

Counselor Companion Frequently Asked Questions

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Counselor Companion Dashboard Data

1. *How frequently is the Counselor Companion Dashboard updated for school administrators and counselors?*

GCIS data in the counselor dashboards, reports, and impersonated student profiles are updated overnight; YouScience data is updated on a two-day lag. When you drill down into the charts, the date on which the data was last updated will be displayed at the top of the screen.

2. *How frequently is the My Career Plan dashboard updated for the students and parents?*

GCIS data in the student dashboards and reports are updated in real time. Students can click the refresh button to see their dashboard update immediately, or they can wait 5 minutes for the data to refresh automatically. YouScience data is updated on a two-day lag.

Parent dashboards and reports are updated overnight for GCIS data, and on a two-day lag for YouScience Data.

3. *I am noticing that Counselor Companion is showing that some of our middle school students have not completed Career Assessments even though GCIS shows that they have.*

Assessments would show 'In progress' or 'Completed' status only when the student starts or completes the required assessment for his/her grade level. For the 7th and 8th grade students who are showing as "In Progress", this is happening because in order to show as "Completed" in Counselor Companion, they are supposed to have completed **two career assessments by 7th and 8th grade**, and the students showing as "In Progress" have only completed one assessment. Once they complete a second career assessment, their status will update to "Completed". **6th graders, on the other hand, only need to complete one career assessment** in order to show as "Completed" in Counselor Companion.

This table displays the requirements in each grade level for students to be considered "Complete" on the Career Assessment step:

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Grade	Requirements for completion of the Career Assessments step
6	Complete Career Cluster Inventory (48 question) OR Career Cluster Inventory (80 questions) OR YouScience Snapshot.
7	Complete Reality Check OR Interest Profiler (60 questions) OR YouScience Snapshot.
8	Complete two career assessments - one from Career Cluster Inventory (48 question) OR Career Cluster Inventory (80 questions) AND one from Reality Check OR Interest Profiler (60 questions) OR YouScience Snapshot. If the student is already marked complete in 7 th grade, they will remain complete in 8 th grade.
9	Complete at least One career assessment from Cluster Inventory (48 question) OR Career Cluster Inventory (80 questions) OR Reality Check OR Interest Profiler (60 questions) OR YouScience Aptitude Assessment. If the student is already marked complete in 7 th or 8 th grade, they will remain complete in 9 th grade.
10	Complete the YouScience Aptitude Assessment. Completing this assessment will satisfy the requirement for both a Career Interest Inventory and an Aptitude Assessment.

4. Is there a list of **ALL BRIDGE Bill/CTAE** activities for students in each grade level?

The following activities are to be completed in each grade level:

Grade	Requirements for students in this grade level
6	Can do either Career Cluster Inventory (80 questions) OR Career Cluster Inventory (48 questions)
7	(1) Can do either Reality Check OR Interest Profiler (60 questions) AND (2) Select 3 Career Clusters
8	(1) Complete Aptitude Assessment, AND (2) Dual Enrollment Verification, AND (3) IGP Course Planner (student completes)/IGP Verification (counselor verifies)
9	(1) Dual Enrollment Verification, AND (2) Select 3 Occupations, AND (3) IGP Verification (counselor verifies)
10	(1) Dual Enrollment Verification, AND (2) Complete Aptitude Assessment/Interest Inventory, AND (3) IGP Verification (counselor verifies)
11	(1) Dual Enrollment Verification, AND (2) Select 3 Postsecondary Schools, AND (3) Workforce Development Initiative, AND (4) IGP Verification (counselor verifies)
12	Select "Next Steps"

5. My students have been made aware of Dual Enrollment opportunities. How can I mark them complete in Counselor Companion?

There are two ways for students to be marked complete for Dual Enrollment awareness. Either method can be used.

