

P6-07 School Counseling

I. Description of program

Pursuant to the Standards of Quality of the Commonwealth of Virginia, each school shall make reasonably available, with available resources, to all students the following school counseling services **based on the developmental stages of growth of students in preschool kindergarten through grade 12.:**

A. Academic counseling, which assists students and their parents/**legal** guardians to acquire knowledge of the curricula choices available to students, to plan a program of studies, to arrange and interpret **academic** options, and to seek post-secondary academic opportunities.

B. Career counseling, which helps students to acquire information and plan ~~accordingly for work, jobs, apprenticeships, and for~~ post-secondary educational and career opportunities.

C. **Social/Emotional** ~~Personal and/or social~~ counseling, ~~to assist~~ **which assists** a students in developing an understanding of themselves, ~~and~~ the rights and needs of others, **how** to resolve conflict and to define individual goals, reflecting their interests, abilities, and aptitudes. Such counseling may be provided either in groups (e.g., all fifth graders) in which generic issues of social development are addressed, or through structured individual or small group multi-session counseling which focuses on the specific concerns of the participant(s) (e.g., divorce, abuse, or aggressive behavior).

II. Requirements and Procedures

A. Professional certification and training of counselors

A master's degree and state certification in Counselor Education is required. The school counselor is prohibited from using counseling techniques which are beyond the scope of the professional certification or training of counselors, including hypnosis, or other psychotherapeutic techniques that are normally employed in medical or clinical settings and focus on mental illness or psychopathology.

B. Delivery of services

Academic, career, and ~~personal and/or social~~ **social/emotional** counseling services will be delivered through:

1. **School Counseling Curriculum** ~~Classroom guidance:~~ **Developmentally appropriate, data-informed lessons and/or activities** ~~a series of classroom lessons conducted by school counselors in the classroom. Group/classroom guidance is planned and provided for all students through a collaborative effort with teachers and administrators. It is~~

designed to **be preventative, psychoeducational and driven by student need. Lessons align with national and state school counseling standards. to promote academic, personal/social and career development in all students.**

2. Small group counseling: available to students experiencing commonly shared concerns, **or developmental or situational challenges**. Emphasis is upon problem solving and the development of positive attitudes and effective personal skills **with the goal of improving achievement, attendance, mental health/wellness, and/or behavior outcomes**. Parents will be asked in advance for permission for their son/daughter to participate in small group counseling.

3. Individual counseling: **Goal-focused, brief counseling sessions to assist** ~~provides direct assistance to individual students. The focus is on helping~~ students **in learning** more efficiently and **overcoming issues impeding success**. ~~effectively, with an emphasis on identifying concerns early before they become overwhelming and interfere with the educational process.~~

1. **Crisis counseling: Assisting students in navigating critical and emergency situations. This can include short-term intervention, referral, and follow-up.**
2. **Appraisal and Advisement: Helping students explore their abilities, skills, and achievement to make decisions and develop immediate and long-range goals and plans.**

C. Procedures for student participation in personal and/or social counseling

No **minor** student shall be required to participate in ~~the social/emotional personal and/or social~~ counseling if the student's parents object. Parents can elect in writing to the principal to have their child "opt out" (not participate in) these counseling services. Affirmative parental consent is not required for short duration personal and/or social counseling which is needed to maintain order, discipline, or a productive learning environment. Participation in ~~normal~~ **the general school counseling curriculum classroom guidance sessions** does not require written permission.

D. Annual Notification

Written annual notification will be sent to parents **which describes the School Division's school counseling program.** ~~about the academic, career, and personal/social counseling programs which are available to their children.~~ The notification will include the purpose and general description of the programs, information regarding ways parents may review materials to be used in school counseling programs at their child's school, and information about the procedures by which parents may limit their child's participation in ~~personal and/or social~~ counseling programs.

E. Review of Materials

Parents may view materials by scheduling an appointment with the School Counseling Director in each middle or high school or the appropriate elementary school counselor. The meeting will be scheduled within seven working days of request. If the parent objects to the materials being used, a meeting will be scheduled with the principal within seven additional working days. Procedures set forth in Regulation **7-05-008**, "Guidelines for Selection and Review of Instructional Materials," section I, "Reconsideration of Challenged Materials" shall be followed.

F. Maintenance of Records

School counselors are discouraged from maintaining any written records of **social/emotional** ~~personal/social~~ counseling. However, if any personal notes made by counselors of **social/emotional** ~~personal/social~~ counseling sessions are kept, they must be kept confidential and separate from a student's educational records and not disclosed to third parties without prior parental consent or as otherwise provided by law.

Last Revised: July 1996, **February 2020**

Legal Refs.: **Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-130.1, 22.1-209.**

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