cogent
education

*Corresponding author: Dana E. Boccio, Derner School of Psychology, Adelphi University, Hy Weinberg Center, Room 322, Garden City, NY 11530, USA
Email: dboccio@adelpi.edu

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY & COUNSELLING | RESEARCH ARTICLE

Using ethical orientations to explain administrative pressure to practice unethically: A pilot study

Dana E. Boccio[1]*

Abstract: The promotion of students' welfare is one of the central professional and ethical responsibilities of school psychology practitioners. However, some practitioners are subjected to pressure from administrators to engage in behavior that runs counter to ethical mandates and may be detrimental to students' well-being. The phenomenon of administrative pressure to violate ethical standards might be explained by professionals' adherence to disparate ethical philosophies, with school psychologists prioritizing the protection of individual rights and school principals valuing the "good of the many." This pilot study explored the feasibility of using a scenario-based instrument in drawing out and comparing the dominant ethical perspectives of school psychologists and school principals. Participants (*N* = 56) consisted of 35 school psychologists and 21 school principals who completed a survey measure that included six ethical dilemmas, each featuring a conflict between the rights of an individual student and benefits to the larger student body. Participants were required to select the more ethical of two solutions from options reflecting either Kantian or utilitarian considerations. The results of this investigation point to the possibility that school professionals endorse conflicting ethical philosophies under certain circumstances. Although both professional groups tended to favor a Kantian framework, school principals were comparatively more supportive of utilitarian principles. The incorporation of ethical vignettes into research aimed at

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dana E. Boccio, PhD, is an assistant professor in the Derner School of Psychology at Adelphi University, where she teaches in the School Psychology MA and undergraduate programs. Her research focuses on two areas with practical implications for the field of school psychology: professional ethics and suicide risk assessment. She has previously published articles linking the experience of administrative pressure to professional burnout and describing school psychologists' preferred strategies for coping with this occupational challenge. Her work also includes investigation of factors contributing to ethical decision-making by school psychologists, including the incorporation of problem-solving models into the decision-making process. Dr Boccio routinely presents at national conferences on the topics of professional ethics and youth suicide and has published an instrument to assist school-based mental health professionals with the task of determining an adolescent's level of suicide risk.

PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

School psychologists are expected to engage in ethical practice as they strive to promote the welfare of students within the school system. However, in their work as child advocates, school psychologists sometimes encounter pressure from administrators to make decisions that are not in the best interests of students and are not consistent with ethical mandates. It is possible that educational professionals do not always see "eye-to-eye" because they hold different ethical philosophies or worldviews. This study used a series of ethical vignettes to explore the dominant ethical orientations of school psychologists and school principals in an attempt to offer an explanation for the phenomenon of administrative pressure. Future research is needed to determine how educational professionals can learn to function more harmoniously within the school environment and achieve greater consensus regarding decisions affecting students' well-being.

cogent oa

identifying incompatibilities in ideological preferences seems to hold promise as an investigative technique. Implications for practice are offered with an emphasis on suggestions for bridging the gap between professional considerations of administrators and school psychologists.

Subjects: Education - Social Sciences; Psychological Science; Education; Inclusion and Special Educational Needs; School Psychology

Keywords: ethics; administrative pressure; school psychology

1. Introduction

Child advocacy has long been recognized as an integral part of the school psychologist's role within the educational system (McMahon, 1993). Professional guidelines and ethical codes of conduct continue to conceptualize the promotion of children's welfare as one of the central duties of school psychologists (Jacob, Decker, & Hartshorne, 2011). According to the National Association of School Psychologists' Principles for Professional Ethics,

> School psychologists consider the interests and rights of children and youth to be their highest priority in decision making, and act as advocates for all students. These assumptions necessitate that school psychologists "speak up" for the needs and rights of students even when it may be difficult to do so. (National Association of School Psychologists, 2010, p. 2)

Despite this clearly articulated emphasis on advocacy, school psychologists may experience difficulty rising to these expectations as a result of competing loyalties within the school system. School psychologists serve the interests of multiple parties (e.g. children, families, teachers, and administrators) and are morally obligated to consider the rights of these various stakeholders when attempting to resolve ethical dilemmas (Koocher & Keith-Spiegel, 1998). Although the rights of the child are assigned primary importance, school psychologists are expected to address these difficult situations in ways that are beneficial to all affected parties. Nevertheless, the desire to render a solution that is pleasing and advantageous to multiple individuals can hinder advocacy efforts aimed at safeguarding students' welfare.

Likewise, attempts at child advocacy are complicated by the fact that school psychologists perform dual roles within the school context – those of student advocate and school employee (Jacob-Timm, 1999). While school psychologists strive to honor the legislative statutes and ethical mandates that govern their professional activities, they must simultaneously remain sensitive to the needs of their employing agency (Boccio, 2015; Helton & Ray, 2009). For example, school psychology practitioners seek to provide appropriate services to students, but must remain mindful of budgetary concerns. Reconciling these priorities can be difficult. The challenge of balancing competing allegiances is intensified when school psychologists are subjected to administrative pressure to behave in ways that are contrary to students' best interests and ethical principles.

The existence of administrative pressure to ignore ethical imperatives is one of the most frequently reported type of ethically challenging situations encountered by school psychology practitioners (Jacob-Timm, 1999; Pope & Vetter, 1992). School psychologists have been urged to avoid making recommendations for support services due to their cost, agree with overly restrictive special education placements, make inappropriate eligibility determinations, manage with inadequate materials for assessment and intervention activities, and perform duties without the prerequisite training and expertise (Boccio, Weisz, & Lefkowitz, 2016a; Dailor & Jacob, 2011). Moreover, some school psychologists have reported facing threats to their job security, reprimands, and ostracism for failure to comply with administrative directives (Jacob-Timm, 1999). In addition to being a widespread problem, administrative pressure has been found to be associated with several indicators of impaired occupational health, including higher levels of burnout, job dissatisfaction, and desire to leave the profession (Boccio et al., 2016a).

To date, research examining administrative pressure to engage in unethical conduct has focused primarily on obtaining estimates of its prevalence, as well as assessing school psychologists' self-reported strategies for resisting intimidation (for examples, see Boccio, Weisz, & Lefkowitz, 2016b; Helton & Ray, 2005; Helton, Ray, & Biderman, 2000). Investigators have yet to explore potential explanations for the existence of administrative pressure and the sometimes contradictory resolutions to ethical dilemmas offered by administrators and school psychologists. It could be that educational professionals working in different roles subscribe to contrasting ethical orientations and that these ideological leanings might predispose individuals to handle ethical challenges differently. Investigating the use of ethical vignettes as a means of identifying value preferences of school professionals could shed light on a possible source of administrative pressure to help guide future research on ethical philosophies of administrators and school psychologists.