Method 1: The student marks him/herself complete through My Career Plan:

1. Login to the SLDS Student Portal
2. Click the icon for "My Career Plan"

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3. Click on the step titled "Dual Enrollment"
4. Click the blue button that says "read about Dual Enrollment"
5. Once on the Dual Enrollment page, the student can scroll down to access the resources provided for Dual Enrollment (these are links to websites)
6. At the top section of the page titled ***In what grade(s) did you learn about "DUAL ENROLLMENT"***, the student must check the box beside their current grade level, then click "Save Information"

Method 2: The counselor marks the students complete in GCIS:

1. Login to GCIS by clicking the "Go To GCIS" button in Counselor Companion.
 2. Within GCIS, go to the "GA Reports (MS/HS)" menu tab
 3. Select "DE Verification" for each desired grade level of students (grades 8-11)
 4. Fill in check boxes for students who have been made aware
 5. Click "Save Changes"
6. *My students have completed the step requiring them to fill out their IGP in GCIS. Why is their status still "Not Started" or "In-Progress"?*

IGP is not considered "Completed" until the counselors check students completed within GCIS. Students are marked complete as follows:

1. Login to GCIS by clicking the "Go To GCIS" button in Counselor Companion.
 2. Within GCIS, go to the "GA Reports (MS/HS)" menu tab
 3. Select "IGP Verification" for each desired grade level of students (grades 8-11)
 4. Fill in check boxes for students who have been made aware
 5. Click "Save Changes"
7. *How do I record my 11th graders' completion of the workforce development initiative requirement within Counselor Companion?*

The counselor must do the following within Counselor Companion:

1. Login to GCIS by clicking the "Go To GCIS" button in Counselor Companion.
 2. Go to "GA Reports (MS/HS)" menu tab
 3. Select "11th Grade: "State or Local Workforce Development Initiatives" Verification
 4. Check off the 11th grade students who have been made aware of "State and Local Workforce Development Initiatives."
 5. Click "Save Changes"
8. *Will YouScience data appear on the Counselor Companion dashboard for those students who have taken those assessments?*

YouScience data will appear on the Counselor Companion dashboard during the 2018-19 school year.

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9. *I have a student who has transferred in from another school, but I cannot see the student's progress on my Counselor Companion dashboard. What must happen in order for me to see this student's GCIS portfolio progress?*

After a student transfers to a new school, the student needs to login to the SLDS Student Portal once in order for the counselor at the new school to see the transferred student's portfolio.

10. *Why don't the student counts on the Counselor Companion dashboard match with the portfolio counts in GCIS? For example, in Counselor Companion, when I click on Student Search and choose 9th grade, I see that I have 352 students. If I click on "Go To GCIS" select search portfolios and select 2021, I see 106 students.*

There can be many reasons why the student counts on the SLDS Counselor Companion dashboard could be different from the portfolio counts in GCIS:

- If there are any new or transfer students that have portfolios in GCIS but are not claimed in SLDS/GUIDE or are not on the schedules sent by the schools to Data Collections, then those students would not be included in the Counselor Companion student counts. Thus, the GCIS portfolio count would be higher than the Counselor Companion student count.
- If there are any new or transfer students that the school has sent with the claims or schedule data that do not have GCIS portfolios yet, then the Counselor Companion student count would be higher than the portfolio count in GCIS. In this case, student will have to login to My Career Plan and click on any button that takes them to GCIS and follow the steps to create new portfolio. Alternatively, the counselor could create a new portfolio for the student within GCIS, but do remember to enter the Unique ID exactly same as the SLDS GTID for that student.
- If you are comparing counts of students at certain grade levels, then the count in SLDS is more accurate and reflective of the grade of the student that the school has sent with schedules. In GCIS, all the grade levels are calculated/manipulated from the Grad Year, which is an editable field. Thus, if the grad year of the student is earlier or later than what the SLDS grade level would suggest, then that would cause a difference in the counts of the students at that grade level.
- If you are seeing less students in one of the Completed or In-progress modules, then there is a possibility that some of the students either do not have their SLDS and GCIS portfolios linked, have their portfolio hidden in GCIS, or they may have an incorrect GCIS portfolio attached to them. If the students' portfolios are not linked, then students must go to SLDS, click on GCIS buttons and follow instructions to either link existing portfolio or to create new one. However, if the student has an incorrect portfolio attached then counselor would need to contact GCIS to get it corrected.
- Prior to SLDS-GCIS integration, there were students that had multiple login IDs for GCIS (i.e. multiple portfolios in GCIS). If the counselors have not merged them or have not hidden/deleted the duplicates, then the portfolio count in GCIS would be higher than the student count in SLDS due to those duplicate portfolios.

