

SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES

What is a School Counseling Program?

A school-counseling program is comprehensive in scope, preventive in design and developmental in nature. The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs is written to reflect a comprehensive approach to program foundation, delivery, management and accountability. School counseling programs are designed to ensure that every student receives the program benefits. Broward County's Annual Guidance Plan is implemented district-wide through brief consultation, small-group settings and classroom guidance lessons.

Comprehensive in Scope

A comprehensive school counseling program will focus on what all students, from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade, should know, understand and be able to do in these three domain areas: academic, career and personal/social. The emphasis is on academic success for every student, not just those students who are motivated, supported and ready to learn. The school counseling program helps all students achieve success in school and develop into contributing members of society.

Preventive in Design

The purpose of the school counseling program is to impart specific skills and learning opportunities in a proactive, preventive manner, ensuring all students can achieve school success through academic, career and personal/social development experiences.

Developmental in Nature

School counseling programs establish goals, expectations, support systems and experiences for all students. They provide the rationale for school counselors, school administrators, faculty, parents or guardians, businesses and the community to engage in conversations about expectations for students' academic success and the role of counseling programs in enhancing student learning.

A school-counseling program:

- Reaches every student
- Is comprehensive in scope
- Is preventive in design
- Is developmental in nature
- Is an integral part of a total educational program for student success

- Selects measurable student competencies based on local need in the areas of academic, career and personal/social domains.
- Has a delivery system that includes school guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services and system support
- Is implemented by a credentialed school counselor
- Is conducted in collaboration with all stakeholders
- Uses data to drive program decisions
- Monitors student progress
- Measures both process and outcome results and analyzes critical data elements
- Seeks improvement each year based on results data
- Shares successes with stakeholders

A. Individual Student Planning

- I. Individual or small-group appraisal:** School counselors work with students analyzing and evaluating students' abilities, interests, skills and achievement. Test information and other data are often used as the basis for helping students develop immediate and long-range plans. In high school, counselors meet with students throughout the year to develop and revise students' academic plans.
- II. Individual or small-group advisement:** School counselors advise students using personal/social, educational, career and labor market information in planning personal, educational and occupational goals. The involvement of students, parents and the school in planning students' programs that meet their needs is critical.

B. Responsive Services

- I. Consultation:** Counselors consult with parents or guardians, teachers, other educators and community agencies regarding strategies to help students and families. School counselors serve as student advocates.
- II. Individual and small-group counseling:** Counseling is provided in a small group or on an individual basis for students expressing difficulties dealing with relationships, personal concerns or normal developmental tasks. Individual and small-group counseling helps students identify problems, causes, alternative and possible consequences so they can take appropriate action. *School counselors do not provide therapy.* When necessary, referrals are made to appropriate community resources.
- III. Crisis counseling:** Crisis counseling provides prevention, intervention and follow-up. Counseling and support are provided to students and families facing emergency situation. Such counseling is normally short

term and temporary in nature. When necessary, referrals are made to appropriate community resources. School counselors can provide a leadership role in the district's crisis intervention team process.

- IV. **Referrals:** Counselors use referral sources to deal with crisis such as suicidal ideation, violence, abuse, depression and family difficulties. These referral sources may include mental health agencies, employment and training programs, juvenile services and other social and community services.
- V. **Peer facilitation:** Many counselors train students as peer mediators, conflict managers, tutors and mentors. The techniques of peer mediation and conflict resolution are used to help students learn how to make changes in the way they get along with others. In peer mediation, students are trained in a system to use with fellow students who are having trouble getting along with each other. Mentors and tutors provide additional support.

C. System Support

- I. **Professional Development:** School counselors are involved regularly in updating and sharing their professional knowledge and skills through.
- II. Inservice Training
- III. Professional association membership
- IV. Post-graduate education
- V. **Consultation, collaboration and teaming:** Through consultation, partnering, collaborating and teaming, school counselors provide important contributions to the school system.
- VI. Consultation
- VII. Partnering with staff, parents or guardians and community relations
- VIII. Community outreach
- IX. Advisory councils
- X. District committees
- XI. **Program management and operations:** This includes the planning and management tasks needed to support activities conducted in the school-counseling program. It also includes responsibilities that need to be fulfilled as a member of the school staff.