



POLICY IJ
SUBJECT: COUNSELLING AND GUIDANCE PROGRAMS
APPROVAL DATE:
REVISION DATE: February 1, 2000
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1. GENERAL

- 1.1 The primary goal of the school guidance and counselling program is to promote and enhance student learning through academic development, career development and personal/social development.
- 1.2 The general model of service shall include the following components: a developmental guidance program, personal, educational and career planning with students both individually and in groups as well as support to the system through community relations and resource development.

2. RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Chief Superintendent

The Chief Superintendent shall be responsible for the implementation of the policy and procedures - Counselling and Guidance Programs within the resources available.

2.2 Superintendents of Schools

The Superintendents of Schools shall be responsible within their districts for allocating human and financial resources for counselling/guidance programs and monitoring the implementation of these programs.

2.3 Director of Student Support Services

The Director of Student Support Services or designate shall be responsible for the coordination and evaluation of the guidance programming in the Division, shall provide support and assistance when necessary to school counsellors, and shall arrange for professional development opportunities in areas relevant to current needs of counsellors.

2.4 Principal

The principal of the school shall be responsible for:

- the administration of the counselling/guidance program as part of the total school program.
- developing a clear vision for counselling/guidance support/program in the school.
- facilitating an open and accepting attitude toward counselling/guidance services for students.
- hiring, supervising and evaluating school counsellors.

2.5 School Guidance Counsellors

School Guidance Counsellors shall be responsible for the specific duties as outlined in Section 5 - Administrative Rule/Procedure IJ-R.



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3. REFERRALS

- 3.1 Students may individually seek assistance from school counsellors. Counsellors will also accept referrals from staff, administration and parents.
- 3.2 School counsellors shall make appropriate referrals to the Child Guidance Clinic or other appropriate professionals when additional expertise is required.

4. STAFFING ALLOCATION

- 4.1 The need for counsellor services and the level of support required shall be determined at the school level as part of the regular staffing decision-making process.

5. COUNSELLOR QUALIFICATIONS

- 5.1 Insofar as possible, the Division shall provide personnel for guidance and counselling programs who have a teaching certificate, two years' successful teaching experience and a minimum of 30 credit hours in school counselling.
- 5.2 The Division shall expect teachers without counsellor qualifications who are currently in counselling positions to take counsellor training at the University level.
- 5.3 Professional development opportunities shall be made available to school counsellors.

6. EXPECTATIONS FOR ETHICAL BEHAVIOR

6.1 Primary Responsibility

The school counsellor's first responsibility is to act in the best interest of students.

6.2 Informed Student

The school counsellor shall inform students of the purposes, goals, techniques, and specific policies under which counselling services may be provided at, or before, the time when the counselling relationship is entered.

Such information includes concerns about confidentiality, legal restraints on counsellors, and the possible necessity for consulting with other professionals and the student's parent/guardian.

6.3 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is the obligation not to disclose willingly, except in urgent circumstances, information obtained during counselling sessions. This refers both to verbal and written information.



Confidentiality is crucial to establishing and maintaining a strong counsellor-student relationship. Therefore, the school counsellor shall attempt to obtain the consent of the student before divulging information received during counselling. Confidentiality is, nevertheless, not absolute. The school administration must be informed of serious situations. The counsellor shall also consult and/or refer such situations to Child Guidance Clinic or other appropriate professionals and/or advise the parent/guardian where necessary.

Some exceptions to maintaining confidentiality are:

6.3.1 Child Protection:

The school counsellor who has reason to believe that a child is or might be in need of protection shall forthwith report the information to the appropriate authorities in accordance with legal obligations pursuant to child protection legislation.

6.3.2 Potential Harm:

If the behavior of the student threatens potential harm of self or others, the school counsellor shall take appropriate action to protect the student and/or others.

6.3.3 Legal Action:

The school counsellor may be required by the courts to release all counselling records and relevant information.

6.3.4 Consultation & Collaboration:

The school counsellor may consult and collaborate with other professionals for purposes of more effectively helping the student. The school counsellor shall share only such information that will serve the best interests of the student.

6.4 Written Confidentiality

A pupil support file shall be established for all students who receive individual counselling in the school. This file shall remain in the school and is the property of the school/Division.

The maintenance and disposal of and access to counsellor records shall be in accordance with Policy JO - Student Records.

The following guidelines apply to counsellor record keeping:

1. All statements should be objective, particularly those relating to drug and alcohol use, sexual activities, mental competency, or other sensitive matters.



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2. Entries should be made in chronological order.
 3. Subsequent alterations or additions should be made openly, with the original entry left intact and legible.
 4. Any corrections should be initialed, signed and dated.
 5. The author should sign the record and indicate his or her position.
 6. The record should be made in dark ink and be legible.
 7. Records should be complete, as any omissions will likely be interpreted negatively.
 8. The author should limit the record to issues that are relevant to the client's treatment.
 9. Items that are relevant should not be omitted simply because they are embarrassing or uncomplimentary.
 10. Information should be recorded contemporaneously - when the event occurs or as soon as possible thereafter.
 11. Entries should be made by the practitioner providing the service.
 12. If any entry is made by a third party, it should be verified by the person who performed the service.

The existence of the pupil support file (counselling) shall be documented in the student's cumulative file.

6.5 Group Counselling

The school counsellor shall make clear the purpose of group counselling and the techniques to be used in group sessions. The school counsellor shall strive to protect members of the group from physical or psychological harm.

6.6 Impartiality

School counsellors shall be aware of their personal values, and shall strive to remain impartial in assisting students with decision making and problem solving.

6.7 Professional Relationships

The school counsellor shall not knowingly enter or continue a counselling relationship with a student who is receiving counselling from another professional person, without consultation with that other professional, except where the best interests of the student clearly demand.