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11. *For the past week, I have been at 91% on the Occupation for the 8th graders in GCIS. In Counselor Companion it shows 60% complete, 5% in progress, and 35% incomplete. Is there a reason why this would not match GCIS?*

The most likely reason for this is that some of the students that are “Complete” or “In Progress” within GCIS do not have their portfolios linked. Those students will be marked “Not Started” in Counselor Companion because there is no link between their SLDS profile and their GCIS portfolios, even though they are “complete” in GCIS. Students will have to go through SLDS – My career plan. Once they are asked ‘if you have existing GCIS portfolio, then student can say yes and enter the credentials of their GCIS portfolio. This way the accounts will be linked and students and counselors will be able to see students’ progress in SLDS.

12. *Does our middle school GCIS JR historical information appear on the Counselor Companion dashboard as well?*

Yes, the students’ GCIS Jr. data will be displayed on the Counselor Companion dashboard for counselors and administrators to see.

13. *Does the data that we see in Counselor Companion always reflect all the students in our GCIS pool, or just the ones who link to their GCIS account through SLDS?*

Counselor Companion reports the status of ALL students who are enrolled in the school, so there may be students showing on your dashboard who do not have GCIS portfolios. As for the statuses that showing in the dashboard, the bars will only reflect “In Progress” or “Completed” for those students who have a portfolio in GCIS.

14. *If a former student of mine from last year logs into GCIS from a new school after 10/31/17, will his data from my school be pulled in if his GCIS account is in deleted or hidden status?*

We recommend that you do not delete or hide those students’ portfolios that are not duplicates. That way, the students’ portfolios will travel seamlessly with them as they move to other schools and/or districts.

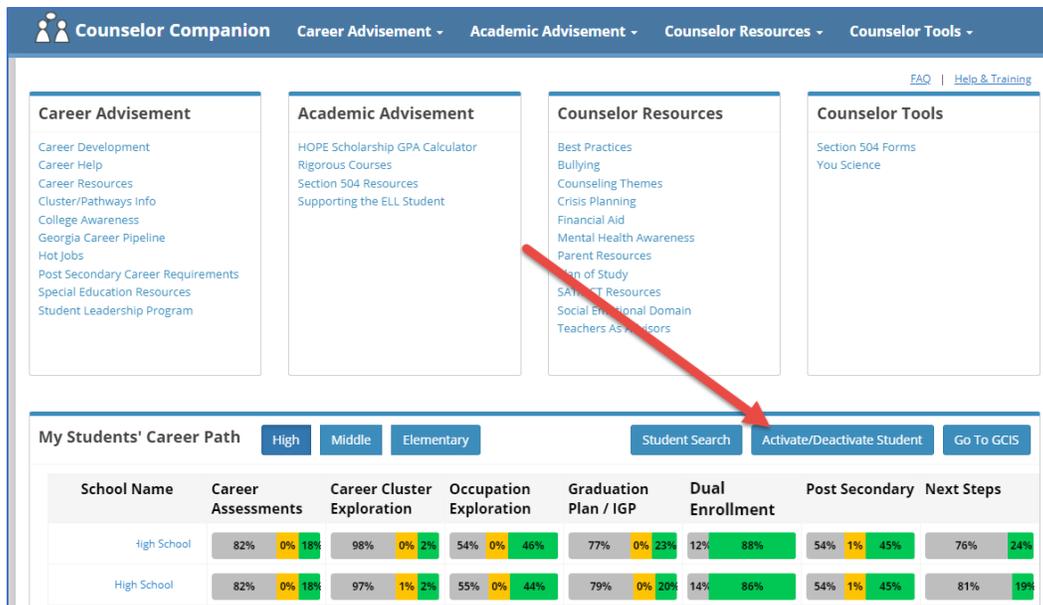
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Withdrawn Students

15. There are students appearing on my dashboard who have withdrawn from the school. How do I remove them from the Counselor Companion calculations?