2. Explaining administrative pressure: Utilitarian versus Kantian ethical orientations

Although administrators and school psychologists share a physical working environment, their responsibilities are considerably different. Administrators (e.g. principals, assistant principals) are concerned with establishing and preserving the smooth and seamless functioning of the school and its personnel as a whole, maintaining a safe and secure learning environment for the entire student body, working within predetermined budgetary constraints, and managing the outside community's public opinion of the institution (Muse, 2009). School psychologists are similarly interested in safeguarding the welfare of all the students within the school building. However, the traditional focus of a school psychologist's daily activities tends to center around serving and protecting the rights of *individual* students. These activities include obtaining appropriate services for students with disabilities and tailoring educational environments to suit individual students' academic, emotional, and behavioral needs (Fagan & Wise, 2007); such responsibilities must be performed in accordance with federal and state legislative mandates (Wright & Wright, 2007). The disparate roles performed by administrators and school psychologists could conceivably result in contrasting ethical philosophies or serve to exaggerate preexisting differences between these two professional groups. Thus, it might be argued that administrative pressure to practice unethically owes its origins to fundamental differences in ethical orientations. Specifically, it is possible that administrators' ethical belief system conforms to a utilitarian approach, while school psychologists subscribe to a Kantian orientation.

Utilitarianism is a consequence-based theory of ethics that falls within the teleological school of thought. Proponents of the utilitarian approach emphasize the ends or consequences of an action in determining whether or not a behavior is morally acceptable. Thus, an action is considered right if it results in the greatest good or happiness for the largest number of individuals (Raines & Dibble, 2011). Utilitarianism, as a basis for ethical decision-making, holds that the intentions of the actor are irrelevant in determining the moral correctness of an action (Ford, 2001). Instead, the "litmus test of morality" (Knapp & VandeCreek, 2006, p. 20) surrounds the ultimate maximization of benefits and minimization of harm for the most people. Although consideration of the consequences of an action would seem to be a sensible component of any ethical framework, the theory's emphasis on summative or aggregate satisfaction has been criticized on the grounds that it fails to promote social justice and "permits the interests of the majority to override the rights of the minority" (Beauchamp & Childress, 2009, p. 342). According to Ford (2001), "the needs of a particular individual have very little significance from a utilitarian perspective, especially when those needs are inconsistent with the needs of the society in general" (p. 61). School administrators who adopt a utilitarian orientation can be expected to make decisions that will promote the welfare of the greatest number of children in the school or district, even if those decisions are detrimental to a single student or violate formal ethical codes or legal statutes.

In contrast, Kantianism's approach to ethical decision-making emphasizes the following of rationally derived moral rules or laws. Conduct is judged according to pre-established standards or principles, which are "either self-evident through logic or jural through legislation" (Raines & Dibble, 2011, p. 1). An action is considered ethical if it comports with one's moral duty and if the person performing the act would desire that every human being behave the same way if found in an identical

situation. Therefore, an action is morally right if the principle guiding that action can be applied universally to all individuals or generalized as a norm of conduct (Nordenstam, 2001). A school psychologist who yields to administrative pressure to withhold necessary services from a student with a disability is behaving unethically – not only because this behavior violates special education law and the ethical principles of the profession, but because he or she could not possibly wish for this behavior to be a universal norm. Certainly, a school psychologist who is the parent of a child with a disability would not want his or her child to be denied these supports. Kantianism is a means-oriented moral philosophy, which advocates that all individuals be treated with dignity and respect. Individuals are considered means in and of themselves and are not to be dismissed as expendable or exploitable. Consequently, those who adhere to a Kantian orientation act according to duties that have their origins in ethical principles. Their behavior tends to be rule-governed and they are not inclined to violate laws or codes of ethics. School psychologists who espouse a Kantian view are likely to uphold their commitment to the legal and ethical mandates of their profession and protect the rights of individual students.

Utilitarian and Kantian approaches are not always in opposition and may lead to convergent or identical resolutions to ethical quandaries. Specifically, decisions may be arrived at that serve the good of the many and simultaneously conform to pre-established and universalizable principles that protect the rights of any one individual. Nevertheless, under certain circumstances these two ideologies can come into conflict and prescribe antipodal courses of action. When dilemmas arise that render utilitarian and Kantian ethical orientations incompatible, what decisions do school administrators and school psychologists consider more ethical? Do the choices of these professional groups demonstrate a predilection for one orientation over another?

3. Specific aims of the present study

The goal of this investigation was to assess the feasibility of using a scenario-based instrument to identify and compare the prevailing ethical perspectives of professionals working within the educational system. Previous research related to professional ethics in both school psychology and educational leadership has typically solicited dilemmas from professionals as a means of capturing commonly experienced moral quandaries (e.g. Dempster & Berry, 2003; Jacob-Timm, 1999; Norberg & Johansson, 2007). In addition, some studies have used concrete scenarios to examine educational leaders' adoption of multiple ethical paradigms simultaneously (e.g. Cranston, Ehrich, & Kimber, 2006; Law, Walker, & Dimmock, 2003). However, the use of ethical vignettes to highlight the emergence of ethical preferences when value systems are in conflict has not been sufficiently explored (Eyal, Berkovich, & Schwartz, 2011). Moreover, there is a dearth of literature examining how ethical scenarios underscoring contradictory orientations may be used to assess differences in the moral considerations of those in disparate professional roles.

