



Guidance Curriculum

The purpose of the guidance curriculum component is to help all students develop basic life skills. It is the foundation of a developmental guidance program. In Texas, seven areas (Texas 7) have been identified for the guidance curriculum:

1. Self-confidence Development
2. Motivation to Achieve
3. Decision-making, Goal-setting, Planning, and Problem-solving Skills
4. Interpersonal Effectiveness
5. Communication Skills
6. Cross-cultural Effectiveness
7. Responsible Behavior

The guidance curriculum is taught in units, through learning activities in the classroom with planned lessons for small or classroom-sized groups of students. The curriculum is designed for the use of materials and other resources, and requires evaluation strategies.

Classroom Instruction - lessons are presented that help students to better understand themselves and others. Through classroom guidance lessons, students can learn how to develop **positive peer relationships, effective social skills, and healthy decision making strategies.**

Parent Workshops/Presentations- Professional School Counselors (PSC's) conduct workshops and informational sessions for parents or guardians to address the needs of the school community and/or to reflect the student's school guidance curriculum. Presentations and/or trainings with parents that involve: description of the comprehensive guidance program; the services offered by the campus/department; benefits/strategies in providing support or intervention to student; parent volunteer trainings and events, etc.

Group Activities – PSC's conduct planned small groups outside of the classroom to respond to the students identified needs or interests and largely focus on the personal, social, educational, and career development skills as outlines in the Texas 7 content areas (above).

Individual Planning

The purpose of the individual planning system is to guide all students as they plan, monitor, and manage their own educational, career, and personal-social development. Schools can systematically use a variety of resources-staff, information, and activities-and to focus resources toward the students and to assist individual students to develop and implement personalized plans. Through the individual planning system, students can:

- Set challenging educational, career, and personal-social goals that are based on self-knowledge and information about school, the world of work, and their society;
- Make plans for achieving short-, intermediate-, and long-term goals;
- Analyze how their strengths and weaknesses enhance or hinder the achievement of their goals;



- Assess their current progress toward their goals; and
- Make decisions that reflect their plans.

As part of the developmental guidance program, the individual planning system includes:

- Age-appropriate, objective-based activities;
- Relevant, accurate, and unbiased information; and
- Coordinated advisement procedures to facilitate appropriate placement decisions by students and their parents.

(Individual meetings, analyzing abilities, interests and/or skills, advising – personal/social, career, post-secondary, test taking job shadowing).

Individual guidance- Accurately and without bias guides individuals to plan, monitor, and manage the student’s own educational development including information regarding post-secondary opportunities, career development, and personal and social development

Small-Group guidance - Uses accepted theories and techniques of developmental guidance to promote career, educational, personal and social development of the student (as stated in individual guidance description above).

Responsive Services

The purpose of the responsive services component is to intervene on behalf of those students whose immediate personal concerns or problems put their continued personal-social, career, and/or educational development at risk. Although counselors respond to any concerns presented by students, some topics have been identified as having high priority and/or relevance within the school setting.

Topics of priority in Texas include	School based issues	Personal issues
• Academic success	• Attendance	• Career indecision
• Adolescent and child suicide	• School attitudes and behaviors	• Financial aid
• Child abuse and neglect	• Peer relationships	• College choice
• School drop-outs	• Study skills	• Death of a family member or friend
• Severe stress	• New to the school	• Family divorce
• Substance abuse	• Emergent issues in intervention or postvention of a traumatic event; and	• Family abuse
• School-age pregnancy	• Violence on campus (school safety)	• Harassment issues, and
• Gang pressures/involvement		• Suicide prevention
• Harassment issues		

Consultation - Counselors consult with parents, teachers, administrators, other educators and community agencies regarding strategies to help individual students. Depending on the situation of the individual student, counselors will access the school nurse, school psychologist, principal, resource officer and other mental health and drug and alcohol liaisons to ensure the safety and well-being of the student.



Individual Counseling - Individual counseling is a service offered to students when an issue or situation interferes with a student's performance at school. Students may be referred for counseling by a parent, a teacher or the students themselves. Counseling can be ongoing or short-term depending on the student and the situation.

The school counselor does not become involved with punitive discipline, but may meet with students to try to help resolve certain situations or consistent inappropriate behavior.

Serious behavior problems or severe family issues may require more in-depth counseling with a licensed professional counselor through an outside agency. Your school counselor can assist you with more information about resources in the community for counseling.

Small-Group Counseling - Small group counseling is a service provided students by invitation from the counselor. The needs of the students in the groups will dictate specific topics covered, but the primary focus will remain on developing safe, respectful, and responsible behavior. Written parent permission will be requested before including a student in small group counseling.

Confidentiality is an important part of small group work. All students should feel safe in their group; therefore, students who break the confidentiality of group and discuss private information outside of group with others may be asked to leave the group.

Crisis Counseling/Response - Children, Youth, Families, Mental Health Liaisons, Drug/Alcohol specialists, and Alternative Schools.

Referrals - Counselors use referral resources to deal with crises such as suicide, violence, abuse, neglect, and terminal illness. These referral resources may include the following:

- School student support services/crisis response team
- Community mental health agencies or private therapists; etc.

Peer Facilitation/Remediation

Another form of responsive services through group counseling is Peer Facilitation. Developmental skills need to be taken into account when creating peer helper groups. In this type of support system, counselors would train students as peer mediators, conflict managers, tutors, mentors, and peer counselors. The techniques that students would learn in peer mediation, conflict resolution, tutoring, mentoring and peer counseling would help the students and their peers to make changes in the way that they get along with others and deal with their personal issues, as well as providing additional support among the peers.

System Support

Whereas the three components previously described serve students directly, the system support component describes services and management activities which indirectly benefit students. The services include:



- Consultation with teachers;
- Support for the parent education program and community relations efforts;
- Participation in the campus-based school improvement plans and goals;
- Implementation of the state and local standardized testing program;
- Cooperation with relevant research projects; and
- Provision of input from the students' perspective to policy-makers and instructional/curriculum planners.

Management activities are required to assure the delivery of a high quality guidance program. These activities include:

- Program development and management;
- Counselor staff development;
- Community outreach; and Development of appropriate written policies, procedures and guidelines.

Professional Development- Skills and knowledge attained for both personal development and career advancement. Professional development encompasses all types of facilitated learning opportunities, ranging from college degrees to formal coursework, conferences and informal learning opportunities situated in practice.

Collaboration: - Collaborate with parents and teachers throughout the year regarding scheduling, curriculum, management of problems, drug and alcohol, and mental health. Counselors collaborate with faculty, academic specialist, students, parents and administrators to better serve students.

Community outreach- The PFC - partners with various community agencies to offer assistance to children and families experiencing personal/financial need. The school counselor acts as a liaison for such organizations.

Management activities Professional school counselors incorporate organizational processes and tools that are concrete, clearly delineated, and reflective of the school's needs. Processes and tools include:

- agreements developed with and approved by administrators for each school year addressing how the school counseling program is organized and what goals will be accomplished
- advisory councils that review school counseling program goals and results and to make recommendations
- the use of student data to effect systemic change within the school system (every student receives the benefit of the school counseling program)
- action plans for prevention and intervention services (defining student achievement measures/results)
- use of annual and weekly calendars to keep students, parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and community stakeholders informed and to encourage active participation in the school counseling program

Data Analysis PFC collect, analyze and interpret student achievement and related data. School counselors monitor student progress through three types of data: student-achievement data, achievement-related data and standards and competency related data.