

Preface

My training in school psychology emphasized that school psychologists should, first and foremost, be consultants. This is, as described by Terry Gutkin and Jane Conoley (1990), the “paradox of school psychology.” The paradox is that young school psychology trainees, who are eager to work directly with children through counseling or assessment, find that they may serve children best and most efficiently by changing the behavior of the key adults who are in a position to significantly influence the lives of these children in need. This consultative approach has been embraced by school psychology as an efficient way to deliver services (e.g., through the teacher); and it frees the school psychologist for other assessment, counseling, program development, and prevention activities. However, for some trainees that enter into this paradigm, the notion of working mainly with adults is antithetical to the reasons they entered the field. Others embrace consultation and find that nearly all of their professional encounters are, in fact, consultations. I fall into the latter group and view this volume as a rare opportunity to consult regarding school psychology with you, the reader.

When I mention consultation, the reader is directed to the consultation entries in this volume (as listed under Consultation in the Reader’s Guide) written by some of the best-known and most influential scholars in school psychology. The reader will find that consultation has many features, one of which involves providing the consultee (e.g., teacher or parent) with information or content. The *Encyclopedia of School Psychology (ESP)* is designed to provide the depth

and breadth of content nonpsychologists need to understand little-known concepts related to psychology in the schools.

The time is right for such a volume. Education is on the forefront of our national thinking, with newspaper headlines covering topics ranging from violence in our schools (e.g., Columbine High School shootings) to identifying schools not making adequate yearly progress under the No Child Left Behind legislation. The public seeks to understand the effectiveness of school alternatives such as homeschooling or charter schools. On a more basic level, parents want to know how their children will fare in school. Will their children make friends? Will they be safe? Will they succeed academically? The goal of this volume is to provide information to attempt to answer these very personal questions while at the same time addressing broad-brush issues in psychology as it intersects with education. Finally, the *ESP* is designed to give the reader a glimpse into the world of a school psychologist and the level of knowledge and skills necessary to negotiate the world of the child and adolescent in schools.

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REFERENCE

- Gutkin, T. B., & Conoley, J. C. (1990). Reconceptualizing school psychology from a service delivery perspective: Implications for practice, training, and research. *Journal of School Psychology, 28*, 203–223.