

Hello, my name is Sandra Luhrsen, and I am an LSSP in the Houston area. Before moving to TX 12 years ago, I worked as a School Psychologist in another state. Here in TX, I have the exact same job but am called a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP). The title LSSP is excessively wordy and confusing to both parents and members of the community.

Furthermore, it doesn't command the same respect that "School Psychologist" does. Please allow LSSPs in Texas to be given the title School Psychologist to both eliminate confusion and afford them the respect that their counterparts in other states are given.

Thank you,
Sandra Luhrsen

Kimberly Grimes, SSP Student

Self/Occupation

Dickinson, TX

LSSP curriculum in universities prepares the professional for the field of school psychology to the degree of which the functions are the same as an individual in the school district with a doctorate in school psychology. However, this distinction of being an LSSP as opposed to a school psychologist can be a source of confusion for other stakeholders, including parents.

Nicola Ferla, Ms.

Self - LSSP

Sugar Land, TX

Please vote YES / support this bill. The change in name would provide more clarity and understanding for parents, students, and colleagues in our professional. The national and state groups associated with this profession employ the term school psychologist, as it communicates the level of expertise and training LSSPs must meet. Texas is the only state has a lack of clarity, using an alternative length term, which is confusing to those who are served. Thanks for your consideration.

Curt Johnson

Calallen ISD

Corpus Christi, TX

I fully support this bill. School Psychologists are trained in many essential mental health roles but are often overlooked in a crisis because the title of LSSP is so confusing.

Venessa Brooks, LSSP

HISD

Missouri City, TX

I am in support of the bill to change the title of LSSP to school psychologist

Cathy Veith

Self

San Antonio, TX

The name change from LSSP to school psychologist will avoid confusion by people unfamiliar with the term Licensed Specialist in School Psychology. Most parents and the community have no idea of the title and therefore are confused on how to seek help within the schools for psychological services. At a time where social-emotional support is so critical, no delay in action can take place. I support the name change. Thank you.

Frances Barcenx

Self

San Antonio, TX

I support the name change to school psychologist supported by HB 3728. As a school administrator, it is difficult to say LSSP and have parents not confuse it with other professionals such as SLPs, ATPs, LS, etc.

Amy Porter, Dr.

self - Licensed Specialist in School Psychologist (LSSP)

Conroe, TX

I am currently a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) working for Willis Independent School District. As a practicing LSSP, I have found that the term, which is seemingly unique to Texas, is very confusing to parents and students that I work with daily. Many of the parents of students I serve have a high school education or less. Many of them do not speak English as their first language. It is hard enough sometimes to explain what a School Psychologist does with these barriers so that people understand, but it is even harder when using a lengthy term or another acronym that has to be explained. I have practiced in other states using where we have been called School Psychologists and the simple difference in terminology does seem to make a difference when talking to people who are unfamiliar with our jobs. Please consider changing our job title to School Psychologists, as we are so named across the country and by our National Certification board, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). NASP credentials us as "Nationally Certified School Psychologists" or NCSPs. Thank you.

Candace DeClet

LSSPs

Victoria, TX

Mental health and special education are the two hardest aspects to advocate for for our students. When you weld those two together, you create school psychology. Being an LSSP, is more than a test them and place them profession. We can do so much more with mental health, behavior, consultations with general Ed and special Ed. Having this title change from LSSP to School Psychologist is a huge place to start. A lot of the time in school districts, staff, administration, parents, and the community don't understand/know what we do or who we are. This saddens me deeply. I don't want to be just "that lady who testing him" or "the lady that hold the ARDs." I want to be more. I want to be the change maker for children that i set out to be when o found this School Psychology major. Changing this name can do that immediately. I'm so proud to be a born and raiser Texan. Please consider making this change effective immediately so the profession I love cake he recognized and believed in by the state that I love.

Jennifer Much

Nwspc pllc - nationally certified school psychologist

New Braunfels, TX

I am called a school osychologist in my previous state, have earned my NCSP (National Certified School Psychologist). It is confusing to have different names for the same professions. I am a School Psychologist! Please consider allowing us the respect we have earned in our specialized schooling to be called and licensed ad School psychologists in the state of Texas!

Tyler Aitken

self, Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP), Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP)

Plano, TX

As a practicing school psychologist in the state of Texas, I support the current bill proposing the much needed change regarding the title of a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology to School Psychologist. As a Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP), I pride myself on the role of a school psychologists; however, in the state of Texas our job title does not reflect the training, expertise, and certification as a school psychologist. It is time for the state legislature to recognize the School Psychologist title. The services that our school psychologists provide in the school districts of Texas deserves the correct recognition and title that represents the skillset, credentials, and expertise as a school psychologist.

Thank you for your time and consideration - it's time.

Leah Kelley

Self- LSSP

Bellville, TX

School psychologists like myself work with students, families, educators, administrators, and communities to ensure all of our students have the supports they need to be successful. We provide direct and indirect interventions to support student social-emotional learning, mental and behavioral health, and academic success. In Texas, school psychologists are not allowed to use their title. Instead, Occupations Code requires us to use Licensed Specialist in School Psychology, abbreviated to LSSP. Unfortunately, a majority of educational professionals, parents, students, and the community are unaware of what LSSP means. As such, the confusion over our title may hinder a student's ability to access school psychological services.

Approximately 80% of students who need mental health supports do not receive them. Research shows that students are more likely to receive mental health supports if the supports are offered at school. According to The Collaborative Task Force on Public School Mental Health Services Year 1 Report dated November 2, 2020, "Many rural and small districts may have no mental health professionals available in the school or community, as none of these positions are mandated." Additionally, "school psychologists and social workers are present in only a small proportion of Texas schools."

It may also hinder the ability for fellow school psychologists, in Texas and around the nation, to contact us about transfer students or job opportunities. Texas is facing a shortage of school psychologists. For the 2020-2021, the current ratio is 1 school psychologist for every 2,627 students in Texas; whereas the national recommended ratio is 1:500.

Support for the use of the title "school psychologist" is found in both federal law (300.308(b)) and state law (Texas Education Code 21.003(b)). 48 out of 50 states allow for the use of the title "school psychologist" in their credentialing and educator licensing language with the exact same credentialing standards as Texas currently has.

Please support school psychologists by saying YES to H.B. 3728.