Use of ethical scenarios as a methodology for uncovering ideological preferences would seem to have certain advantages, such as the anchoring of decision-making to authentic predicaments and the inclusion of compelling details that add a level of realism. A well-constructed vignette capitalizes on contextual elements that may be absent in traditional Likert-scale items. The present study examined the potential of a vignette-based instrument to serve as a vehicle for exploring conflicting ethical perspectives, specifically, utilitarian and Kantian approaches. The aims of this preliminary investigation were twofold:

(1) To examine the feasibility of using ethical vignettes (with a forced-choice response option format) as a method for examining educational professionals' preferences for specific ethical orientations, and

(2) To explore the usefulness of ethical scenarios in comparing the dominant ethical frameworks of professional groups working within the school system.

cogent ·· education

4. Method

4.1. Participants

Participants (*N* = 56) consisted of 35 school psychologists and 21 school principals currently employed in school districts across the United States. Table 1 provides a summary of participant

Table 1. Participant characteristics			
Demographic characteristics	**School psychologists % (n)**	**School principals % (n)**	**Combined % (n)**
Gender			
Male	31.4 (11)	52.4 (11)	39.3 (22)
Female	68.6 (24)	47.6 (10)	60.7 (34)
Ethnicity			
Caucasian	91.4 (32)	100.0 (21)	94.6 (53)
Black	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
Hispanic	2.9 (1)	0.0 (0)	1.8 (1)
Asian/Pacific Islander	5.7 (2)	0.0 (0)	3.6 (2)
Age (in years)			
<30	8.6 (3)	0.0 (0)	5.4 (3)
30–40	42.9 (15)	19.0 (4)	33.9 (19)
41–50	22.9 (8)	19.0 (4)	21.4 (12)
51–60	14.3 (5)	52.5 (11)	28.6 (16)
>60	11.4 (4)	9.5 (2)	10.7 (6)
Years in current position			
1–5	17.1 (6)	38.1 (8)	25.0 (14)
6–10	48.6 (17)	14.3 (3)	35.7 (20)
11–15	11.4 (4)	4.8 (1)	8.9 (5)
16–20	11.4 (4)	9.5 (2)	10.7 (6)
21–25	5.7 (2)	14.3 (3)	8.9 (5)
>25	5.7 (2)	19.0 (4)	10.7 (6)
Tenured			
Yes	57.1 (20)	52.4 (11)	55.4 (31)
No	34.3 (12)	28.6 (6)	32.1 (18)
N/A	8.6 (3)	19.0 (4)	12.5 (7)
Highest degree earned			
Doctoral	20.0 (7)	14.3 (3)	46.4 (26)
Specialist	45.7 (16)	4.8 (1)	1.8 (1)
Master's plus additional credits	14.3 (5)	0.0 (0)	8.9 (5)
Master's	20.0 (7)	80.9 (17)	42.9 (24)
Employment setting			
Elementary school only	28.6 (10)	42.9 (9)	33.9 (19)
Middle school only	2.9 (1)	9.5 (2)	5.4 (3)
High school only	5.7 (2)	38.1 (8)	17.9 (10)
Multiple levels	62.9 (22)	9.5 (2)	42.9 (24)
Community type			
Urban	28.6 (10)	28.6 (6)	28.6 (16)
Suburban	40.0 (14)	28.6 (6)	35.7 (20)
Rural	31.4 (11)	42.9 (9)	35.7 (20)

characteristics for both professional groups, as well as the total sample. The demographic characteristics of the school psychology practitioners who participated in this study are comparable to those reported by members of the National Association of School Psychologists (Curtis, Castillo, & Gelley, 2010), the largest national level organization of school psychologists with a current membership of over 26,000 individuals. The attributes reported by participating school principals were consistent with demographic data presented by the U.S. Department of Education (Bitterman, Goldring, & Gray, 2013) with respect to age and gender.

However, the sample included in the present study reflected an overrepresentation of Caucasian individuals (compared to the figure of 81.8% reported by the U.S. Department of Education).

Table 2. Ethical dilemmas included in EOQ	
Scenario	**Description**
Scenario 1	Mrs. Bennett has been approached by an English teacher in her school who is concerned about a 6th-grade boy who recently transferred into the school district. The teacher, who is known for exercising good judgment in making referrals, states that the child is really struggling in class and suspects the boy may have a learning disability. Pre-referral strategies have been ineffective in improving the child's performance. Mrs. Bennett discusses the student's lack of progress at a multidisciplinary Child Study Team meeting and suggests going forward with an evaluation after obtaining parental consent. After the meeting, the Chair of the Special Education Department suggests that Mrs. Bennett hold off on starting the evaluation process. The Chair is concerned that this child may qualify for Special Education services and earn a low score on upcoming state testing in English/Language Arts. She is worried that his score will lower the average of the Special Education student population and render the school even more at-risk for being found "in need of improvement." She suggests delaying the evaluation until after the state assessments are completed for the year. Mrs. Bennett feels the boy likely needs services. However, she is worried that evaluating the child may contribute to her school failing to meet Annual Yearly Progress, a result that could impact negatively upon the entire school and its staff
Scenario 2	Mrs. Bennett has been working with Jim, a 10-year-old student, on anxiety (particularly separation anxiety) issues for several months. Jim continues to receive services under a 504 Plan related to these emotional issues and has been working hard to master the anxiety management strategies that Mrs. Bennett has taught him. Jim is highly motivated and desires to go on a school fieldtrip to a New York City museum with his class. He is very nervous about this upcoming school trip. The last time he attempted to go on a fieldtrip, he experienced a panic attack and the bus driver turned around and brought everyone back to school. Because of this previous incident, Jim's teacher (one of the chaperones) is concerned that he may have "an anxiety attack" on the trip. She feels that the entire group of students attending may suffer if Jim cannot manage his anxiety and fears the fieldtrip may have to be terminated prematurely. Unfortunately, Jim's parents are unable to accompany the group as chaperones that day and Mrs. Bennett has annual review meetings scheduled on the date of the trip. Jim's teacher has expressed that she does not feel Jim should be allowed to go and wants Mrs. Bennett to encourage him to stay behind
Scenario 3	Mark is a 10th-grade student who has been repeatedly suspended for violent behavior, including throwing a chair in class, physically bullying other students, and making sexually explicit comments to female classmates. In addition, he has threatened to "blow up" the school on several occasions. He is classified as having an Emotional Disturbance and receives services in a self-contained class, as well as in-school counseling 1x/ week with Mrs. Bennett. Although a behavior intervention plan is in place and has been modified several times, Mark's behavior has not improved. Mark's parents reject the suggestion of placement in an alternative setting better equipped to meet his emotional and behavioral needs. The district does not wish to challenge the parents to a due process hearing for financial reasons. Instead, Mrs. Bennett is asked to contact the parents and encourage them to keep Mark home for the remainder of the school year, where he would receive home-teaching. Mrs. Bennett is told to remind the parents that they could be sued by other parents if Mark injures any of his classmates. Mrs. Bennett is aware that Mark and his parents have rights, but is also concerned about the welfare and safety of the other students in the building
Scenario 4	Mrs. Bennett is counseling a 7th-grade boy for issues related to social anxiety. During the session the child mentions that his father was drunk last night and threw a vase at him, which just missed his head and crashed against the wall. He explained that his father has never become physically violent in the past, but often gets angry and verbally abusive after drinking. Mrs. Bennett thinks she has a duty to call Child Protective Services, but is aware that the father is a very wealthy man who recently pledged to donate several million dollars to the school for a new library. She knows the school desperately needs a new library, since the current facility is in disrepair and cannot be used by students or staff. However, she is concerned that if she calls CPS, the father will suspect that the school made the phone call and withdraw his pledge
Scenario 5	Sarah, a 5-year-old girl, received a comprehensive evaluation by Mrs. Bennett and an outside psychologist specializing in Autism Spectrum Disorders. Sarah received a diagnosis of Autism and was placed on the agenda for an upcoming IEP Team meeting. Mrs. Bennett believes that Sarah needs intensive behavioral intervention services in order to demonstrate improvement, including several hours a week of parent training in the home. The Director of Pupil Personnel Services warned Mrs. Bennett not to recommend parent training because this would require the school district to hire a specialist to work with the parents, a very costly service. The PPS Director indicated that the district was planning on introducing an evidence-based social-emotional learning initiative into the schools that could conceivably benefit all children. She stated that recommending parent training would eliminate any funding available for this program
Scenario 6	Jack is a 7th-grade student classified as having an Emotional Disturbance who currently attends an alternative learning center. Jack was classified subsequent to a documented history of poor academic performance, physically aggressive behavior, and making verbal threats to other students. He has been in an alternative placement for several years and his behavior has improved somewhat, but scholastically he continues to struggle. Jack's mother wants him to participate in afterschool tutorials at his home district's middle school, since she feels that he is falling behind academically and no tutorials are offered at his current placement. Mrs. Bennett discusses the mother's request with her school principal, who explains that he does not want Jack returning to the middle school for tutorials. The principal states that he is afraid that Jack may act out and threaten the safety of other students in the building. Mrs. Bennett feels torn about the situation. She is aware that under federal law, special education students are permitted to participate in their home school district's afterschool activities. However, Jack is known to have a history of aggressive behavior and he may be a potential threat to the rest of the student body

