

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENTAL SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM?

Comprehensive developmental school counseling is designed to respond to the developmental needs of **all students** in a school district. The developmental approach is based on the works of developmental theorists such as Benjamin Bloom, Erik Erikson, Robert Havighurst, Lawrence Kohlberg and Jean Piaget, and it recognizes that all students move in a sequential manner toward self-understanding and self-enhancement. The developmental approach is founded on the belief that individuals experience general stages of personal/social growth and that school guidance programs must be structured to anticipate and fulfill the academic, career, and personal/social needs of all students.

The emphasis in a developmental guidance program shifts from working with individuals to working with all students through classroom guidance activities and structured group experiences. The emphasis shifts from remediation to prevention, from crisis-based to a planned orientation, and from unplanned and unstructured approaches to a systematic approach that delivers a guidance curriculum and individual planning sessions to all students.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDANCE

- 1. Developmental guidance is for all students.**
Although there will always be students who need the attention of the school counselor because of their special needs or circumstances, developmental guidance is directed to all students.
- 2. Developmental guidance has an organized and planned curriculum.**
Based upon developmental stages, skills and learning conditions, the guidance curriculum is a planned effort to provide each student with a set of skills and experiences that enhances all learning.
- 3. Developmental guidance is sequential and flexible.**
Based on experiences with students at different ages and grade levels, particular units and topics are presented to students. Flexibility is also important so that guidance lessons can accommodate student readiness as well as address new concerns.
- 4. Developmental guidance is an integral part of the total education process.**
The guidance program is not a separate or isolated part of the educational program. It is integral to the total school program.

5. **Developmental guidance involves all school personnel.**

Although school counselors are responsible for organizing and planning a developmental guidance program, the cooperation and support of teachers and administrators is essential to the success of the program.

6. **Developmental guidance helps students learn more effectively and efficiently.**

All guidance goals and objectives have an educational base, and all guidance and counseling services are related to helping students get the most out of school.

SCHOOL COUNSELORS WILL STRIVE TO SPEND AT LEAST 80 PERCENT OF THEIR TIME IN ACTIVITIES THAT PROVIDE DIRECT SERVICES TO STUDENTS, BE PROACTIVE IN THEIR APPROACH TO SCHOOL COUNSELING AND ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS AS A TOP PRIORITY, THEY WILL IMPLEMENT THE CURRICULUM AND INDIVIDUAL PLANNING PROGRAM COMPONENTS IN A PLANNED, SYSTEMATIC AND TIMELY MANNER.

The school counseling curriculum and the individual planning components of a comprehensive school counseling program ensure the systematic participation of all students in the program.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Academic development includes acquiring skills, attitudes and knowledge that contribute to effective learning in school; employing strategies to achieve success in school; and understanding the relationship of academics to the world of work, and to life at home and in the community. Academic goals support the premise that all students should meet or exceed the local, state and national goals.

Career development goals guide the school counseling program to provide the foundation for the acquisition of skills, attitudes and knowledge that enable students to make successful transition from school to the world of work and from job to job across the life span. Career development includes the employment of strategies to achieve future career success and job satisfaction as well as fostering an understanding of the relationship among personal qualities, education and training and the world of work. Career development goals and competencies ensure that students develop career goals as a result of their participation in a comprehensive plan of career awareness, exploration and preparation activities.

Personal/social development goals guide the school counseling program to provide the foundation for personal and social growth as students progress through school and into adulthood. Personal/social development contributes to academic and career success by helping students understand and respect themselves and others, acquire effective interpersonal skills, understand safety and survival skills and develop into contributing members of our society. Personal/social development helps to ensure that students successfully and safely negotiate their way into increasingly complex and diverse world.

GOALS OF THE GUIDANCE PROGRAM – GRADES 6 – 12

1. **Understanding the school environment**
enables students to become familiar with programs, procedures, facilities and support systems. This goal includes helping students to understand the impact guidance services and school counselors have on their educational development. It encourages activities that assist students in adjusting to school.
2. **Understanding self and others**
help students learn about their abilities, interests, feelings and the uniqueness and differences among people. Students are encouraged to identify their strengths and weaknesses through self-assessment, accept their skills and develop a desire to improve in chosen areas. Students are also directed to develop skills associated with peer and adult relationships, leading to a positive self-concept and self-confidences.
3. **Developing decision-making and problem-solving skills**
emphasizes the value of making responsible decisions. This goal stimulates an increased awareness of factors that influence decision-making, problem solving and change. Procedures for making decisions and solving problems focused on individual choice and responsibility.
4. **Developing interpersonal and communication skills**
assist students in learning positive interpersonal skills and understanding the effects communication skills have upon the way in which people interact with each other.
5. **Understanding moral and ethical values**
focuses on understanding how attitudes, beliefs and customs affect making moral judgments and ethical decisions. This goal assists students to examine and assess the values, standards and traditions of the community, recognizing the necessity for moral and ethical conduct in society.
6. **Developing school success skills**
Helps students understand the value of study skills, time management, learning styles and a positive attitude toward learning. This goal encourages the development of positive habits and attitudes enabling students to benefit from school.
7. **Developing career awareness and education plans**
assists the students in understanding the world of work. This goal helps students increase career awareness. Career exploration and use personal skills, interests and abilities when making educational plans, choosing courses, searching for a job, planning for future education and graduation.
8. **Developing a sense of community**
emphasizes how students can be responsible members of the community. This goal highlights the importance of community resources and productive community members.