Sincerely,

Leah Kelley, S.S.P., LSSP, NCSP

Sian Flores, LSSP

School District

Allen, TX

Distinguished Committee. As an LSSP of almost 30 years in Texas, I plea that you vote Yes to HB3728 today. The term Licensed Specialist in School Psychology has been a long and confusing title for parents, students, and school staff to understand and remember. So they frequently refer to us as School Psychologists anyway. Can you imagine being a student in need of

support or in crisis who is trying to say they need to see the 'Licensed Specialist in School Psychology'? We worked hard and long for our degrees (with extensive practicums and internships), licenses (continuing education requirements, licensing exams), and vocations (understaffing). We feel that we have earned the right to be called School Psychologists as it is recognized in most other states. We are often confused with SLPs (Speech Language Pathologists) because of the confusing acronym. So please, whether it be for practical reasons for the families of school children in Texas, or for the hard earned recognition of psychologists in our field, vote YES for HB3728. With sincere gratitude.

Marlo Gonzalez, LSSP

Self/LSSP

San Antonio, TX

I am in support of being able to identify myself as a School Psychologist in the state of Texas. The hours and expertise that I and other LSSPs in Texas have earned should be recognized in our great state, just like it is in every other state in the U.S. The title of LSSP causes confusion within districts and to the children (and their parents) that we serve. Our license encompasses not only assessment, but counseling, consultation and ensuring equity for all of the students we work with. Please make this change!

Carla Egyed, Dr

Licensed Psychologists

Grand Prairie, TX

It is not a good idea to change the title of a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) to School Psychologist. The use of the title Psychologist is reserved for individuals that have obtained a doctorate degree in psychology and have gone through a rigorous process to obtain licensure to become a Psychologist. Licensed Specialists in School Psychology are not required to have a doctorate degree or take the Psychological Licensing Exam or the additional supervision requirements that are required of Psychologists. Awarding the title of Psychologist to individuals that have not obtained these additional licensure requirements is potentially hazardous and confusing to the public. Licensed Specialists in School Psychology should not be allowed to change their title to School Psychologist. Please do not vote in favor of this bill.

Albessa Mazatan

self, LSSP

Cibolo, TX

I am a bilingual Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) from Cibolo, Texas.

I'm writing today to ask you to support HB 3728, relating to school psychologists licensed under the Occupations Code, which seeks to change our title from LSSP to school psychologist. It is time that Texas aligns with the rest of the country and switches the professional title of LSSP to School Psychologist. Texas is one of only two states (the second being Arkansas) that does not allow the title School Psychologist. The rationale behind the LSSP title is both outdated and irrational for the current times. The title School Psychologist clearly reflects who we are and the type of service that is being provided to children, whereas the title of LSSP may cause confusion. This update on the title, will also help facilitate the transition process of other professionals moving to Texas from other states.

Thank you,

Albessa Mazatán, M.A., LSSP

Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Devyn Justice

Self, LSSP Intern

San Marcos, TX

Dear Representative,

I am a current LSSP Intern and will fully licensed as an LSSP this summer. I support H.B. 3728 as an important step in furthering access to mental health services to students and families.

School psychologists like myself work with students, families, educators, administrators, and communities to ensure all of our students have the supports they need to be successful. We provide direct and indirect interventions to support student social-emotional learning, mental and behavioral health, and academic success. In Texas, school psychologists are not allowed to use their title. Instead, Occupations Code requires us to use Licensed Specialist in School Psychology, abbreviated to LSSP. Unfortunately, a majority of educational professionals, parents, students, and the community are unaware of what LSSP means. As such, the confusion over our title may hinder a student's ability to access school psychological services. I myself have experienced constant confusion from parents, students, teachers, and administrators related to my lengthy and unclear official title. It has hindered my ability to provide services to students.

Support for the use of the title "school psychologist" is found in both federal law (300.308(b)) and state law (Texas Education Code 21.003(b)). 48 out of 50 states allow for the use of the title "school psychologist" in their credentialing and educator licensing language with the exact same credentialing standards as Texas currently has.

Specialist-level graduate education consists of 3 years of full-time graduate study in a recognized school psychology program, the accrual of 60 or more graduate credits, and the completion of a minimum of 1 academic year (minimum of 1,200 hours, of which at least 600 hours must be in a school setting) of supervised internship experience. Doctoral- and specialist-level school psychologists whose graduate preparation merit a state-level credential of school psychologist, and who practice in schools under that credential, should use the title "school psychologist" as their professional designation.

Please support school psychologists by saying YES to H.B. 3728.

Thank you for all the work that you do and for taking the time to read my letter. If you have any questions, or would like to further discuss any issues related to school psychology, please feel free to contact me.

Ashley Rew-Hunter, LSSP

@curlmecrazyashley

Austin, TX

Thank you for listening and reading all of the information regarding this bill. As a practicing LSSP and Nationally Certified School Psychologist for the past 16 years, I appreciate your effort on these matters. Although I hold a national license as a school psychologist, in the state of Texas; I have never been able to call myself one. As LSSPs we understand that we do not practice outside of schools. However, NONE of our parents realize that our schools have "school psychologists" because they don't know what an LSSP is. The current high school I work at has 3 LSSPs; however, if a sampling of our students, parents and teachers were taken - they would NOT know what we were and therefore say we don't have psychological services available in schools. All this bill is asking for, is for us to clarify our title so those who need mental health support in public education can find us and access the assistance.

Sabrina Risken, LSSP Intern

Self

Port O'Connor, TX

Many states in our country already use the term School Psychologist. Many school staff and parents do not understand the term LSSP. Being able to be called a School Psychologist is more descriptive of the role that we play within the school district. Adding the term School in front of the term psychologist will separate the two occupations of Psychologist (Dr.) and School Psychologist (a little above masters). I believe there will be little confusion if that is the problem. Thanks

Christina Bell Macher

Self, Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Dallas, TX

The title Licensed Specialist in School Psychology is counterintuitive. People are often confused when confronted with this title within a context that is usually stressful and overwhelming enough for families. Even school administrators and teachers are unclear as to our profession and introduce us in terms that often require us to rectify or clarify our title and function. Moreover, it is not a title that helps with recruitment into the field. It reduces our professional status and appeal. I relocated from another state in 2005 and was frustrated by the fact that I had to refer to my profession by a name few recognized and therefore understood. We work in an arena where trust in our expertise is essential at helping create collaborative efforts. Our cumbersome title adds an additional layer of work and confusion that is unnecessary. This becomes even more challenging when we are translating it into another language. We are highly educated and trained professionals who engage in important work. We merit being identified by the most appropriate and identifiable title. Thank you for time.

Lien Tran

Self LSSP

HOUSTON, TX

What is a "Licensed Specialist in School Psychology" or even more confusing "LSSP"? What do they do? Most don't know, would have trouble guessing, or if they've encountered us, don't remember. To change the title to School Psychologist might seem like a little thing but it carries big weight. In the least, it is a succinct representation of the profession and what we do. It helps school staff, parents, and students recognize that we are an important resource for mental health support. It gives us more visibility. It makes it easier for the profession to advocate for itself and the community to stand with us. It sets us to be on par with others nationwide that already practice under the title of School Psychologist. It clears up ethical conundrums when we simply want to wear a T-shirt that says School Psychologist on it. What is in a name? Potentially everything.

