



## Palo Alto Unified School District

School psychologists receive specialized advanced graduate preparation that includes coursework and practical experiences relevant to both psychology and education. School psychologists typically complete either a specialist-level degree program (at least 60 graduate semester hours) or a doctoral degree (at least 90 graduate semester hours), both of which include a year-long 1,200-hour supervised internship.

## School Psychologist Team

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## PALO ALTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



School  
Psychologists

2018-2019



Director of Special Education:

Alma Ellis

# School Psychologists

Helping Children Thrive ★ In School ★ At Home ★ In Life

## What Do School Psychologists Do?

School psychologists provide direct support and interventions to students; consult with teachers, families, and other school-employed mental health professionals (i.e., school counselors, school social workers) to improve support strategies; work with school administrators to improve school-wide practices and policies; and collaborate with community providers to coordinate needed services.

### School Psychologists Help Schools Successfully:

- Improve Academic Achievement
- Promote Positive Behavior and Mental Health
- Support Diverse Learners
- Create Safe, Positive School Climates
- Strengthen Family – School Partnerships
- Improve School-Wide Assessment & Accountability

## Why Do Children and Youth Need School Psychologists?

All children and youth can face problems from time to time related to learning, social relationships, making difficult decisions, or managing emotions such as depression, anxiety, worry, or isolation. School psychologists help students, families, educators, and members of the community understand and resolve both long-term, chronic problems and short-term issues that students may face. They understand how these issues affect learning, behavior, well-being, and school engagement. School psychologists are highly skilled and ready resources in the effort to ensure that all children and youth thrive in school, at home, and in life.

### How Do I Contact a School Psychologist?

Every PAUSD school has access to the services of a school psychologist. However, some school psychologists serve one or more schools and may not be at a particular school every day. Most often, school psychologists can be reached by inquiring at the school directly or locating information on the school website.

## What Training Do School Psychologists Receive?

School psychologists' training emphasizes using research-based methods, understanding both individual and environmental factors influencing learning and behavior, and individual and systems level interventions. More specifically, school psychologists develop knowledge and skills in areas such as:

- Data collection and analysis
- Assessment
- Resilience and risk factors
- Consultation and collaboration
- Academic/learning interventions
- Mental and behavioral health
- Instructional support
- Prevention and intervention services
- Special education services
- Crisis preparedness, response, and recovery
- Family–school–community collaboration
- Diversity in development and learning
- Cultural competence
- Research and program evaluation
- Professional ethics and school law