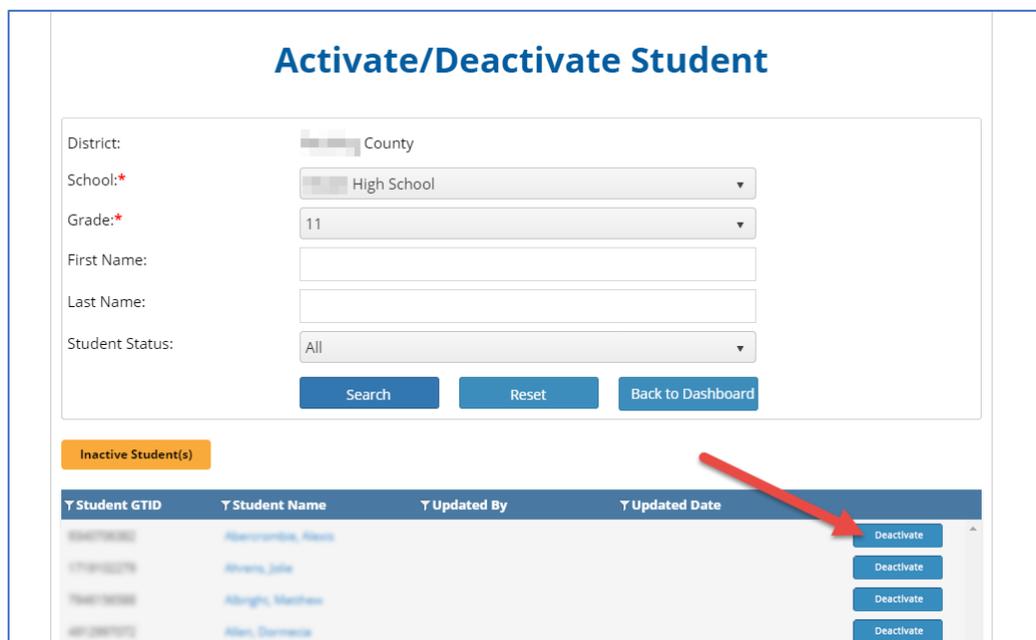
You can remove students from the Counselor Companion dashboard calculations by using the “Activate/Deactivate Students” button. Note that for middle and high school students, the calculations will adjust **OVERNIGHT**, while for elementary students, the calculations will adjust immediately.

1. Click the “Activate/Deactivate Student” button.



The screenshot shows the Counselor Companion dashboard. At the top, there are navigation tabs: Career Advisement, Academic Advisement, Counselor Resources, and Counselor Tools. Below these are four main content areas: Career Advisement, Academic Advisement, Counselor Resources, and Counselor Tools. A red arrow points to the 'Activate/Deactivate Student' button in the 'My Students' section. Below this button is a table with columns for School Name, Career Assessments, Career Cluster Exploration, Occupation Exploration, Graduation Plan / IGP, Dual Enrollment, Post Secondary, and Next Steps. The table contains two rows of data for 'High School'.

2. Search for the student(s) that you wish to Deactivate, i.e. remove from the calculations on the dashboard, then click the “Deactivate” button beside the student’s name.



The screenshot shows the 'Activate/Deactivate Student' form. The form has fields for District, School, Grade, First Name, Last Name, and Student Status. Below the form are buttons for Search, Reset, and Back to Dashboard. Below the form is a section titled 'Inactive Student(s)' which contains a table with columns for Student GTID, Student Name, Updated By, and Updated Date. A red arrow points to the 'Deactivate' button next to the first student in the list.

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3. You will be asked to confirm the action.

Change Status Confirmation

Are you sure you want to Deactivate Student?