Curt Johnson

Self

Corpus Christi, TX

I am a Nationally Certified School Psychologist. I have been invited all over the country to present my research on teenage suicide. How a school responds to a suicide is predictive of creating a suicide contagion, in which an increased number of kids attempt to mimic the first death. I have advanced training in this expertise and yet when the district at which I am employed experienced a loss of a student by suicide, they did not seek any advice from me on how to respond appropriately to maximize the healing for the surviving students. They asked the school counselors because their title is associated with mental health. The school counselors at my district are great, but not specialists in this type of crisis response. The title of LSSP in the school setting gets relegated to a narrow focus of Special Education identification and often the expertise that we carry as part of our training is overlooked because of the title. When a teacher finds out that I am a school psychologist, they almost always immediately refer a child to me that they have been very concerned for, but did not know the district employs this resource. They know my title of LSSP, but unless I have specifically spoken with that teacher and explained my role, they have no idea what I do for a living and what I can contribute. The title School Psychologist immediately conveys expertise in mental health and is a person you would consult with about a student in concern. One of the committee members asked the question if LSSPs or School Psychologists

could open a private practice. The correct answer is YES but ONLY to contract for school districts. LPs or Licensed Psychologists may open their own practices and provide services to the general public, but MAY NOT contract with the school district as they are not trained in education statute and classification, which is different than diagnosis. The two domains are related and yet distinct. Licensed Clinical Psychologist and School Psychologist are not the same thing and the name change would not confuse them. I have practiced in other states and the title of School Psychologist has never been confused with that of a Clinical Psychologist anymore than the general public confuses Psychologist with Psychiatrist (very different things). Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions!

Shelby Bourland

Self - Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Seagoville, TX

I am an LSSP (Licensed Specialist in School Psychology) in Mesquite, Texas. Please consider voting YES on HB 3728, which seeks to change the LSSP title to school psychologist. This simple change would provide more clarity and understanding for parents, students, and colleagues in our profession. Our national and state groups employ the term school psychologist, as it communicates the level of expertise and training LSSPs must meet. As a group, we provide collaborative services to support students, teachers, and school staff. Based on our training and experiences, LSSPs also support students' mental health needs, which continues to be a significant concern. The term School Psychologist succinctly summarizes the wide variety of challenges we support daily.

Support for the use of the title "school psychologist" is found in both federal law (300.308(b)) and state law (Texas Education Code 21.003(b)). 48 out of 50 states allow for the use of the title "school psychologist" in their credentialing and educator licensing language with the exact same credentialing standards as Texas currently has. Using the title LSSP may hinder the ability for fellow school psychologists, in Texas and around the nation, to contact us about transfer students or job opportunities. Texas is facing a shortage of school psychologists. For the 2020-2021, the current ratio is 1 school psychologist for every 2,627 students in Texas; whereas the national recommended ratio is 1:500. It would be wonderful for Texas to become the 49th state to use the term school psychologist and to recognize the effort we make daily to serve our students. Thank you.

Molly Machemehl, Licensed Specialist in School Psychology ("LSSP")

Texas Association of School Psychologists ("TASP")

SAN ANTONIO, TX

Thank you for caring. While most licensees were well aware of their credentials, other administrative staff; clients; families; students; and faculty members were not always aware even after multiple discussions. The general public has not always known to state the complete title, even with us licensees providing explanation. While I and other licensees probably do not mind the talk, with limited time in meetings and priority needs for discussion at meetings, it would behoove the leaders to permit us to use a general category. Even after showing license, showing badges, making calls, and having discussions with the individuals responsible for making faculty phone lists, our credentials were labeled with the general category of school psychologist. Then, if subsequent changes and edits were made, all personnel was not necessarily using the new list. To simplify this for the faculty and public, having a generic term is appropriate in my opinion. It prevents mishaps of others. Most of us licensees are conscientious to explain that we provide educational considerations. Even after years with a group of people in a volunteer capacity, they refused to use the title Licensed Specialist in School Psychology ("LSSP") for me and instead used school psychologist even after multiple requests to explain and implore. The word "school" in the title school psychologist implies educational considerations being used by the licensee instead of clinical ones. A disclaimer and explanation could be required on informed consent pages and prior written notices to provide clarity. Thank you for taking the time to review this and understand many perspectives.

Karla Vermillion

LSSP

San Antonio, TX

Just reading the description under the bill and the title "School Psychologist" is used instead of "Licensed Specialist in School Psychology." Why? Because school psychologist is more easily understood. It's so much easier for people in our community/schools to understand what a School Psychologist is instead of the LSSP title. In any other state this occupation/title is known as a School Psychologist. LSSPs in the state of Texas go through the same graduate studying/programs as school psychologists and we go through the TSBEP to get our license. I believe LSSPs should be able to call themselves school psychologists. I hope it's decided to finally end this confusion between these two titles.

Taieka Derrick

LSSPs/School Psychologists

Fresno, TX

Most states across the USA refer to PhD to Masters/specialist level as School Psychologist. It is easier for parents and the community we serve to all be referred to as "school psychologist". It unifies us as a profession and it reduces confusion with the community and the people we serve.

Thanks

Alecia Wilson

Self-School Psychologist

Marble Falls, TX

Good morning! I am an LSSP serving the students in public education in the great state of Texas. If you've never heard of an LSSP before, you are not alone! In all other states we are called "School Psychologists" which is pretty clearly understood and recognized by most people. I am writing to ask you to support HB 3728 relating to a school psychologist licensed under the Occupations Code seeking to change out title from LSSP to School Psychologists, which would provide more clarity to those we serve about the nature of our profession. Thank you.

Nancy Razo, Dr.

Self

Mission, TX

To answer Rep Guerra's question, McAllen ISD has 7 LSSPs with a student population of approximately 22,000. Our LSSP to student ratio in the RGV is the 6th worst in the state. As a Graduate Educator in School Psychology in the RGV and a clinician, I'm very familiar with the confusion that the title creates. As demonstrated by members of your committee, they do not know what an LSSP is. Would it be clearer if it was School Psychologist? I think it would.

As for LSSPs practicing outside of schools, our current license does not allow us to practice outside of schools. This is why Amanda Afifi indicated we would have to practice under the Licensed Psychologist. Our board recognizes that LSSPs are the ones that can practice in schools because of our specialized training. Licensed Psychologists practice outside of schools and would require the LSSP to be hired by school districts to provide psychological services in schools the way we do.