4.2. Instrument

Participants were invited to complete a survey instrument developed by the author, entitled the Ethical Orientation Questionnaire (EOQ). This instrument presented respondents with six ethical dilemmas encountered by a hypothetical school psychologist named Mrs. Bennett (see Table 2). These scenarios were constructed based upon the author's personal experience in the field, as well as a review of the literature on ethically challenging situations involving administrative pressure. Each dilemma was carefully designed so as to position the rights of an individual student in conflict with the needs of the greater student body. For each scenario, participants were instructed to indicate which of two decisions they believed was "the more ethical course of action." Alternatives conformed to a forced choice format, entailing the dichotomous selection of either a utilitarian or Kantian solution. Utilitarian solutions were defined as resolutions to ethical dilemmas that would result in benefits for the larger collective of students. Contrariwise, options consistent with a Kantian approach prioritized the rights and well-being of individual students and were consistent with adherence to the law and/or ethical principles.

Participants were encouraged to articulate the reasons for their chosen alternative in an open-ended format. Specifically, individuals were asked to write responses to the question, "Why did you pick this option?" Recognizing that individuals may not always act in accordance with their beliefs, the following question was included for each scenario: "What would you actually do in this situation, providing these were the only two options available?" Once again, participants were presented with the utilitarian and Kantian solutions and asked to pick only one.

Additional items were included on the EOQ to gather demographic information (e.g. age, gender, employment setting, highest degree earned, and achievement of tenure). The survey instrument was reviewed by two doctoral-level practicing school psychologists for clarity of instructions, intelligibility of items, and the possible presence of biased language. The measure was revised accordingly and the final version of the EOQ was mailed to participants.

4.3. Procedure

This research was approved by the university's Institutional Review Board prior to the recruitment of participants. Two hundred and sixty-two school personnel (131 school principals and 131 school psychologists) were invited to complete a survey entitled the "Ethical Orientation Questionnaire." Using a table of random numbers, 51 school districts (representing the 50 states plus the District of Columbia) were randomly selected from complete lists provided by each state's Department of Education. School district websites were then accessed to obtain contact information for school psychologists and school principals employed at elementary- and secondary-level schools. Personnel were sampled from multiple schools within each district; however, school psychologists and school principals were selected from the same educational facility or building so as to minimize this potential source of variability across groups. In accordance with a slightly modified version of the Tailored Design Method, specified by Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2009), participants were contacted on multiple occasions using different methods of survey delivery. Initially, participants were mailed a prenotice letter informing them that they would be receiving an email request to complete a survey assessing their ethical decision-making styles. A few days later, they were sent an email entitled, "School Ethical Orientation Survey," which explained the nature of the research study and included a link to an online version of the EOQ. A reminder email was sent approximately one week later with another link to the survey. Non-respondents were then mailed a paper copy of the EOQ two weeks later with a detailed cover letter requesting their participation and a postage-paid return envelope. A total of 56 respondents (35 school psychologists and 21 school principals) completed the survey, yielding an overall response rate of 21.4%. The response rates for school psychologists and school principals were 26.7 and 16.0%, respectively.

4.4. Data analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative data obtained from the EOQ were evaluated to determine the utility of ethical vignettes as an investigative tool for examining individuals' preferred ethical belief

systems. Quantitative data were used to assess the dominant ethical paradigms of both school psychologists and school principals and consisted of the following: (1) calculation of a summative score of responses to six ethical dilemmas reflecting overall utilitarian and Kantian predilections and (2) examination of individual forced choice responses to each of the six ethically challenging vignettes. Participants' open-ended responses providing reasons for the selection of a particular alternative as the "more ethical course of action" were reviewed for underlying ethical themes. These qualitative data allowed for enhanced interpretation of participants' rationales behind their chosen responses and assisted with determining each vignette's usefulness in eliciting utilitarian and Kantian considerations.

In order to identify the two professional groups' dominant ethical paradigms, composite scores were calculated for the six scenarios using the "more ethical" action responses. For each respondent, the number of choices that reflected utilitarian predilections was summed, as well as the number of solutions that conformed to a Kantian perspective. As a result, each respondent was assigned overall utilitarian and Kantian scores that ranged from 0 to 6. For example, a respondent that selected two utilitarian and four Kantian responses would earn utilitarian and Kantian scores of 2 and 4, respectively.

5. Results

Independent *t*-tests were performed on composite scores to compare school psychologists' and principals' dominant ethical orientations. Both groups tended to subscribe to a Kantian ideology, as evidenced by an average overall Kantian score of 4.97 (SD = .92) for school psychologists and 4.33 (SD = 1.02) for school principals. However, the school principals in this study were comparatively more utilitarian in their ethical decision-making activities. Specifically, school principals earned an average overall utilitarian score of 1.67 (SD = 1.02), while school psychologists obtained an average score of 1.03 (SD = .92), a difference that achieved statistical significance, t (54) = 2.41, p = .02, and a medium effect size, as indicated by a *Cohen's d* of .64.

