Jessica Gilligan, MS, EdS, NCSP

My name Jessica Gilligan and I have been a school psychologist in the state of Arizona since 2008 and I have maintained the NCSP credential since the beginning of my career. I hold an Educational Specialist certificate and a Master of Science degree in school psychology, both of which were obtained at California University of Pennsylvania. I earned my Bachelor of Arts degree at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania where I majored in Psychology and minored in Sociology. I completed my school psychology internship for the Allegany County Public Schools in the state of Maryland prior to moving to the Phoenix Metropolitan area. I am currently a school psychologist at a K-8 school in the Dysart Unified School District. I am happily married with a daughter who will be starting first grade. I enjoy the many facets of being both a mother and a full-time school psychologist. Personally, I greatly enjoy hiking, reading, and I can often be found creating new dishes in my kitchen.

I was recently (2022) honored with the Arizona Council of Administrators of Special Education (AZCASE) Outstanding Leadership Award. This award highlights my commitment to the populations I serve and for school psychology in general. In a leadership capacity, I highlight the unique skills of school psychologists and how such skills can be assets to individual sites, school districts, and at the state level. Over my years as a school psychologist, I have worked with a variety of populations from preschool through high school. I am passionate about serving the needs of students with developmental disabilities and have historically worked as a developmental disability specialist in the Dysart Unified School District. I have been trained in assessment using the ADOS and then ADOS-2 since the early years of my career. I have led several Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in my current position regarding best practices in evaluating autism with school psychologists and speech pathologists. I believe that collaboration between disciplines is critical to provide the most appropriate services and supports to students. I have also served to lead PLC groups relating to assessment of preschool aged children. I currently participate in district PLC groups relating to self-care and best practice assessment of executive functions.

I have supervised both practicum students and school psychologist interns. I have a strong commitment to supervision in school psychology and continue to have regular relationships in this capacity with my former students. I believe that ethics is a key component of supervision and practice as a school psychologist and this guides me in all decision making. I have obtained certification in Cross Battery Competency through the School Neuropsychology Institute. Being a life-long learner is a top priority to me, and I actively pursue professional development that enhances my skills as a school psychologist. I have been focused on social-emotional learning over my career and have worked to bring curriculum in this area to my school site. I have participated in and helped to obtain training for colleagues through Social Thinking. Over the last few years I have also focused on trauma, the impact it has on students, and approaches to work with students who have experienced trauma. Social Justice and Equity are also areas of focus for me professionally and drive both my personal and professional decision making.