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Nancy P. Razo, LSSP

Latisha Dominguez, LSSP

Licensed Specialist of School Psychology

Lubbock, TX

I support the title change from LSSP to School Psychologist for the same reason we do not refer to School Counselors as Licensed School Counselors. For every LSSP, we perform the duties of what many states refer to as School Psychologist, and should have access to the title that supports it. Thank You.

Jennifer Covington, Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Self

austin, TX

I am a bilingual Licensed Specialist in School Psychology and a Nationally Certified School Psychologist. I am in favor of Bill #3728 as this is a long overdue change that is desperately needed to break down barriers to mental health services in our schools. In 48 other states I would be able to refer to myself as a School Psychologist but in Texas I must use the long, outdated title of Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP). The LSSP title is confusing to parents and school staff and it is especially difficult to translate to Spanish and often leaves parents confused and unclear about what services we can provide. I am always heartbroken when I explain to community members what I do for a living and they say they didn't know the schools had access to school psychologists because they had no idea what an LSSP was and had they known we were in fact School Psychologists then they would have asked for that support for their child. This is one of many examples of how we are often overlooked in our district as mental health providers since our current title of LSSP is misleading. If we were able to refer to ourselves with the proper title of School Psychologists, because that's what we are, then there would be increased awareness that we too are mental health providers that can support mental health needs of students in the schools. Too many times I've had to tell district leadership- "you have access to highly trained school psychologists" only to be met with confusion as they often think LSSPs are just "educational diagnosticians." It is not until you explain to them that LSSPs are in fact "School Psychologist" and explain we have a specialist degree in School Psychology which is more than a masters degree (we have to complete more than 60+ graduate hours and a 1200 hr internship year and pass the Praxis School Psychology exam and the state jurisprudence to be licensed by the state board of examiners of psychologist, must do continuing education hours every year to maintain licensure) do they start to understand that they in fact have access to highly trained mental health professionals. But this explanation and conversation takes time and if there is a change in leadership this conversation has to happen all over again- if we were able to refer to ourselves correctly as School Psychologist then district leadership would have more awareness and understanding of what mental health services we can provide. My degree is in School Psychology, I passed the School Psychology exam, I am a member of the National Association of School Psychologists and am a Nationally Certified School Psychologists, I am licensed by the Texas Board of Examiners of PSYCHOLOGISTS -I should be able to tell families and schools- I am a School Psychologist and I can be of service to students and families who suspect their child has a disability or for mental health supports and services. There is already a shortage- let's remove these unnecessary barriers!

Doris Hermann, NCSP, LSSP

Self

College Station, TX

I have met the requirements for the National certification of School Psychologist and desire to use this title in Texas. In other states I am able to accurately describe what I do and the professional qualifications I have for it. It is a shame that Texas does not acknowledge this as those who use the title have had to take the exact same licensure test that I took. Please consider allowing those that hold NCSP as well as LSSP to be called School Psychologists. I work in a school district and it is difficult for our parents to understand what a licensed specialist in school psychology does. Please simplify this to the public. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Morgan Myer

Self, LSSP

Richardson, TX

Hello I am a LSSP currently working in Texas. I constantly have to field questions from parents and even school staff members about what a LSSP is and what it stands for. Our current title causes confusion because everywhere else in the US we are known as school psychologists. The title change would help clear up this confusion as well as advocate for more people to move to Texas to work from other states. Thank you for your consideration.

Michelle Lowder

Self

Bullard, TX

Say my name! I worked hard to be a School Psychologist!

Jimmie Barrett

Deer Park ISD

Deer Park, TX

Please support the change in Title for Licensed Specialists in School Psychology. It is very confusing to parents about our role in the schools. We are independent practitioners in the school setting.

Lauren Gourgues

Holland ISD

Temple, TX

I support this change.

Stacy English

LSSP

New Braunfels, TX

Please allow LSSP's to be called school psychologist. The majority of us are Nationally Certified School Psychologists. Using LSSP instead of school psychologist causes parents a great deal of confusion.

Stephanie Barbre, Dr.

Self, School Psychologist

Lubbock, TX

I am in favor of HB 3728 which aims to officially change the title of school psychologists in Texas. Unlike the rest of the United States, school psychologists in Texas are called, "Licensed Specialists in School Psychology," abbreviated as "LSSPs". The current title is ambiguous and gives stakeholders a misperception of the knowledge and expertise school psychologists possess. Namely, a 'specialist' is a general term used to describe an individual who specializes in a certain field, but they may not have or need a specific credential or level of training to do their work (e.g., behavior specialist, intervention specialist, reading specialist).

Point blank, school psychologists are psychologists who specifically work in the school setting. We are heavily trained mental health professionals and provide assessment and intervention services. Further, our training hours extend beyond a typical master's degree, and a formal internship is required for licensure.

Unfortunately, the expertise and value of school psychologists in Texas are overlooked when stakeholders easily recognize and understand what a school counselor is, but have no idea what a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology is. Over the past several years, I've collected data to analyze employment trends of school psychologists and school counselors in addition to trends in student enrollment. The current data for the 2020-2021 school year continues to suggest a visibility issue when Texas schools employ 13,639 school counselors but only 2,045 LSSPs (or school psychologists). The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) recommends one school psychologist for every 500 students (1: 500). Our state ratio this school year is 1: 2,627. There is no doubt Texas students need more psychological and mental health supports due to the pandemic, and it would help increase our workforce and visibility as school-based mental health providers if people actually identified us as school psychologists. Your support of the title change comes without a fiscal note, and we just want to be recognized and called what we are- school psychologists. I appreciate your consideration.

Tina Keith

Self

Rockwall, TX

I am a school psychologist have been for 17 years; however, I am not allowed to call myself that in the state of Texas. No, I am required to use a lengthy title “ licensed specialist in school psychology” that no one really understands and parents/teachers struggle to repeat. Every other state in the country is allowed to refer to my profession as school psychologist. Why has Texas chosen to remain in the stone ages? Please Allow us to refer to ourselves as such. We have trained for years, obtained highly rigorous degrees, only 12 credits shy of a PhD. Please allow us to refer to ourselves as the title in which we practice. Thank you

Joy Wang, Dr.

Self; Psychology

Lubbock, TX

The title of LSSP is confusing for parents, children and schools, and diminish of the contribution/impact a school psychologist can make to our children. Many states across the country use the title of school psychologist (vs. LSSP). Changing the title to school psychologist has the potential to increase the reach of school psychologist and bring Texas to the national norms

Catherine Drott

Self, Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Addison, TX

I support HB 3728. The title “school psychologist” accurately reflects the scope of our practice to the public and is more easily and universally understood than LSSP. Using the title “school psychologist” would also keep us in line with the rest of the country and alleviate confusion when special education students transfer across state lines.

