

GUIDANCE/COUNSELING SERVICES

The Governing Board recognizes that a structured, coherent and comprehensive counseling program promotes academic achievement and serves the diverse needs of all district students.

Counseling staff shall be available to provide students with individualized reviews of their educational progress toward academic and/or career and vocational goals and, as appropriate, may discuss social, personal, or other issues that may impact student learning.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that all persons employed to provide school counseling, school psychology, and/or school social work services shall possess the appropriate credential from the Commission on Teacher Credentialing authorizing their employment in such positions. Responsibilities of each position shall be clearly defined in a job description.

(cf. 4112.2 - Certification)

Responsibilities of school counselors include, but are not limited to:

1. Engaging with, advocating for, and providing support for all students with respect to learning and achievement
2. Planning, implementing, and evaluating programs to promote the academic, career, personal, and social development of all students, including students from low-income families, foster youth, homeless youth, undocumented youth, and students at all levels of academic, social, and emotional abilities
3. Using multiple sources of information to monitor and improve student behavior and achievement
4. Collaborating and coordinating with school and community resources

(cf. 5131 - Conduct)

(cf. 5131.2 - Bullying)

(cf. 5138 - Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation)

(cf. 5144 - Discipline)

6. Intervening to ameliorate school-related problems, including issues related to chronic absences

(cf. 5113.1 - Chronic Absence and Truancy)

7. Using research-based strategies to reduce stigma, conflict, and student-to-student mistreatment and bullying

GUIDANCE/COUNSELING SERVICES (continued)

8. Improving school climate and student well-being

(cf. 5137 - Positive School Climate)

9. Enhancing students' social and emotional competence, character, health, civic engagement, cultural legacy, and commitment to lifelong learning and the pursuit of high-quality educational programs

(cf. 6142.4 - Service Learning/Community Service Classes)

10. Providing counseling interventions and support services for students classified as English learners, eligible for free or reduced-priced meals, or foster youth, including enhancing equity and access to the education system and community services

(cf. 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan)

(cf. 6173 - Education for Homeless Children)

(cf. 6173.1 - Education for Foster Youth)

(cf. 6174 - Education for English Language Learners)

11. Engaging in continued development as a professional school counselor

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

Educational Counseling

Beginning in grade 7, parents/guardians shall receive a general notice at least once before career counseling and course selection so that they may participate in the counseling sessions and decisions. (Education Code 221.5)

(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

The educational counseling program shall include academic counseling in the following areas: (Education Code 49600)

1. Development and implementation, with parent/guardian involvement, of the student's immediate and long-range educational plans
2. Optimizing progress towards achievement of proficiency standards
3. Completion of the required curriculum in accordance with the student's needs, abilities, interests, and aptitudes
4. Academic planning for access and success in higher education programs, including advisement on courses needed for admission to public colleges and universities, standardized admissions tests, and financial aid

GUIDANCE/COUNSELING SERVICES (continued)

5. Career and vocational counseling, in which students are assisted in doing all of the following:
 - a. Planning for the future, including, but not limited to, identifying personal interests, skills, and abilities, career planning, course selection, and career transition
 - b. Becoming aware of personal preferences and interests that influence educational and occupational exploration, career choice, and career success
 - c. Developing realistic perceptions of work, the changing work environment, and the effect of work on lifestyle
 - d. Understanding the relationship between academic achievement and career success, and the importance of maximizing career options
 - e. Understanding the value of participating in career technical education and work-based learning activities and programs, including, but not limited to, service learning, regional occupational centers and programs, partnership programs, job shadowing, and mentoring experiences

(cf. 6178 - Career Technical Education)
(cf. 6178.1 - Work-Based Learning)
(cf. 6178.2 - Regional Occupational Center/Program)
 - f. Understanding the need to develop essential employable skills and work habits
 - g. Understanding the variety of four-year colleges and universities and community college vocational and technical preparation programs, as well as admission criteria and enrollment procedures

The district's educational counseling program also may include, but not be limited to, identification of students who are at risk of not graduating with the rest of their class, development of a list of coursework and experience necessary to assist students to satisfy the curricular requirements for college admission and successfully transition to postsecondary education or employment, and counseling regarding available options for a student to continue his/her education if he/she fails to meet graduation requirements.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish and maintain a program of guidance, placement, and follow-up for all high school students subject to compulsory continuation education. (Education Code 48431)

(cf. 6184 - Continuation Education)

GUIDANCE/COUNSELING SERVICES (continued)

No counselor shall unlawfully discriminate against any student. Guidance counseling regarding school programs and career, vocational, or higher education opportunities shall not be differentiated on the basis of any protected category specified in BP 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities.

