**Section 23.150 Standards for School Marriage and Family Therapists**

a) Child and Adolescent Development

The competent school marriage and family therapist understands the individual diversity of human growth, development and learning and provides experiences that promote the physical, intellectual, social and emotional development of the student.

1) Knowledge Indicators – The competent school marriage and family therapist understands:

A) theories of individual and family development and transitions across life;

B) that students' physical, social, emotional, cognitive, ethical and moral development influences learning;

C) theories of learning, personality development, attachment, child and adolescent development, and the range of individual variation;

D) how students construct knowledge, acquire skills and develop habits of mind;

E) that differences in approaches to learning and performance interact with development;

F) how systemic approaches and appropriate interventions apply to the developmental stages of children and adolescents;

G) human behaviors, including developmental crises, disability, addictive behavior and psychopathology, and situational and environmental factors as they affect children and adolescents in the peer, family and school settings;

H) the characteristics and effects of the cultural and environmental milieu of the child and the family, including cultural and linguistic diversity, socioeconomic level, abuse/neglect and substance abuse;

I) the role of medications as they affect students' behavior; and

J) the characteristics of normal, delayed, and disordered patterns of communication and interaction in peer, family and school settings and their impact on learning.

2) Performance Indicators – The competent school marriage and family therapist:

A) uses theories of learning, personality and human development to plan activities and experiences that respond to students' individual, group, family and school needs at the appropriate level of development;

B) analyzes individual and group performance in order to design interventions that meet learners' current needs in the cognitive, social, emotional, ethical and moral, and physical domains at the appropriate grade level;

C) plans interventions appropriate to students' developmental levels;

D) utilizes strategies for facilitating optimum student development over the life-span;

E) recognizes the characteristics of individuals with various disabilities and the effects these may have on individuals;

F) implements interventions relevant to students' developmental levels;

G) recognizes the effects of addictive behavior, psychopathology and situational and environmental factors as they affect children and adolescents in the peer, family and school settings;

H) recognizes the effects of cultural and environmental factors on students' performance; and

I) recognizes that medications can have effects on the educational, cognitive, physical, social and emotional behaviors of individuals.

b) Assessment and Evaluation

The competent school marriage and family therapist understands basic concepts of, technology for, and implications of various assessment and evaluative instruments used within academic settings.

1) Knowledge Indicators – The competent school marriage and family therapist understands:

A) the purposes and meaning of assessment from multiple perspectives (historical, sociological, educational and emotional) and utilizes both standardized tests and observational methods of assessment;

B) the basic concepts of standardized and non-standardized testing and other assessment techniques in the assessment of behavior in individuals, families and other dyadic interactions;

C) the use of technology in assessment;

D) the statistical concepts, including scales of measurement; measures of central tendency; indices of variability; shapes and types of distributions and correlation;

E) reliability (theory of measurement error, models of reliability, and the use of reliability information) and validity (evidence of validity, types of validity), and the relationship between reliability and validity; and

F) the implications of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, disability, culture, spirituality and other factors related to assessment and evaluation.

2) Performance Indicators – The competent school marriage and family therapist:

A) analyzes testing information needed and selects appropriate tests, methods and/or materials to gather information and/or perform assessments;

B) uses various strategies for selecting, administering and interpreting assessment and evaluation instruments and techniques in therapy;

C) interprets and accurately uses the statistical concepts, including scales of measurement; measures of central tendency; indices of variability; shapes and types of distributions and correlation;

D) accurately selects and interprets assessment tools based on reliability and validity when appropriate;

E) interprets assessments accurately with understanding of diversity and its implications;

F) uses and applies appropriate technology in assessment; and

G) interprets results accurately and at the level that clients and families can best understand the assessment outcomes.

c) School-based Systems Theory

The competent school marriage and family therapist has knowledge of diverse family systems (e.g., single parent, foster parents, bi-racial parents, sexual orientation of parents) and understands influences on students' development, learning and behavior. Further, the competent school marriage and family therapist has knowledge of systemic methods for involving families in education and service delivery. The competent school marriage and family therapist works effectively with families, educators and others in the community to promote and provide comprehensive services to children and families.

1) Knowledge Indicators – The competent school marriage and family therapist:

A) understands:

i) how diverse family systems affect students;

ii) the importance of family involvement in education;

iii) the school-based systems theory and model;

iv) methods of promoting collaboration and partnerships between families/guardians and educators that improve outcomes for students; and

v) the implications of cultural diversity on family, home, school and community collaborations; and

B) has knowledge of school and community resources and agencies available to students and families/guardians.

2) Performance Indicators – The competent school marriage and family therapist:

A) designs, implements, monitors and evaluates programs that promote school, family and/or community partnerships and enhance academic and behavioral outcomes for students;

B) facilitates collaboration between schools and parents/guardians by designing educational and therapeutic interventions; and

C) identifies resources and facilitates communication between schools, families/guardians and community agencies.

d) Intervention in Schools and Crisis Intervention

The competent school marriage and family therapist utilizes a variety of systemic intervention strategies that support and enhance students' educational and emotional development. Furthermore, the competent school marriage and family therapist has training and experience in working with various crises and trauma that might occur in the school or family environments.