John Powell, 3728

Self

Austin, TX

I am a certified teacher and am writing today in favor of bill 3728, title change of LSSP to School Psychologists. Words matter,

every time I am concerned about a student, I shouldn't have to do a lesson on "What is a LSSP? It's a School Psychologist, who can't call themselves a School Psychologists because Texas has a law that is different than 48 other states that doesn't allow them to call themselves School Psychologists but they are in fact School Psychologists." Prior to marrying a LSSP, I did not know School Psychologists were available in the schools to support students with emotional, behavioral, academic needs, or those suspected of having a disability. I thought LSSPs were just diagnosticians trained to give IQ test. Had I heard the title "School Psychologist" instead of "LSSP" I would have put two and two together and immediately understood that as a teacher in a public school, my students have access to a highly trained mental health provider, a School Psychologists. There is already a shortage of mental health providers and during trying times such as these, it is crucial, more than ever to clear up any confusion and remove any barriers that may be hindering access to mental health services. If I have a student who I am worried about it, it would be so much easier and understandable for me to speak to administration and or parents and say, "I would like to consult with the School Psychologists or have the student meet with the School Psychologist." They would immediately have some understanding of what I am saying, versus is me saying, "I would like to consult with the Licensed Specialist in School Psychology" which leads to major confusion and questions such as "Who? What's that? What do they do? Is that speech pathologists? A licensed what?" Please remove this confusing, outdated language, and allow and encourage the use of the proper title School Psychologists.

Keya Saleh

self

Dallas, TX

As a community member and LSSP, I strongly believe that this bill must PASS.

HB 3728, relating to a school psychologist licensed under the Occupations Code, seeks to change a title from "Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP)" to "School Psychologist." This simple change would provide more clarity and understanding for parents, students, and colleagues in the profession. The national and state groups associated with this profession employ the term School Psychologist, as it communicates the level of expertise and training our LSSPs must meet. Collectively, they provide collaborative services to support students, teachers, and school staff. Based on their training and experiences, LSSPs also support students' mental health needs, which continues to be a significant concern in these tumultuous times. The term School Psychologist succinctly summarizes the wide variety of challenges that these professionals support daily.

Please consider voting YES on HB 3728.

Thank you for your consideration.

Vanessa Martinez-Soto

Self

San Benito, TX

I am by nature a server to my community and the children that deserve my support. I attended college for three years and earned 69 college hours to earn my Masters Degree in School Psychology. Which is the equivalent to two Masters degrees in educational administration. I have earned my right to be called a school psychologist. I work in the schools and collaborate with teachers and staff. I make recommendations to help students feel and be successful. When I introduce myself to parents and staff they ask, "What is your position?" I respond with a licensed specialist in school psychology or LSSP. Which is met with a confused facial expression. I then state I am similar to a school psychologist. Which is further met with comments such as "Then why not call yourself that!?". By that time we have already lost the reason why I was there in the first place. And these types of questions happen frequently and then it happens in spanish. Which is ever more confusing. So the point is I am a school Psychologist and I deserve to called just that!!

Olivia Perez

Public & parent of special needs child

Houston, TX

Even the Bill title utilizes the term school psychologist. LSSP is an acronym that conveys no information for the public. Please do away with the term LSSP.

Emily Willeford

Self, Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) (School Psychologist)

San Antonio, TX

I support the title change from LSSP to School Psychologist. I have worked in this profession for seven years, and in those seven years, I have observed how the title of LSSP can be confusing and alienating to parents and school staff. I have repeatedly had people get the LSSP title incorrect upon introduction or admit confusion as to what my job is on the campus. Most colleagues end up introducing us to others as the campus school psychologist anyway to avoid getting the LSSP title incorrect. I truly feel that changing our title to school psychologist will decrease confusion and increase outreach from parents and colleagues. Additionally, the title of school psychologist is used across the rest of the United States by practitioners in the field. Changing our title from LSSP to school psychologist will align with the standard title used across the nation. I look forward to the day when I can introduce myself as the School Psychologist instead of the Licensed Specialist in School Psychology. Thank you for your consideration.

Patrick Sajovec

UH

Houston, TX

Please reduce the amount of confusion, especially for those who eventually work outside of Texas, by changing the name of LSSP's to School Psychologists. Nearly every other state refers to their licensed specialists as School Psychologists, instead of having a separate term like LSSP.

Gail Cheramie

Self/Consulting Psychologist

Galveston, TX

I am in full support of the title change from LSSP to School Psychologist. This is a much needed change for our profession.

Lindy Frazer

Self - LSSP

Round Rock, TX

My name is Lindy Frazer and I have been both a School Psychologist and a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology for 24 years. When I worked in Kansas for five years I was certified via the Kansas Education Agency and titled as a School Psychologist. When I held the School Psychology title I felt my purpose and role was transparent and that parents, teachers, community members had instant recognition of my training and role on campus. My title matched the Ed.S program I attended and it matched the state and national associations that represent my profession. When I came to Texas I was licensed by TSBEP and took on the title of LSSP. I have found over the past 19 years that many to most people would not be able to tell you what those letters stand for including people in education. The title is opaque and does not offer instant recognition of my training and role. Over the years we have asked that our title match our state, national and training programs and each time it has not passed.

Only one other state in the Union does not recognize the specialist level School Psychologist as a School Psychologist. I feel like there has never been a better time to honor the work we are doing in Texas than allowing us to represent ourselves by our true title. Thank you for your time.

Jessica Richardson

Self, Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Colleyville, TX

Hello,

Please support me and school psychologists from across the state by supporting of HB 3728. This bill seeks to change our title from “licensed specialist in school psychology” to “school psychologists. This will greatly impact parent understanding of the professional role in the school setting.

Gordon Lamb

Lamb Behavioral Health Center

Bryan, TX

I am speaking as an LSSP and licensed psychologist, I have a PhD in school psychology and have trained specialist level LSSPs within a university setting. I am NOT in support of reclassifying LSSP's as "School Psychologists." An LSSP can be obtained with a specialist degree, whereas one must have a doctoral degree to be classified as a psychologist. I can attest that the difference in training between a specialist level LSSP and a doctoral level psychologist who is also an LSSP is substantial. Using the title "School Psychologist" would increase confusion. As a psychologist in private practice, I often work with children and parents in their interactions with schools. This has at times included individuals obtaining services from specialist level LSSPs who were already calling themselves “School Psychologist.” Examples have included misdiagnosis/misclassification due to failure to assess in all areas of suspected disability (even with documented requests for the areas of disability they failed to assess), lack of knowledge about the basics of a manifest determination review, or openly questioning a diagnosis of PTSD within the first 30 minutes of talking to a child. In each case they presented themselves as “School Psychologist” as a means to validate their faulty logic over my own. Each case was eventually resolved; however, it required additional education and overcoming the parent’s confusion as to why two “psychologists” would disagree on such basic issues.

