

# Wisconsin Requirements for School Social Workers

**In order to work in Wisconsin public schools as a school social worker, it is necessary for the individual to be certified as a school social worker by the Department of Public Instruction. Certification requires a master's degree in social work and a statement from a DPI-approved school social work preparation program that the candidate has met all necessary requirements as delineated in PI 34.**

**PI 34.31 Pupil services categories.** Licenses may be issued in the following pupil services categories at the early childhood through adolescence level to individuals who complete an approved program, demonstrate proficiency in the standards in PI 34.04 and meet the additional requirements under this subchapter. Specific competencies for the separate license categories shall be determined by the state superintendent based on the recommendations made by the professional standards council under s. 115.425, Stats.

## **(4) SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER.**

(a) A license may be issued to an applicant who has obtained an institutional endorsement and has completed or possesses all of the following:

1. A master's degree in social work.
2. Institutional endorsement.

**Candidates from other states can receive a 2-year certification (allowing them time to complete any Wisconsin-specific requirements they may still need), if they have a master's degree in social work and school social work certification from another state.**

**Candidates for any of the four pupil services professions (school counseling, nursing, psychology, and social work) must demonstrate the adequate knowledge, skills, and dispositions under the seven pupil services standards.**

**PI 34.04 Pupil services standards.** To receive a license in a pupil services category under s. PI 34.31, an applicant shall complete an approved program and demonstrate proficient performance in the knowledge, skills and dispositions under all of the following standards:

- (1) The pupil services professional understands the teacher standards under s. PI 34.02.
- (2) The pupil services professional understands the complexities of learning and knowledge of comprehensive, coordinated practice strategies that support pupil learning, health, safety and development.
- (3) The pupil services professional has the ability to use research, research methods and knowledge about issues and trends to improve practice in schools and classrooms.
- (4) The pupil services professional understands and represents professional ethics and social behaviors appropriate for school and community.
- (5) The pupil services professional understands the organization, development, management and content of collaborative and mutually supportive pupil services programs within educational settings.
- (6) The pupil services professional is able to address comprehensively the wide range of social, emotional, behavioral and physical issues and circumstances which may limit pupils' abilities to achieve positive learning outcomes through development, implementation and evaluation of system-wide interventions and strategies.

(7) The pupil services professional interacts successfully with pupils, parents, professional educators, employers, and community support systems such as juvenile justice, public health, human services and adult education.

**Each educator profession, including school social work, has established content guidelines that further delineate knowledge, skills and dispositions that must be demonstrated in order to be certified to work in Wisconsin public schools.**

The School Social Worker will demonstrate knowledge of and skill in:

1. Implementing the mission of school social work to insure student learning, educational equity and social justice for every student by reducing or eliminating the social, economic, and environmental barriers that may interfere with a student's ability to maximally benefit from his/her education.
2. The influence of bio-psycho-social variables on human development and behavior and the application of theoretical frameworks to understand the interaction among individuals and between individuals and social systems (families, groups, organizations, and communities).
3. The ability to assess children's adjustment to and performance in school including:
  - The child's physical, cognitive, social and emotional development and family history.
  - The child's behavior and attitudes in different settings, including formal assessment of adaptive and behavioral functioning.
  - Patterns of interpersonal relationships as observed in the family, school, and community.
  - Formal and informal policies of the school and other institutional factors that may affect the child's behavior and learning.
  - Patterns of achievement and adjustment at critical points in the child's growth and development.
  - The existence, accessibility, and utilization of community resources for children and families.
4. Systematic assessment of the interactions of individuals, families, schools, and community, and how to select and implement appropriate and effective services including:
  - The ability to provide a range of social work services including counseling, crisis intervention, casework, group work, community organization, consultation, case management, family engagement, mediation and conflict resolution, advocacy, curriculum and program development, education and training.
  - Applying effective prevention and intervention methods with individuals, families, schools, and communities.
  - Using communication and interpersonal skills differentially with a variety of client populations, colleagues, and members of the community.
5. Utilizing a strength-based approach to enhance students' capacities, with special emphasis on students who live in poverty, belong to oppressed groups, and/or whose families are in crisis.
6. Cultural factors in race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and social class and how culture affects individual, family, group, organizational and community behavior; and the ability to develop trust, open communication, mutual respect and on-going collaboration with members of diverse populations.
7. Issues of prejudice, discrimination, and oppression; the ability to apply strategies and skills to the advancement of social change and economic justice; and effective advocacy for members of oppressed groups, developing programming and/or interventions to meet the unique needs of diverse populations.
8. Practice literature relevant to the areas of children, youth, family, and schools; and the use of the literature for services for children and youth, including special populations, families and schools.