(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)

(cf. 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment)

In addition, counselors shall affirmatively explore with students the possibility of careers, or courses leading to careers, that are nontraditional for that student's sex. (Education Code 221.5)

For assessing or counseling students, the district shall not use testing or other materials that permit or require impermissible or unlawful differential treatment of students. (5 CCR 4931)

Colleges and prospective employers, including military recruiters, shall have the same access to students for recruiting purposes. (Education Code 49603; 10 USC 503; 20 USC 7908)

(cf. 5125.1 - Release of Directory Information)

Personal or Mental Health Counseling

A school counselor, school psychologist, or school social worker may provide individualized personal, mental health, or family counseling to students in accordance with the specialization(s) authorized by his/her credential. Such services may include, but are not limited to, support related to the student's social and emotional development, behavior, substance abuse, mental health assessment, depression, or mental illness. As appropriate, students and their parents/guardians shall be informed about community agencies, organizations, or health care providers that offer qualified professional assistance.

(cf. 1020 - Youth Services)

(cf. 5113 - Absences and Excuses)

(cf. 5131.6 - Alcohol and Other Drugs)

(cf. 5141.4 - Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting)

(cf. 5141.6 - School Health Services)

(cf. 5145.9 - Hate-Motivated Behavior)

(cf. 5147 - Dropout Prevention)

(cf. 6164.5 - Student Success Teams)

Written parent/guardian consent shall be obtained before mental health counseling or treatment services are provided to a student, except when the student is authorized to consent to the service pursuant to Family Code 6920-6929, Health and Safety Code 124260, or other applicable law.

GUIDANCE/COUNSELING SERVICES (continued)

Any information of a personal nature disclosed to a school counselor by a student age 12 years or older or by his/her parent/guardian is confidential and shall not become part of the student record without the written consent of the person who disclosed the confidential information. The information shall not be revealed, released, discussed, or referred to except under the limited circumstances specified in Education Code 49602. (Education Code 49602)

(cf. 5022 - Student and Family Privacy Rights)
(cf. 5125 - Student Records)

A counselor shall consult with the Superintendent or designee and, as appropriate, with the district's legal counsel whenever unsure of how to respond to a student's personal problem or when questions arise regarding the possible release of confidential information regarding a student.

Crisis Counseling

The Board recognizes the need for a prompt and effective response when students are confronted with a traumatic incident. School counselors shall assist in the development of the comprehensive school safety plan, emergency and disaster preparedness plan, and other prevention and intervention practices designed to assist students and parents/guardians before, during, and after a crisis.

(cf. 0450 - Comprehensive Safety Plan)
(cf. 3516 - Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness Plan)

In addition, the Superintendent or designee shall identify crisis counseling resources to train district staff in effective threat assessment, appropriate response techniques, and/or methods to directly help students cope with a crisis if it occurs.

Early identification and intervention plans shall be developed to help identify those students who may be at risk for violence so that support may be provided before they engage in violent or disruptive behavior.

(cf. 5136 - Gangs)
(cf. 5141.52 - Suicide Prevention)

Teacher-Based Advisory Program

The Board recognizes that a supportive, ongoing relationship with a caring adult can provide a student with valuable advice, enhance student-teacher relationships, and build the student's feelings of connectedness with the school. The Board authorizes the development of a teacher-based advisory program in which teachers advise students in such areas as academic planning, character development, conflict resolution, and self-esteem. Any teacher participating in this program shall be under the supervision of a credentialed school counselor

GUIDANCE/COUNSELING SERVICES (continued)

as appropriate, receive related information and training, and be subject to this Board policy and law, including requirements pertaining to student confidentiality and nondiscrimination.

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

221.5 Prohibited sex discrimination

44266 Pupil personnel services credential

48431 Establishing and maintaining high school guidance and placement program

49600-49604 Educational counseling

51250-51251 School age military dependents

51513 Personal beliefs

FAMILY CODE

6920-6929 Consent by minor for treatment or counseling

HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE

124260 Mental health services; consent by minors age 12 and older

PENAL CODE

11166-11170 Reporting known or suspected cases of child abuse

WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE

5850-5883 Mental Health Services Act

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

4930-4931 Counseling

80049-80049.1 Pupil personnel services credential

80632-80632.5 Preparation programs for pupil personnel services

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 10

503 Military recruiter access to directory information

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1232g Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

7908 Armed forces recruiter access to students and student recruiting information

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

99.1-99.67 Family educational rights and privacy

Management Resources:

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS

California Results-Based School Counseling and Student Support Guidelines, 2007

WEB SITES

American School Counselor Association: <http://www.schoolcounselor.org>

California Association of School Counselors: <http://www.schoolcounselor-ca.org>

California Department of Education: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>

Commission on Teacher Credentialing: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov>

U.S. Department of Education, access to military recruiters:

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpc/hottopics/ht10-09-02.html>

Policy

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VISALIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Visalia, California