The differentiation between a specialist level LSSP and the currently understood term of “School Psychologist” in Texas as one who is both an LSSP and Licensed Psychologist should be maintained.

Donna Black

Social-Emotional Learning Alliance for Texas (SEL4TX.org)

Frisco, TX

I wholeheartedly support this bill. It is a much needed change in our schools, especially in the upcoming year when mental health services will be of dire needed. We need to be transparent with parents and school staff about who LSSPs really are. The current title just causes confusion and is not transparent at all.

Linda Lankford

Self

Taft, TX

I am in favor of a change in the title from LSSP to school psychologist. I feel that the title of school psychologist is the best

description. There is also a conflict between the current title of LSSP and the certification provided by NASP (nationally certified school psychologist). The current guidelines make it inappropriate for Nationally certified school psychologists to use their title in Texas.

Roberta Rodriguez

Self

Abilene, TX

I support the title change.

Melinda Rayman, LSSP

Self, currently a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology in Texas, formerly a Certified School Psychologist in Pennsylvania prior to moving to Texas in 2007

Frisco, TX

House Committee members and other interested parties,

Upon moving to Texas from Pennsylvania in 2007, I was surprised and saddened to learn that I would no longer be able to identify myself as a school psychologist in Texas even though I moved into the state as a nationally certified school psychologist (NCSP). TSBEP actually used information from my NCSP licensure to make me eligible for my Texas LSSP license, so they apparently do value the title of nationally certified school psychologist. There is absolutely no valid reason why a nationally certified school psychologist shouldn't be able to identify as a school psychologist in the state of Texas but can do so in any other state. This issue stemmed from licensed clinical psychologists feeling that school psychologists are somehow not as qualified as they are, thereby only they should be able to officially call themselves "psychologists". School psychologists are only licensed to provide psychological services in the educational setting though, so there is no risk of school psychologists infringing on the territory of licensed clinical psychologists. We are not able to go outside of the educational setting and label ourselves as "psychologists".

The vast majority of staff, students, and parents in my large school district in the DFW Metro area do not understand the role of a "LSSP", as the title is confusing. With all of the acronyms already used in the educational setting, people often get the LSSP confused with other professionals like the SLPs (Speech Language Pathologists). Defining what a LSSP is something I literally have to explain to those I work with at least once or twice a week. It is that big of an issue. When I explain that I was titled a school psychologist while residing in PA, they immediately understand my job role.

At a minimum, school psychologists/LSSPs are required to complete at least 60 credit hours of graduate level coursework and a 1200 hour internship in order to obtain the Specialist/Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS) designation. Many go on to get their Ph.D. or Psy.D. in School Psychology as well. Those who have completed the educational requirements to be titled a "School Psychologist" in other states (and for NASP NCSP certification) deserve to be titled a "school psychologist" in Texas as well. Please support HB 3728, and thank you in advance for reading my comments.

Sincerely,
Melinda Rayman, LSSP

Sarah Mire, Dr.

self; Licensed Psychologist, Licensed Specialist in School Psychology, Nationally Certified School Psychologist

Porter, TX

As a dually-licensed psychologist (Licensed Psychologist/LP) and school psychologist (Licensed Specialist in School

Psychology/LSSP) with practice experience both within and outside public schools, as well as a graduate trainer of future LPs and LSSPs, I am writing to lend full support to the title change from "LSSP" to "school psychologist" for those who provide school-based psychological services. The LSSP title does not adequately or accurately represent the training and expertise of school psychologists, nor it is it aligned with titles used for identically-trained specialist-level school psychologists in other states (where "school psychologist" is the title used). School psychologists must complete specialized training in (a) evidence-based psychoeducational and psychological assessment of school-age children for a variety of disabling conditions and related educational needs in a way that is aligned with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004; (b) provision of evidence-based academic, behavioral, emotional, and social interventions to school-age children within the complexities of school systems; (c) consultation with school personnel (i.e., teachers, administrators, counselors, social workers, etc.) and families, with the goal of improving outcomes of school-age children across settings and across the developmental period and beyond; (d) crisis intervention in schools; and (e) effecting systems-level/organizational changes such as development and evaluation of specialized programming for children who struggle in various domains that affect schooling. However, the title of LSSP belies this training, rendering these school-based mental health providers invisible to many districts, school personnel, families, children, and community stakeholders. The result is a barrier to access of desperately needed mental health services for Texas children, particularly for those from racially, linguistically, and/or socioeconomically marginalized groups whose primary means of access to psychological services lies within the school system. The title change has the potential to remedy this social injustice by increasing public and school personnel understanding of the expertise of school psychologists who work in school systems. Importantly, the title change does not have an effect on other psychological service providers (e.g., Licensed Psychologists) because the goal is only to permit more accurate setting-specific representation of this subspecialty of school psychology practitioners- not to change the settings in which school psychologists are permitted to practice. Thank you for your consideration of this critical update to Texas's use of this title.

Alicia Nichols

Self, LSSP

KATY, TX

The change in terminology from "Licensed Specialist in School Psychology"/LSSP to school psychologist is a much needed change.

Jenny Peterson

Self

San Marcos, TX

LSSPs should be referred to as School Psychologist as is the title in all other states!

Abby Jensen, Constituent- Travis County

Self- LSSP

Pflugerville, TX

Please allow for LSSPs to be officially called School Psychologists. Parents and the community do not know what a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology is, but they have heard of School Psychologists when talking about mental health and special education in other states. 48 of our 50 states use the term "school psychologist" for the exact same training that we receive as LSSPs in our masters programs at Texas colleges. When attempting to be best practice, many of us have the "Nationally Certified School Psychologist" credential that is awarded by our national organization- National Association of School Psychologists". We would just like to be recognized the same as any other state and it is more confusing to the public and community when we try to say "Licensed Specialist in School Psychology". Parents need to know who we are so they better understand the resources available at their children's school and we can reach more students who need help. Please finally agree to pass this bill.

Tabitha O'Neal

Self - EdS in school psychology graduate student

Waco, TX

I support the title change of LSSP to school psychologist. "School psychologist" is the title used in all other states in the U.S. It is time for us to adopt the title that is more appropriate for our position. The title "LSSP" only causes confusion for those that we serve (e.g., teachers, parents, school administrators, and students). Thank you.

Cristen Daniel

Self-Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Missouri City, TX

Please support HB 3728. I fully support this bill. Licensed Specialists in School Psychology in Texas should be able to use the title School Psychologist to clearly explain our role in the schools. Please pass this bill! Millions of school children, their families, and staff will benefit from this clear title and role of the LSSPs.