Respondents' preferred solutions for each of the six ethical dilemmas on the EOQ were subjected to chi-square analyses. Table 3 summarizes the percentage of resolutions endorsed for each ethical challenge by the two groups of professionals. Scenario 3 yielded the only statistically significant difference between school psychologists and school principals, X^2 (1, N = 56) = 5.49, p = .03, evidencing a medium effect, ϕ = .31. In response to this vignette, a significantly greater number of school psychologists endorsed the option favoring the upholding of legal statutes and ethical precepts, consistent with a Kantian orientation. Although school psychologists and school principals differed significantly with respect to their selection of which action was "more ethical," the two groups did not exhibit a statistically significant difference in response to an item asking what they would "actually do" if placed in an analogous situation, X^2 (1, N = 56) = 1.93, p = .20, ϕ = .19.

Content analyses were performed on participants' open-ended responses to items requesting a rationale for the "more ethical course of action" option they endorsed for each scenario. Particular attention was devoted to comments pertaining to Scenario 3, considering that this vignette was responded to differently by school psychologists and principals. A total of 36 individuals (64.3% of respondents) offered an explanation for their selected alternative to the third vignette, with 25.0% of those who responded providing multiple reasons for their decision. Results suggested that personnel from both groups who selected the due process option as more ethical were concerned with following procedural safeguards and ensuring that the student be educated in the least restrictive environment. Most participants (80.5%) who offered an explanation for choosing to follow due process procedures indicated that contacting the parents and encouraging them to keep the student home would constitute a denial of a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) and could serve as grounds for litigation.

Conversely, only four participants who identified calling the parents to keep the student home as the ethically superior alternative offered an explanation for this decision. These participants were

Table 3. Resolutions endorsed in response to ethical scenarios as a function of school position				
Resolution to ethical scenario	School psychologists *n* (%)	School principals *n* (%)	X^2	φ
Scenario 1				
"More ethical" action				
Test the student[a]	34 (97.1)	21 (100.0)	0.61	0.1
Wait to test the student[b]	1 (2.9)	0 (0.0)		
Would actually do				
Test the student[a]	34 (97.1)	21 (100.0)	0.61	0.1
Wait to test the student[b]	1 (2.9)	0 (0.0)		
Scenario 2				
"More ethical" action				
Encourage going[a]	29 (82.9)	14 (66.7)	1.93	0.19
Discourage going[b]	6 (17.1)	7 (33.3)		
Would "actually do"				
Encourage going[a]	27 (77.1)	14 (66.7)	0.74	0.115
Discourage going[b]	8 (22.9)	7 (33.3)		
Scenario 3				
"More ethical" action				
Call to keep student home[b]	3 (8.6)	7 (33.3)	5.49*	0.31
Utilize due process[a]	32 (91.4)	14 (66.7)		
Would "actually do"				
Call to keep student home[b]	6 (17.1)	7 (33.3)	1.93	0.19
Utilize due process[a]	29 (82.9)	14 (66.7)		
Scenario 4				
"More ethical" action				
Call CPS[a]	32 (91.4)	19 (90.5)	0.02	0.02
Do not call CPS[b]	3 (8.6)	2 (9.5)		
Would "actually do"				
Call CPS[a]	31 (88.6)	18 (85.7)	0.1	0.04
Do not call CPS[b]	4 (11.4)	3 (14.3)		
Scenario 5				
"More ethical" action				
Recommend training[a]	22 (62.9)	8 (38.1)	3.24	0.24
Do not recommend training[b]	13 (37.1)	13 (61.9)		
Would "actually do"				
Recommend training[a]	16 (45.7)	6 (28.6)	1.62	0.17
Do not recommend training[b]	19 (54.3)	15 (71.4)		
Scenario 6				
"More ethical" action				
Allow student to return[a]	25 (71.4)	15 (71.4)	0	0
Do not allow return[b]	10 (28.6)	6 (28.6)		
Would "actually do"				
Allow student to return[a]	24 (68.6)	15 (71.4)	0.05	0.03
Do not allow return[b]	11 (31.4)	6 (28.6)		

[a]Kantian solution.

[b]Utilitarian solution.

*$p \le .05$.

generally more concerned with issues surrounding school safety, as indicated by 50% of responses emphasizing the need to protect the well-being of the entire student body and school staff. Examples of rationales offered to support this position reflected a utilitarian mindset and included the following statements: "One student cannot be allowed to endanger others" and "Given the two options, the good of the many is also considered." The remaining 50% of comments cited the importance of maintaining a positive working relationship with parents and suggested that initiating due process might be construed as adversarial.

6. Discussion

In an attempt to offer a possible explanation for the phenomenon of administrative pressure to practice unethically, the current study examined the feasibility of using a scenario-based instrument to assess and compare the respective dominant ethical orientations of administrators (i.e. school principals) and school psychologists. Ethical vignettes offer an opportunity for researchers to ground participants' decision-making processes in realistic and compelling examples of moral conflict. When combined with a forced choice format that requires individuals to adopt a particular position, the use of real-life dilemmas could serve to elicit ethical judgments that demonstrate a preference for certain values over others. The present pilot investigation used a series of ethical vignettes with alternative resolutions corresponding to Kantian and utilitarian perspectives as an investigative technique for drawing out and contrasting the ethical paradigms of individuals from two educational professions. Results suggested that incorporating ethical scenarios into the study of professional ethics shows promise as a technique for uncovering values-based preferences. In addition, findings indicated that responses to ethical dilemmas could potentially serve to underscore differences across professionals employed in educational settings.

In the present study, overall utilitarian and Kantian scores obtained by summing responses to the six vignettes indicated that, on average, both groups tended to favor a Kantian framework. However, principals did attain significantly higher utilitarian summative scores compared to their school psychologist counterparts. This suggests that principals may weigh utilitarian considerations more heavily in their ethical decision-making activities, while school psychologists may focus more on prioritizing individual rights and adherence to legal and ethical precepts. However, it is important not to overstate the presence of these observed ideological differences. Notwithstanding principals' greater support of decisions maximizing the aggregated good, both groups saw value in preserving the rights and well-being of individual students and upholding laws designed to protect children in need of support. This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that principals generally attempt to make decisions that are in the best interest of students, in both an individual and collective sense (Frick & Faircloth, 2007; Stefkovich & Begley, 2007).