9. Critically evaluating the impact of school social work practice and educational interventions including:
  - The concept of accountability in practice and research, including program evaluation.
  - Scientific investigation and the requirements of research design.
  - Performance objectives and measurable outcomes and means to assess the effects of prevention and intervention strategies.
10. The mission of public education, including the purposes, roles, professional standards, NASW code of ethics, and laws affecting social work practice in the public schools; and the ability to practice as an autonomous social worker in keeping with the values and ethics of the profession.
11. The values, culture and structures of the school including:
  - Organizational theory including systems theory.
  - The historical development of social work in education.
  - The politics of school-community relations in shaping educational policy and the effects of the different types of school-community power structures.
  - Legislation affecting educational opportunity.
  - Child and adult subgroups in the local educational agency.
  - Roles and areas of competence of various professionals in the local educational agency, including the teacher standards under PI 34.02.
  - Current and alternative organizational structures, functions and leadership in the school and community.
  - Early childhood through adolescence general, alternative and special education curricula, programs and procedures.
12. School and community support systems that provide assistance to and interact with students, families and schools.
13. Working collaboratively as leaders or members of interdisciplinary teams and community partnerships to mobilize resources of the local educational agency and community to meet the needs of children and families.
14. The process of policy formation, implementation and analysis and the impact on client systems, workers, agencies/organizations and communities.

**School social worker preparation programs must include a practicum.**

**PI 34.15 Conceptual framework.** Each SCD shall have a written conceptual framework included as part of the requirements under s. PI 34.06 (1). The conceptual framework shall be well defined, articulated, and defensible and shall include all of the following:

**(5)** A clinical program including practicums for pupil services and administrative programs and for prestudent teaching, student teaching, and other supervised clinical experiences in prekindergarten through grade 12 school settings as follows:

(c) *Practicum program.*

1. Programs for pupil services and administrative licenses shall include supervised practicums in the area of licensure that are developmental in scope and sequence.
2. As a result of the practicum experience a license candidate shall demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the Wisconsin standards in PI 34.02, PI 34.03 or PI 34.04.
3. Successful performance shall be measured using all of the following:

a. At least 2 written evaluations based upon observations by the school-based supervisor and at least 2 written evaluations by the SCD supervisor shall be required during each student's practicum.

b. The evaluation procedures under subpar. a. shall include at least 2 conferences involving the school-based supervisor, the SCD supervisor and the practicum student. The school-based supervisor evaluation of the practicum shall become part of the student's portfolio.

**There are some general requirements that all candidates for Wisconsin educator certification must meet.**

**PI 34.15 Conceptual framework.** Each SCD shall have a written conceptual framework included as part of the requirements under s. PI 34.06 (1). The conceptual framework shall be well defined, articulated, and defensible and shall include all of the following:

(4) Provisions that meet the following requirements, including those that meet statutory requirements identified under s. 118.19, Stats., which enable all students completing teacher preparation programs to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:

(c) Minority group relations for all licenses including all of the following:

1. The history, culture, and tribal sovereignty of American Indian tribes and bands located in Wisconsin.
2. The history, culture and contributions of women and various racial, cultural, language and economic groups in the United States.
3. The philosophical and psychological bases of attitude development and change.
4. The psychological and social implications of discrimination, especially racism and sexism in the American society.
5. Evaluating and assessing the forces of discrimination, especially racism and sexism on faculty, students, curriculum, instruction, and assessment in the school program.
6. Minority group relations through direct involvement with various racial, cultural, language and economic groups in the United States.

(d) Conflict resolution for all licenses including all of the following:

1. Resolving conflicts between pupils and between pupils and school staff.
2. Assisting pupils in learning methods of resolving conflicts between pupils and between pupils and school staff, including training in the use of peer mediation to resolve conflicts between pupils.
3. Dealing with crises, including violent, disruptive, potentially violent or potentially disruptive situations that may arise in school or activities supervised by school staff as a result of conflicts between pupils or between pupils and other persons.

(g) Procedures used for assessing and providing education for children with disabilities, including the roles and responsibilities of regular and special education providers.

(h) Modifying the regular education curriculum when instructing pupils with disabilities.

**Additional information on the Wisconsin Quality Educator Initiative is available at <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlsis/tel/index.html>.**