1) Knowledge Indicators – The competent school marriage and family therapist understands:

A) the theory, process, techniques and methods of individual, group and family crisis intervention and counseling;

B) and develops skills in advocacy, case management, community organization, consultation and in-service training;

C) the application of systemic concepts, theories and techniques to identify and develop broad-based prevention and interventions;

D) the interdisciplinary approach to collaborative service delivery within the educational environment;

E) how to integrate content and process knowledge for appropriate intervention; and

F) the role of mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect and the function of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

2) Performance Indicators – The competent school marriage and family therapist:

A) develops and implements prevention and intervention plans that enable children to benefit from their educational, emotional and relational experiences;

B) provides individual, group and/or family counseling and other services to enhance relational functioning while increasing success in the educational process;

C) provides crisis intervention therapy and other services to the school community;

D) provides consultation to teachers, administrators, parents and community agencies;

E) develops and provides training and educational programs in the school and community;

F) conducts diagnostic assessments and participates in eligibility conferences for special education and other programmatic options, students' educational planning conferences, and conferences with parents;

G) initiates referrals and linkages to community agencies and maintains follow-up services on behalf of identified students;

H) mobilizes the resources of the school and community to meet the needs of children and their families; and

I) initiates the appropriate reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect to DCFS.

e) Consultation and Collaborative Relationships

The competent school marriage and family therapist develops consultative and collaborative relationships with colleagues, parents, teachers and the community to support students' learning and well-being.

1) Knowledge Indicators – The competent marriage and family therapist understands:

A) the principles, practices and processes of individual, family and organizational consultation;

B) the collaborative process with parents, school personnel, community-based organizations and agencies to enhance the student's educational functioning;

C) the school's role within the context of the larger community;

D) the variations in beliefs, traditions and values across cultures and their effect on interactions among group members;

E) the importance of audience and purpose when selecting ways to communicate ideas;

F) how formal and informal political implications affect communication;

G) language development, communication techniques, and the role of communication in the learning environment; and

H) the role of school personnel as mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect.

2) Performance Indicators – The competent school marriage and family therapist:

A) initiates, develops and implements consultative relationships;

B) models and promotes ethical practices for confidential communication;

C) collaborates with colleagues, parents/guardians and community personnel about students' needs;

D) encourages relationships among colleagues to promote a positive learning environment;

E) participates in collaborative decision-making and problem-solving to promote students' success;

F) facilitates a collaborative relationship between general and special education systems to promote a unified system of education;

G) models and promotes effective communication among group members or between groups;

H) uses a variety of effective communication modes with diverse target groups; and

I) assists mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect in relaying and documenting information to the State's child welfare agency.

f) Diversity

The competent school marriage and family therapist possesses the knowledge and skills to appropriately address issues of diversity, cultural difference and change with different types of learners.

1) Knowledge Indicators – The competent school marriage and family therapist understands:

A) the implications of the therapist's own social and cultural background;

B) how the therapist's own cultural background and experiences influence the therapist's attitudes, values and biases about psychological processes;

C) the diverse groups with which the therapist may work;

D) how race, culture, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical and mental characteristics, and other areas of diversity affect personality formation, vocational choice and manifestation of difficulties and strengths in academic, career and personal/social development;

E) how gender affects personality formation, academic choice, vocational choice, and manifestations of difficulties and strengths in academic, career, and personal and social development;

F) the impact of sexual harassment on students' personal, social, emotional and academic development;

G) the impact of students' learning abilities, styles and capabilities on academic, career, and personal and social development; and

H) the specialized needs and resources available for students who are disabled, gifted or at risk, or who have dropped out.

2) Performance Indicators – The competent school marriage and family therapist:

A) incorporates an approach to social and cultural diversity that is equitable for all students;

B) adopts intervention skills appropriate to the specific diverse needs of the student;

C) develops programs for students that acknowledge their diversity and meet special needs as appropriate;

D) incorporates a gender-equitable and culturally sensitive approach in dealing with students, families, staff and the community;

E) adopts appropriate methods to intervene when students use inappropriate language or behaviors relating to issues of social and cultural diversity; and

F) teaches how oppression, racism, discrimination, intolerance, homophobia, heterosexism and stereotyping may affect students personally and their work.

g) Professional Conduct and Ethics

The competent school marriage and family therapist is aware of current legal issues and ethical guidelines of the profession and acts accordingly.

1) Indicators – The competent school marriage and family therapist understands:

A) legal standards, including the Illinois School Code [105 ILCS 5] and the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code [405 ILCS 5], that apply to the therapy and educational process;

B) the school marriage and family therapist's responsibility for knowing and complying with federal, State and local legislation, regulations and policies; and

C) that, in the event a conflict arises among competing expectations, the school marriage and family therapist shall be guided by the AAMFT Code of Ethics, published by the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, 112 South Alfred Street, Alexandria VA 22314-3061, https://www.aamft.org/Legal\_Ethics/Code\_of\_Ethics.aspx (January 1, 2015). No later amendments to or editions of these standards are incorporated.

2) Performance Indicators – The competent school marriage and family therapist:

A) demonstrates commitment to the values and ethics of the marriage and family therapist profession;

B) adheres to the AAMFT professional standards and Code of Ethics (see subsection (g)(1)(C)) as a guide to ethical decision-making;

C) maintains adequate safeguards for the privacy and confidentiality of information;

D) informs students of their ethical rights, the limitations of the counseling relationship, and the confidentiality of the counseling relationship; and

E) follows State and federal laws, including the School Code, the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code, the Illinois School Student Records Act [105 ILCS 10] and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g).

(Source: Amended at 46 Ill. Reg. 8083, effective May 2, 2022)