Moreover, the school psychologists and school principals who participated in this investigation differed significantly in response to only one scenario, which involved concern that a student's behavior constituted a potential threat to school safety. While both groups tended to view following due process as the more ethical course of action in this situation, school principals demonstrated a greater likelihood of selecting the option that involved circumventing proper procedure and encouraging the parents to keep their child home. Half of participants who offered a rationale for their decision to contact the parents mentioned concerns that were consistent with a utilitarian framework, citing the need to prioritize the safety of the collective over the interests of the few (in this case, the student and his parents). Certainly these findings warrant further investigation in a large-scale study examining the prevailing ethical preferences of educational professionals when paradigms are mutually exclusive. In addition, methodologically rigorous research is needed to determine the particular environmental circumstances and school-related issues (e.g. disciplinary decisions, determinations regarding special education placement, safety concerns) that give rise to divergent ethical judgments.

In general, the results of this pilot investigation suggest that a nuanced and contextualized understanding of school-based professionals' dominant ethical orientations is needed if we are to explain

the outcomes of moral reasoning. The preliminary findings of this study suggest that both school psychologists and school principals are inclined to support actions that promote the well-being of individual students. Accordingly, in resolving ethical dilemmas, it is doubtful that school principals will simply "apply a consequentialist calculus" (Dempster, Carter, Freakley, & Parry, 2004, p. 451) and school psychologists will cling to absolutist readings of regulations. The ethical decision-making activities of school-based professionals appear to be much more complex and seem to involve some movement "between camps" (Dempster et al., 2004, p. 459) depending on the problem being confronted.

In order to prevent or reduce administrative pressure to practice unethically, it is critical that the educational community understand the conditions that contribute to its existence. If contrasting ideologies at least partly underlie the disagreement between professionals, countermeasures might focus on helping school psychologists and administrators understand – and recognize some value in—each other's frame of reference. Additional research efforts conducted with larger samples are needed to provide more conclusive support for the existence of philosophical preferences and to offer evidence-based interventions for facilitating consensus concerning ethical decisions.

6.1. Limitations and directions for future research

While the present investigation points to the potential utility of ethical vignettes, and the EOQ more specifically, as a data collection tool for exploring ethical perspectives, the present study has certain limitations that restrict the interpretation of the results. Considering the level of effort and protracted amount of time involved in reading and deliberating about the six ethical dilemmas included on the EOQ, a somewhat lower response rate was anticipated. Nevertheless, the findings of the present study are limited by a relatively low response rate (particularly for school principals), which resulted in a small sample size. The generalizability of results is also limited because those individuals who completed the survey instrument may have been especially motivated to respond and/or interested in the topic of professional ethics. Moreover, although findings provided tentative support for the existence of some degree of ideological divergence between school psychologists and administrators, the small sample size rendered it difficult to explore differences between the two groups more fully. A statistically significant difference was found for only one dilemma included on the EOQ; however, future research conducted with a larger sample size might yield additional dissimilarities in ethical perspectives.

The inclusion of only a handful of ethically challenging scenarios limited this study's ability to capture the entire scope of potential ideological differences between school psychologists and school principals. In addition, respondents' selection of specific response options may not have been solely a function of endorsing disparate orientations. Examination of the rationales underlying respondents' decisions indicated that both professional groups considered multiple factors beyond those related to the two ethical orientations assessed (e.g. maintaining positive working relationships with parents; whether a service falls within a district's purview). For example, in the due process scenario, some participants were concerned that initiating a due process complaint might serve to antagonize the parents and damage any good will that had been established between the parties involved, thus hindering future attempts to help the student. With respect to the field trip scenario, some school psychologists and school principals indicated they would discourage the student from going because they felt more supports were necessary in order for him to be successful. They argued that a setback in front of the student's peers could be extremely embarrassing and ultimately detrimental to his therapeutic progress. These reasons do not reflect support for a utilitarian framework, but rather, are representative of an ethical system that values protecting the well-being of a single individual.

Unanticipated geographical differences in laws and practices also seem to have influenced respondents' decisions. Specifically, in response to the parent training scenario, several respondents indicated that such a service is beyond the scope of supports typically offered by a school district and that parents could be encouraged to pursue this service independently through community-based

agencies. However, in the state of New York, as a matter of law, some form of parent training must be included on the IEP of a student with Autism in order for parents to learn effective strategies for working with their child at home. Thus, future research should strive to develop purer tests of ethical orientations, while simultaneously maintaining the element of authenticity that may be more readily attained by incorporating real-life scenarios.

In addition, the realism of the EOQ's forced choice response format was questioned by a few respondents, who asserted that a greater number of options are typically available to address ethically challenging situations in actual practice. The "either/or" structure of the response options did not permit school professionals to demonstrate their skillful use of creativity and compromise, talents that are valued in a school setting. While use of a forced choice, dichotomous format enabled testing of the study's hypothesis, certainly resolving ethical dilemmas involves more than choosing between two opposing viewpoints. Future investigations examining the decision-making styles of school professionals could incorporate more nuanced scenarios, with response options that allow respondents to showcase their inventiveness and ability to strike a balance between perspectives.

Although this study explored school professionals' endorsement of dissimilar ethical belief systems as a possible explanation for the existence of administrative pressure, it did not explicitly establish a causal relationship between ideological conflict and pressure to practice unethically. Future longitudinal research could directly investigate a causal link between adherence to specific ethical orientations and the likelihood of an individual exerting or experiencing administrative intimidation. Moreover, it is likely that disparate perspectives on ethical action constitute only one variable in a much larger constellation of factors contributing to pressure on school psychologists to violate ethical requirements. Other variables that might help to explain the existence of this occupational hazard include differences in administrators' and school psychologists' training in professional ethics, adherence to professional ethics codes, and knowledge of law pertaining to the provision of services and supports to students with special needs. For example, formal training in ethics has been widely incorporated into graduate programs in professional psychology (Domenech Rodriguez et al., 2014), and school psychology, more specifically (Dailor & Jacob, 2011). However, programs in educational administration have lagged behind other professions in requiring instruction in ethical decision-making (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). Systematic studies examining the amount and type of ethical training provided to prospective school administrators are few and outdated, yet findings suggest that graduate coursework in this area is hardly uniform and more extensive coverage is needed (e.g. see Levine, 2005). Considering a school's typical power hierarchy, which places building principals in a position of authority over school psychologists, such disparities in training could conceivably create obstacles for ethically principled school psychologists, especially those working in multiple settings. School principals less extensively educated in professional ethics and moral reasoning could potentially issue directives that are not in compliance with ethical standards. School psychologists can offer their counsel on such matters and inform principals about the ethical dictates of their profession, but the potential for conflict remains. Nevertheless, positive changes may be on the horizon. The newly issued Professional Standards for Ethical Leaders (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, [NPBEA], 2015), formerly known as the ISLLC Standards, offer somewhat more specific guidance to graduate programs and accrediting bodies regarding the core ethical competencies aspiring school administrators should possess.

