

**160-4-8-.05 SCHOOL COUNSELING.**

**(1) DEFINITIONS.**

**(a) Comprehensive School Counseling Program** – a standards-based, data-informed program designed to meet the needs of all students through Student Competencies in an educational setting through Instruction, Small Group support, and Individualized Consultation.

**(b) Domains** – areas of focus within the Student Competencies to support success of all students in their K-12 and post-secondary pursuits.

**(c) Individualized Consultation** – ongoing, comprehensive activities designed to assist individual students in establishing personal goals and developing post-secondary plans.

**(d) Instruction** – structured lessons designed to assist students in attaining the Student Competencies and presented through K-12 classroom and group activities. Each local educational agency (LEA) must follow the provisions of State Board Rule 160-4-4-.10 *Instructional Materials Selection and Recommendation* to ensure public review of instructional materials and content.

**(e) School Counselor** – a Georgia Professional Standards Commission certified educator who works in K-12 settings to provide Student Competencies to all students through a Comprehensive School Counseling Program.

**(f) School Counseling Services** – activities aligned to the Student Competencies, within the scope of a Comprehensive School Counseling Program, and conducted by the School Counselor through direct interactions with, and on behalf of, students in the educational setting.

**(g) Student Competencies** – specific, measurable skills and knowledge, as adopted by the State Board of Education, that serve as a foundation for K-12 and post-secondary student success in college, career, and life.

**(h) Small Group** – counseling services provided to students who need targeted, intensive support in ensuring the success of all students in their K-12 and post-secondary pursuits.

**(2) REQUIREMENTS.**

(a) The LEAs shall provide for a Comprehensive School Counseling Program in accordance with state and federal laws, State Board of Education rules, and Georgia Department of Education guidance by:

1. Ensuring that all students have access to a Comprehensive School Counseling Program to include the following:

(i) A clearly defined program which includes, but is not limited to:

(I) The use of Student Competencies to assess student growth and development and inform decisions regarding strategies, activities, and services that help students achieve at the highest academic level possible.

(II) The use of student progress on Student Competencies to guide School Counseling Services decision making and professional learning goals to ensure students have access to a high-quality school counseling program.

(ii) An effective program which includes, but is not limited to:

(I) Program beliefs, vision, and mission statements aligned to school, district, and state goals;

(II) The use of school and student data to set specific and measurable annual student outcome goals, abiding by all federal, state, and local student privacy and parental notification laws, rules, and policies;

(III) An advisory council formed in coordination with school and district leaders, and using school and other widely available data; and

(IV) Action plans that address Instruction, Small Group support, Individualized Consultation, and closing the gap needs based on student and school data.

(iii) A plan for delivering Instruction and services which includes, but is not limited to:

(I) Large group, classroom, and school wide curricula designed to align to Georgia's workforce readiness and outcomes;

(II) Large group, classroom, and school wide curricula designed to help students achieve mastery of the Student Competencies;

(III) Individualized Consultation, student appraisal, and advisement to help students plan, monitor, and manage their own learning;

(IV) Individual and group counseling to support the post-secondary pursuits of all students;

(V) Individual or schoolwide crisis response;

(VI) Services and activities that support a positive school climate;

(VII) Dissemination of school and community resources that assist students and families;

(VIII) Consultation with teachers, parents, and external agencies that support student achievement; and

(IX) Coordination with district and school leaders, and collaboration with other educators, parents, and the community to support student achievement and ensure access to a high-quality school counseling program for all students.

(iv) A plan to effectively assess the program which includes, but is not limited to:

(I) Analysis of school achievement, attendance, and discipline data to identify significant areas of need to be addressed by the school counseling program;

(II) Examination of data and input from students, staff, and the community to determine the effectiveness of school counseling programming;

(III) Evaluation of school counseling program by utilizing an annual program assessment; and

(IV) Transparent communication of program results with stakeholders.

2. Ensuring that each School Counselor:

(i) Engages in School Counseling Services for a minimum of five of six full-time equivalent program count segments as provided in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-182(c);

(I) Non-counseling duties should be comparable to the share of additional duties for the other faculty and staff in the school.

(ii) Participates in the training needed to fulfill the responsibilities of his or her job assignments;

(iii) Has the supplies, equipment, and technology necessary to deliver School Counseling Services to students;

(iv) Has a specific area designated in each school that is accessible to all students, including those with disabilities, and situated to protect student and parent confidentiality; and

(v) Abides by all federal, state, and local student privacy and parental notification laws, rules, and policies.

3. Ensuring that Counselor to Student ratios are reasonable and as close as possible to the ratio of one school counselor for every 450 full-time equivalent students as provided in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-182(c);

4. Ensuring all School Counseling Services align with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission's school counselor certification standards and state requirements.

**Authority:** O.C.G.A § 20-2-182

**Adopted:** December 9, 2021

**Effective:** December 29, 2021