Megan Nyitray, LSSP, NCSP

self as a Licensed Specialist in School Psychologist (LSSP), Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP), member of the Texas Association of School Psychologists (TASP), and member of NASP

BEE CAVE, TX

I am an LSSP and a member of the Texas Association of School Psychologists, an association that represents school psychologists across Texas. I support H.B. 3728.

School psychologists like myself work with students, families, educators, administrators, and communities to ensure all of our students have the supports they need to be successful. We provide direct and indirect interventions to support student social-emotional learning, mental and behavioral health, and academic success. In Texas, school psychologists are not allowed to use their title. Instead, Occupations Code requires us to use Licensed Specialist in School Psychology, abbreviated to LSSP. Unfortunately, a majority of educational professionals, parents, students, and the community are unaware of what LSSP means. As such, the confusion over our title may hinder a student's ability to access school psychological services.

Approximately 80% of students who need mental health supports do not receive them. Research shows that students are more likely to receive mental health supports if the supports are offered at school. According to The Collaborative Task Force on Public School Mental Health Services Year 1 Report dated November 2, 2020, "Many rural and small districts may have no mental health professionals available in the school or community, as none of these positions are mandated." Additionally, "school psychologists and social workers are present in only a small proportion of Texas schools."

It may also hinder the ability for fellow school psychologists, in Texas and around the nation, to contact us about transfer students or job opportunities. Texas is facing a shortage of school psychologists. For the 2020-2021, the current ratio is 1 school psychologist for every 2,627 students in Texas; whereas the national recommended ratio is 1:500.

Support for the use of the title "school psychologist" is found in both federal law (300.308(b)) and state law (Texas Education Code 21.003(b)). 48 out of 50 states allow for the use of the title "school psychologist" in their credentialing and educator licensing language with the exact same credentialing standards as Texas currently has.

School psychologists are commonly referred to by title when national and local news outlets report on the services we deliver to students and the school community; however, in Texas, the official title is licensed specialist in school psychology. The current

title causes confusion among students, parents, and staff, as well as fellow school psychologists across the nation. One school website might refer to us as school psychologists, while another school website may solely refer to us as LSSPs. This even happens within the same school district! The current title is only further complicated when translated into numerous languages.

Please support school psychologists by saying YES to H.B. 3728. THANK YOU!

Jorge Gonzalez, Dr.

self, licensed psychologist and Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Houston, TX

As an LP and an LSSP I am writing to lend full support to the title change from "LSSP" to "school psychologist" for those who provide school-based psychological services. LSSP does not sufficiently represent the specialized training required to complete federally mandated assessments, provide services aligned with those diagnoses, consult with school, medical, psychological and other professionals, work in multiple settings, conduct crisis interventions in the schools, organizational consultation such as program evaluations in schools. Changing the title will increase awareness and likely lead to service utilization by those who need services most, the marginalized, minoritized and those that live at the margins of society, especially in Texas which borders Mexico. There are now more Latinx children and youth enrolled in Texas schools than there are citizens in over 10 states in the United States. School psychologists are well-trained to meet the needs of these children and their families but awareness of our services is hampered simply by the title LSSP

Betty Dawson

Texas Assoc. of Psychological Associates (TAPA) and Self (retired Lic. Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP)

Dallas, TX

FOR HB 3728

The customary title across the U.S. for licensed psychology professionals (with either Masters or Doctoral degrees) is School Psychologist. This title is recognized and utilized by many State Licensing Boards. It is the title recognized and utilized by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and the Nationally Certified School Psychologist credential (NCSP). The title School Psychologist is used customarily in professional articles, reference sources and legal descriptions.

Texas is the ONLY state that uses a title other than School Psychologist for its school psychology professionals. This can be confusing for professionals in other states, for school personnel, and for the public at large. It makes it more difficult for LSSPs to become licensed in other states and for School Psychologists from other states who move into Texas to be licensed to provide services.

There is NO benefit to retaining the title Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP), and several significant drawbacks.

The Texas Association of Psychological Associates is FOR the title change proposed by HB 3728.

Nedra Francis

self, Licensed Specialist in School Psychology and Licensed Psychological Associate

College Station, TX

Hello, my name is Nedra H. Francis and I am an LSSP (Licensed Specialist in School Psychology) currently practicing in a public school district in College Station Texas. I am contacting you because HB3728 is currently in a hearing before the Public Health Committee to determine if under the Occupations Code, our current title of LSSP can be changed to School Psychologist. There are significant benefits in providing this simple change in title, which would provide increased clarity and understanding of

our positions for parents, students and colleagues. National and state groups refer to the title School Psychologist when it communicates the level of expertise and training required for the position. LSSPs currently provide psychological, behavioral and consultative support to students, teachers, administrative and other educational staff. We are available to address mental health needs in the educational setting that are of continuing concern in our nation and impact our students academic and behavioral progress. Allowing the use of the title of School Psychologist, instead of LSSP, would not only provide an accurate description of who we are but also give clarity to the type of services we are capable of providing.

Lori Pietsch, Ms.

Self/LSSP

Spring, TX

Please consider changing our job title from Licensed Specialist in School Psychology to School Psychologist to align with other states and to help the community better understand what we do.
Thank you.

Claire Delgadillo

self- Licensed Specialist in School Psychology/Nationally Certified School Psychologist

Tomball, TX

Please change our title to School Psychologists, which is less confusing for students, parents, and school staff. Thank you!

Nichole Mills, Mrs.

Self, Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Spring, TX

The title LSSP is not reflective of the services provided by School Psychologists within the schools. It is confusing for parents, students, and staff alike. In all other states, we are licensed as School Psychologists given the same degree and licensing requirements. We are able to provide evaluations to determine special education eligibility, consultation with staff / families / and systems, we provide direct services such as counseling as a related service, we are members of crisis intervention teams, we assist with developing interventions for students and training staff on behavioral and social emotional supports, we advocate for ALL students, and we obtain ongoing continuing education so that we remain aware of best practices and continuously improve our tool kit. The title School Psychologist is more reflective of the role and responsibilities Texas service providers provide.

Jeanne Hardy

self - retired LSSP (Texas Certification)/Certified School Psychologist (NASP certification)

Spring, TX

I'm a retired Licensed Specialist in School Psychology in Texas, who also had the national certification as Certified School Psychologist. When I would tell a parent that I was a licensed specialist in school psychology, they would usually look at me blankly, having no idea what I was talking about. As soon as I mentioned that was like a school psychologist, there was instant recognition. I finally got to the point where I would just introduce myself as a school psychologist, figuring that I had that title through my national certification and it just simplified things and avoided confusion. Therefore, based on many years of personal experience as an LSSP in Texas, I am writing to ask that you change the title of Licensed Specialist in School Psychology to Licensed School Psychologist. This will eliminate a lot of confusion when communicating with parents or other professionals.