The preliminary findings of the present study may be used to offer guidance to investigators pursuing further research into the ethical considerations of educational professionals. The following recommendations are provided to assist individuals interested in using ethical dilemmas as a means of assessing preferred ethical orientations:

(1) Attempt to recruit approximately five times the minimum number of participants needed to conduct predetermined data analyses (including comparisons of group means). Questionnaires using vignettes are generally time-consuming to complete; thus, low response rates are to be expected. Higher survey completion and return rates may be achieved through the use of

advance notification procedures, multiple personalized contacts involving different modes of delivery (e.g. mail, Internet), and incentives for participation (Dillman et al., 2009).

(2) Select or construct vignettes that include sufficient contextual elements to make the described dilemma feel realistic and palpable. However, the details of the scenario should be as "minimalistic" as possible in order to avoid introducing confounds and irrelevancies that obscure the central ethical conflict (Eyal et al., 2011, p. 9).

(3) If a forced choice format is used to structure a scenario's response options, it is recommended that additional items be included to assess participants' flexibility or rigidity in their attitudes toward the particular dilemma described. For example, it is possible that participants will select a specific resolution because the option reflects pragmatic considerations of a situational nature, rather than an underlying worldview or deep-seated ethical philosophy. Likert-type scales could supplement each forced choice item to measure the degree to which participants' favored resolutions were selected to meet situational demands or to be consistent with firmly held ethical principles.

(4) While use of a forced choice format is helpful in highlighting ethical preferences by requiring participants to choose one course of action over another, researchers might consider allowing respondents to generate their own resolutions to dilemmas. These open-ended responses are likely to be more representative of solutions arrived at through the natural decision-making process. By subjecting these proposed resolutions to thematic analysis after the fact, researchers might identify patterns in the ethical approaches suggested by different groups of school professionals.

(5) Surveys using ethical vignettes should include open-ended items that allow participants to clarify the considerations and intent behind their ethical judgments, particularly when the validity of a measure has yet to be well-established.

6.2. Implications for professional practice

The present investigation provides preliminary support for the utility of ethical vignettes as a potentially fruitful avenue for exploring the dominant ethical considerations of professionals employed within the school system. Results suggest that school psychologists and school principals may disagree when encountering some ethically challenging situations in the school setting, particularly when Kantian and utilitarian perspectives are incompatible and school safety is of concern. While this study's findings suggest that both groups appear to value upholding the law and protecting the rights of individual students, principals may be more likely to favor the "good of the many." Keeping in mind these predilections, the following recommendations for practice are offered with the intention of bridging the gap between the professional considerations of administrators and school psychologists. For more extensive discussion of strategies helpful in managing administrative pressure to practice unethically, see Boccio (2015) and Boccio et al. (2016b).

School psychology practitioners might have success in communicating with administrators if they were to frame ideas in a manner that emphasizes the potential benefit to the larger collective. For example, if the provision of a particular service to one or a few students is costly, a prudent course of action would be to highlight how others might simultaneously profit from this support or resource. A principal who resists the assignment of a 1:1 aide to a student with serious behavior management issues might be persuaded to concede if convinced that the safety and scholastic performance of the rest of the class would be positively affected. Similarly, an administrator who finds him or herself tempted to disregard the civil rights of a child with a disability due to safety or financial concerns might be urged to consider the conceivably more extensive and negative impact of a lawsuit aimed at the district. Thus, school psychologists should consider imparting suggestions in ways that convey a mindfulness of utilitarian values, as well as respect for ethical and legal requirements.

School psychologists should solicit the participation of colleagues in the ethical problem-solving process. The recruitment of these "ethical allies" (Helton & Ray, 2009, p. 117) into collaborative decision-making activities may help generate novel and creative resolutions that will appeal to

administrators. Moreover, if a school psychologist garners the support of other likeminded profes-sionals, the resultant strength in numbers might prove highly convincing to administrators partial to utilitarian arguments. Research suggests that school psychologists are indeed relying on their rela-tionships with colleagues to help resolve conflicts with administrators over ethical issues (Boccio et al., 2016b).

School psychologists should strive to educate building- and district-level administrators about the ethical demands and legal requirements that govern practice within the school setting. School psy-chology practitioners may be able to encourage their superiors to adopt policies that are more ethi-cally defensible by informing administrators of their commitment to professional mandates and sharing their expertise in ethical practice and special education law. Conversely, school psycholo-gists should attempt to familiarize themselves with the constraints and pressures placed on admin-istrators. Practitioners may not be privy to the abundant challenges that principals encounter in attempting to manage an organization as complex and multifaceted as a school. While it would be easy to speculate that pressure on school psychologists to practice unethically is caused by the de-valuing of ethical practice by administrators, such an explanation would be unfairly reductive and dismissive. Principals also face pressure from district level administrators (e.g. superintendents) to make unethical decisions, creating a kind of trickle-down moral dissonance. Frick (2009) demon-strated that principals experience a palpable intrapersonal struggle "between personal beliefs and values and organizational and/or professional expectations" (p. 59). Consequently, increased sensi-tivity to the demands of each profession will be needed in order to achieve harmonious functioning within the school environment. In an educational climate where scarcity of resources appears to be the norm for many states (Baker, Farrie, Luhm, & Sciarra, 2016), greater empathy and meaningful communication between school professionals is vital to creating institutions that truly serve stu-dents' best interests.

7. Conclusions

The use of ethical vignettes is a potentially valuable approach to uncovering the overriding ethical concerns of different professional groups working within the schools. While the preliminary findings of this investigation suggest that school psychologists and school principals both value acting in the best interest of students, these professionals may not always see eye-to-eye on what constitutes "best interest," with principals appearing to assign comparatively greater weight to utilitarian con-cerns. Additional research of a longitudinal nature is needed to explore the utility of ethical vignettes in discovering how value preferences might contribute to the creation of environments that are fa-vorable or unfavorable to the exertion of administrative pressure to practice unethically.

Author details
Dana E. Boccio[1]
E-mail: dboccio@adelpi.edu
[1] Derner School of Psychology, Adelphi University, Hy Weinberg Center, Room 322, Garden City, NY 11530, USA.

