

**CHAPTER I**  
**MISSION OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE**



**Philosophical Perspective**  
**Role of School Social Workers**

## Chapter I: Mission of School Social Work Practice

**Objective:** To describe the philosophical and ecological perspective of the role of school social workers in Minnesota schools.

**School Social Work Mission:** The mission of school social work is to promote academic success by reducing social, emotional, economic and environmental barriers to learning.

### Philosophical Perspective of School Social Work

The uniqueness of school social work lies in the ecological perspective in which the student is viewed within the context of the classroom, the family, the community and his or her culture. Training as a social worker prepares professionals to understand how community and societal issues impact students and it teaches us to assess the functioning of individual students in the context of multiple environments. The focus on the student and the environment organizes our approach towards building on strengths rather than centering on pathological deficits. Interventions that promote positive educational outcomes for all students are embedded in the historical social work commitment to social and economic justice for all people.

School Social Workers build partnerships between families and the school to develop a shared approach which will promote the individual student's learning.

### Role of School Social Work

School social workers are professionals who meet the state requirements to practice social work in the school setting. School social workers help students to address barriers to learning through an ecological perspective in which the student is viewed within the context of the classroom, the family, the community and culture. School social workers are prepared to understand and assess the functioning of an individual student within the context of multiple environments. School social workers provide services to all students related to the student's social and emotional adjustment to school, family, community and society. School social workers are the link between the home, school and community providing direct and indirect services to students, families and school personnel to promote and support students' academic and social success. School social workers are prepared to provide a breadth of services (See Appendix: Role of the School Social Worker) as members of multidisciplinary school teams. These services include, but are not limited to:

- assessment and screening,
- counseling and support groups,
- crisis intervention,
- home-school collaboration,
- advocacy,
- services to families,
- services to school staff,
- coordination of community agency services,
- classroom presentations, and
- program, resources and policy development.