Changes will not reflect immediately on Dashboards & Reports but will appear a day later

Yes No

4. Once you confirm, the student's status will change to Inactive, and the student will be highlighted in orange coloring. The name of the person who made the change and the time and date of the change will populate beside the student's name. The button beside his/her name will change to "Activate." Note that for middle and high school students, the calculations will adjust **OVERNIGHT**, while for elementary students, the calculations will adjust immediately.

Activate/Deactivate Student

District: County

School:* High School

Grade:* 11

First Name:

Last Name:

Student Status: All

Search Reset Back to Dashboard

Inactive Student(s)

Student GTID	Student Name	Updated By	Updated Date	
				Deactivate
		Carol Moore	07/24/2018 12:56 PM	Activate
		Carol Moore	07/24/2018 12:59 PM	Activate
				Deactivate
				Deactivate

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5. If you wish to "Activate" a student who was previously deactivated, you may click the button beside the student's name that now says "Activate." The name of the person who made the change and the time and date of the change will populate beside the student's name. The button beside his/her name will change to "Deactivate." Note that for middle and high school students, the calculations will adjust **OVERNIGHT**, while for elementary students, the calculations will adjust immediately.

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Logging in to GCIS

16. *I am a school level Counselor Companion user, and I see this message when click the "Go To GCIS" button. I am logging in to GCIS for the first time. What should I do?*



If you have an existing GCIS login and password, then you can select "Yes" and enter your GCIS user ID and password. The existing GCIS account would be then linked to Counselor Companion, and from now on, you will not see this message and will not have to enter any login information.

If you do not have an existing GCIS login, then you can select "No" and a new GCIS user account would be created for you. From now on, you will not see this message and will not have to enter any login information.

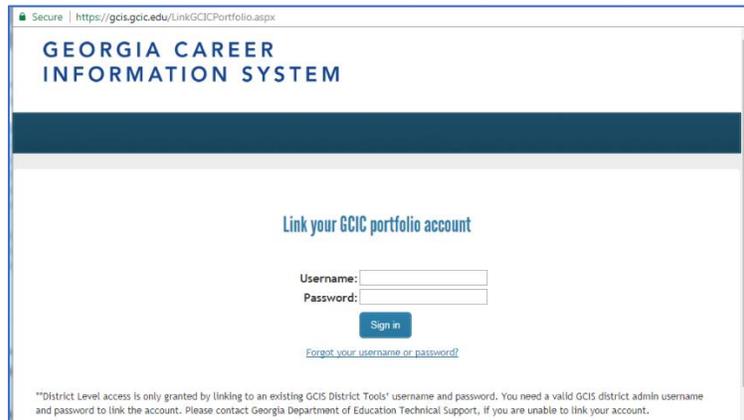
17. *How do I login as a new counselor if I have more than one school and need access for both? I have never had a GCIS log in before. What process do I follow?*

Please do the following for each of those schools:

1. Login to your Student Information System (Infinite Campus, Powerschool, etc.) and select one of your two schools within the application.
2. Click on the link to SLDS.
3. Once in SLDS, click on the Counselor Companion button.
4. Within Counselor Companion, click on the "Go To GCIS" button.
5. When asked if you have an existing GCIS portfolio, say "No" and allow it to create a new account for you.
6. You are now setup with an account for the first school, so now logout of SLDS, then log out of your Student Information System.
7. Log back in to your Student Information System, select the second school, and repeat steps 2-5. This should allow you to switch between both schools, as it will create two separate GCIS accounts for you.

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18. I am a district level user, and I am getting this message when I click “Go To GCIS”.