Michelle Howard
Tomball Independent School District
Tomball, TX

Please consider allowing specialist level school psychologists (currently referred to as Licensed Specialist in School Psychology) to use the term School Psychologist. This is the term used in 48 states and would make it easier for parents to understand our role and what we do. Introducing oneself as a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology is a mouthful and I often have to explain that this means a "School Psychologist."

Thank you,
Michelle S. Howard, PhD
Licensed Specialist in School Psychology
Longing to saying, "I'm a school psychologist"

Sarah Fernandez
Self
Houston, TX

I am in favor of Texas referring to LSSP as school psychologists, as is done in vast majority of other states. The title of LSSP is confusing to parents.

LaFondra Leonard
Terrell Independent School District
LANCASTER, TX

I am for the change of the title from LSSP to school psychologists.

Aaron Martin
Klein ISD
Houston, TX

To the State of Texas Public Health Committee,

I am writing to advocate for the change of terminology from "Licensed Specialist in School Psychology" to "School Psychologist". There are multiple reasons for this but namely it is to avoid a lack of understanding on the part of the public as to the function of this role. The title L.S.S.P. is not meaningful to parents and this is why 47 out of 50 states in the U.S. use the term "school psychologist"! I have been in this role for 18 years now and still to this day, I am repeatedly asked by parents as well as colleagues as to what my title is and what it actually means. Please consider this simple revision that would bring much needed clarity to an ongoing issue within our public schools.

Sincerely,

Aaron Martin, L.S.S.P.

Kassi Gregory, Ms.

Self Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Lubbock, TX

Dear Representative,

I am an LSSP and member of the Texas Association of School Psychologists, and association that represents school psychologists across Texas. I support H.B. 3728.

School psychologists like myself work with students, families, educators, administrators, and communities to ensure all of our students have the supports they need to be successful. We provide direct and indirect interventions to support student social-emotional learning, mental and behavioral health, and academic success. In Texas, school psychologists are not allowed to use their title. Instead, Occupations Code requires us to use Licensed Specialist in School Psychology, abbreviated to LSSP. Unfortunately, a majority of educational professionals, parents, students, and the community are unaware of what LSSP means. As such, the confusion over our title may hinder a student's ability to access school psychological services.

Approximately 80% of students who need mental health supports do not receive them. Research shows that students are more likely to receive mental health supports if the supports are offered at school. According to The Collaborative Task Force on Public School Mental Health Services Year 1 Report dated November 2, 2020, "Many rural and small districts may have no mental health professionals available in the school or community, as none of these positions are mandated." Additionally, "school psychologists and social workers are present in only a small proportion of Texas schools."

It may also hinder the ability for fellow school psychologists, in Texas and around the nation, to contact us about transfer students or job opportunities. Texas is facing a shortage of school psychologists. For the 2020-2021, the current ratio is 1 school psychologist for every 2,627 students in Texas; whereas the national recommended ratio is 1:500.

Support for the use of the title "school psychologist" is found in both federal law (300.308(b)) and state law (Texas Education Code 21.003(b)). 48 out of 50 states allow for the use of the title "school psychologist" in their credentialing and educator licensing language with the exact same credentialing standards as Texas currently has.

Please support school psychologists by saying YES to H.B. 3728.

Thank you for all the work that you do and for taking the time to read my submission. If you have any questions, or would like to further discuss any issues related to school psychology, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,
Kassi Gregory

Brook Roberts

self

Lubbock, TX

Thank you for hearing this bill. I am in favor and support this bill. As a practicing school psychologist, I work with young children who often have limited cognitive and academic abilities and have problems behaving or learning in the school setting. Many of these children need counseling support, psychological services, and other mental health services. As a school psychologist, I provide these services to these children. However, TSBEP (an agency of the BHEC), in Rule 465.6 and Rule 465.38 prohibits the use of the title and self-identification as a "school psychologist" therefore, I must be referred to as a licensed specialist in school psychology or LSSP which is very difficult for children with learning problems to pronounce and/or remember. This impacts children who may need services and are unable to self-refer and self-advocate. I do not want to violate the TSBEP rules, and the passage of this bill will permit me to identify myself appropriately and correctly by what I do on a daily basis: psychologists practice psychology and I am licensed to practice psychology. Please change this rule so that I might be able

to correctly describe my job.

Milena Keller-Margulis, Dr.

University of Houston

Houston, TX

As a dually-licensed psychologist (Licensed Psychologist/LP) and school psychologist (Licensed Specialist in School Psychology/LSSP) with practice experience both within and outside public schools, as well as a graduate trainer of future LPs and LSSPs, I am writing to lend full support to the title change from "LSSP" to "school psychologist" for those who provide school-based psychological services. The LSSP title does not adequately or accurately represent the training and expertise of school psychologists, nor it is it aligned with titles used for identically-trained specialist-level school psychologists in other states (where "school psychologist" is the title used). School psychologists must complete specialized training in (a) evidence-based psychoeducational and psychological assessment of school-age children for a variety of disabling conditions and related educational needs in a way that is aligned with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004; (b) provision of evidence-based academic, behavioral, emotional, and social interventions to school-age children within the complexities of school systems; (c) consultation with school personnel (i.e., teachers, administrators, counselors, social workers, etc.) and families, with the goal of improving outcomes of school-age children across settings and across the developmental period and beyond; (d) crisis intervention in schools; and (e) effecting systems-level/organizational changes such as development and evaluation of specialized programming for children who struggle in various domains that affect schooling. However, the title of LSSP belies this training, rendering these school-based mental health providers invisible to many districts, school personnel, families, children, and community stakeholders. The result is a barrier to access of desperately needed mental health services for Texas children, particularly for those from racially, linguistically, and/or socioeconomically marginalized groups whose primary means of access to psychological services lies within the school system. The title change has the potential to remedy this social injustice by increasing public and school personnel understanding of the expertise of school psychologists who work in school systems. Importantly, the title change does not have an effect on other psychological service providers (e.g., Licensed Psychologists) because the goal is only to permit more accurate setting-specific representation of this subspecialty of school psychology practitioners- not to change the settings in which school psychologists are permitted to practice. Thank you for your consideration of this critical update to Texas's use of this title.

Jennifer Shewmaker, Dr.

Self professor and Dean

Abilene, TX

As professionals trained in the fields of psychology and education and licensed by TSBEP, those professionals with degrees in school psychology should be titled school psychologists. Current licensure naming is confusing and not consistent with national practice or standards.

Noelia Shroyer

Self

Harlingen, TX

It's important to change to the to make it easier to recognize the position across faculty, students, parents, and community.