References
Baker, B., Farrie, D., Luhm, T., & Sciarra, D. G. (2016). *Is school funding fair? A national report card* (5th ed.). Retrieved June 18, 2016 from https://www.schoolfundingfairness.org/National_Report_Card_2016.pdf

Beauchamp, T. L., & Childress, J. F. (2009). *Principles of biomedical ethics* (6th ed.). New York, NY: Oxford Univerity.

Bitterman, A., Goldring, R., & Gray, L. (2013). *Characteristics of public and private elementary and secondary school principals in the United States: Results from the 2011–2012 schools and staffing survey.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved June 1, 2016 from https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2013/2013313.pdf

Boccio, D. E. (2015). *Preventing and resisting administrative pressure to practice unethically [Ethics advisory bulletin].* Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Boccio, D. E., Weisz, G., & Lefkowitz, R. (2016a). Administrative pressure to practice unethically and burnout within the profession of school psychology. *Psychology in the Schools, 53,* 659–672. https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.2016.53.issue-6

Boccio, D. E., Weisz, G., & Lefkowitz, R. (2016b). School psychologists' management of administrative pressure to practice unethically. *Journal of Applied School Psychology, 32,* 313–328.

Cranston, N., Ehrich, L., & Kimber, M. (2006). Ethical dilemmas: The bread and butter" of educational leaders' lives. *Journal of Educational Administration, 44,* 106–121. https://doi.org/10.1108/09578230610652015

Curtis, M. J., Castillo, J. M., & Gelley, C. (2010). School psychology 2010: Demographics, employment, and the context for professional practices – part I. *Communique, 40*; 28-30.

cogent ·· education

Dailor, A. N., & Jacob, S. (2011). Ethically challenging situations reported by school psychologists: Implications for training. *Psychology in the Schools, 48*, 619–631. https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.v48.6

Dempster, N., & Berry, V. (2003). Blindfolded in a minefield: Principals' ethical decision-making. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 33*, 457–477. https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764032000122069

Dempster, N., Carter, L., Freakley, M., & Parry, L. (2004). Conflicts, confusions, and contradictions in principals' ethical decision making. *Journal of Educational Administration, 42*, 450–461. https://doi.org/10.1108/09578230410544062

Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2009). *Internet, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: The tailored design method* (3rd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Domenech Rodriguez, M. M., Erickson Cornish, J. A., Thomas, J. T., Forrest, L., Anderson, A., & Bow, J. N. (2014). Ethics education in professional psychology: A survey of American Psychological Association accredited programs. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology, 8*, 241–247. https://doi.org/10.1037/tep0000043

Eyal, O., Berkovich, I., & Schwartz, T. (2011). Making the right choices: Ethical judgments among educational leaders. *Journal of Educational Administration, 49*, 396–413. https://doi.org/10.1108/09578231111146470

Fagan, T. K., & Wise, P. S. (2007). *School psychology: Past, present, and future* (3rd ed.). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Ford, G. (2001). *Ethical reasoning in the mental health professions.* Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Frick, W. C. (2009). Principals' value-informed decision making, intrapersonal moral discord, and pathways to resolution. *Journal of Educational Administration, 47*, 50–74. https://doi.org/10.1108/09578230910928089

Frick, W. C., & Faircloth, S. C. (2007). Acting in the collective and individual "best interests of students". *Journal of Special Education Leadership, 20*, 21–32.

Helton, G. B., & Ray, B. A. (2005). Strategies school practitioners report they would use to resist pressures to practice unethically. *Journal of Applied School Psychology, 22*, 43–65.

Helton, G. B., & Ray, B. A. (2009). Administrative pressures to practice unethically: Research and suggested strategies. *Ethical Human Psychology and Psychiatry, 11*, 112–119. https://doi.org/10.1891/1559-4343.11.2.112

Helton, G. B., Ray, B. A., & Biderman, M. D. (2000). Responses of school psychologists and special education teachers to administrative pressures to practice unethically. *Special Services in the Schools, 16*, 111–134. https://doi.org/10.1300/J008v16n01_08

Jacob, S., Decker, D. M., & Hartshorne, T. S. (2011). *Ethics and law for school psychologists* (6th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Jacob-Timm, S. (1999). Ethically challenging situations encountered by school psychologists. *Psychology in the Schools, 36*, 205–217. https://doi.org/10.1002/(ISSN)1520-6807

Knapp, S. J., & VandeCreek, L. D. (2006). *Practical ethics for psychologists: A positive approach.* Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Koocher, G. P., & Keith-Spiegel, P. (1998). *Ethics in psychology: Professional standards and cases* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University.

Law, L., Walker, A., & Dimmock, C. (2003). The influence of principals' values on their perception and management of school problems. *Journal of Educational Administration, 41*, 498–523. https://doi.org/10.1108/09578230310489344

Levine, A. (2005). *Educating school leaders.* Retrieved June 18, 2016 from https://www.edschools.org/pdf/Final313.pdf

McMahon, T. J. (1993). On the concept of child advocacy: A review of theory and methodology. *School Psychology Review, 22*, 744–755.

Muse, M. D. (2009). Principals give voice to the ISLLC standards: An investigation of leadership job priorities. *Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences, 70*, 96.

National Association of School Psychologists. (2010). *Principles for professional ethics.* Bethesda, MD: Author. Retrieved from https://www.nasponline.org

National Policy Board for Educational Administration (2015). *Professional standards for educational leaders 2015.* Reston, VA: Author.

Norberg, K., & Johansson, O. (2007). Ethical dilemmas of Swedish school leaders: Contrasts and common themes. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 35*, 277–294. https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143207075393

Nordenstam, T. (2001). Kant and the utilitarians. *Ethical Perspectives, 8*, 29–37.

Pope, K. S., & Vetter, V. A. (1992). Ethical dilemmas encountered by members of the American Psychological Association: A national survey. *American Psychologist, 47*, 397–411. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.47.3.397

Raines, J. C., & Dibble, N. T. (2011). *Ethical decision making in school mental health.* New York, NY: Oxford University.

Shapiro, J. P., & Stefkovich, J. A. (2011). *Ethical leadership and decision making in education: Applying theoretical perspectives to complex dilemmas* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Stefkovich, J., & Begley, P. T. (2007). Ethical school leadership: Defining the best interests of students. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 35*, 205–224. https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143207075389

Wright, P. W., & Wright, P. D. (2007). *Wrightslaw: Special education law* (2nd ed.). Hartfield, VA: Harbor House Law Press.