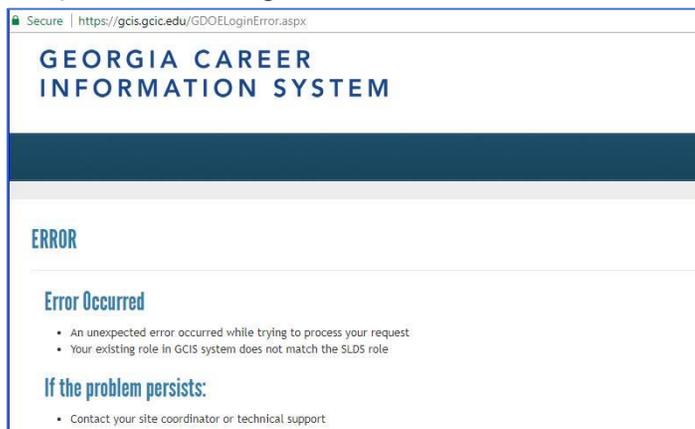
a. Should I enter my current GCIS ID and password here?

Yes, enter your GCIS ID and Password. Once you do this once, you will no longer need to enter it again when you click the “Go To GCIS” button.

b. What if I do not have a GCIS ID and password?

Please contact us at slds@doe.k12.ga.us if you are a district level user who is being asked for the GCIS ID and Password, but you do not yet have those credentials.

19. I currently have Site Administrator access within GCIS. When I clicked “Go to GCIS” in Counselor Companion, it asked if I already had an account. I said “Yes” and it took me to the GCIS login page. My admin login and password were found, but then I got the role mismatch error (pictures attached). What is causing this error and how can I correct it?



This error is the result of a role mismatch between SLDS and GCIS. As a GCIS Site Administrator, you would need to be given the Site Administrator role for Counselor Companion. This is a step that your district superuser (usually the Data/SIS Coordinator in your district) does within the SLDS Profile Manager. Please contact your Data Coordinator and let him/her know that you need to be setup with Site Administrator access for Counselor Companion. This step is covered in the [release notes for setting up roles in Counselor Companion](#). This document was also sent

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to all Data Coordinators on October 1st when Counselor Companion was released. Please try logging in again once you have been given Site Administrator access in Profile Manager. This error will also be displayed if you were given Site administrator access in Profile Manager, but do not have that level of access in GCIS.

20. *Now that we can login to GCIS through the Counselor Companion, why do we still need Site Administrators?*

There are two reasons why it would still be needed:

1. Site Administrators are responsible for deleting or disabling GCIS accounts for staff members who leave the school or district.
2. In order for those who are currently in the GCIS system as a Site Administrator to be able to log through Counselor Companion, they need to have the Site Administrator role in Profile Manager as well, so that their roles match.

Maintaining the Student GCIS Portfolio

21. My student does not have a portfolio in GCIS. How can we create a portfolio for this student?

To create a new GCIS portfolio, the student needs to:

1. *Login to the SLDS Student Portal.*
2. *Click on the **My Career Plan** tile, then click on one of the Career Plan steps (for example, "Career Assessments").*
3. *Click on a button to start an activity within the step (for example, "Take this Assessment")*
4. *When asked if he/she already has a GCIS portfolio, the student may click "No" to create a new portfolio, or may click "Yes" and enter his/her GCIS username and password if he/she already has a portfolio (refer to the [My Career Plan Student Guide](#) for more information).*

22. *If we have students who have completed activities and transferred, please confirm that we should also attach their GTID numbers to their GCIS portfolios. Will these completed activities following them via their GTID to their new Georgia school?*

Assuming the students completed their activities in the SLDS student portal, their GCIS portfolios already have GTID numbers attached. When students transfer to another school or district in GA, their GCIS portfolios along with GTIDs will travel with them.

23. *If we have students who have transferred out of state, should we delete their GCIS portfolio?*

With the exception of duplicate student accounts, you should not delete or hide student portfolios since they are part of student data.

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24. *If we have students who have transferred in from other schools in Georgia who have completed career activities, how can we ensure their completed GCIS activities will follow them to their current school?*

If the students completed their GCIS activities at the prior school by first logging in through My Career Plan within the SLDS student portal, their portfolios will automatically travel with them to the new school, as their GTID is automatically attached to their GCIS portfolio.

If the students completed their activities at the prior school without logging in to My Career Plan through the SLDS student portal, then the prior school must transfer the student's GCIS portfolio to the new school. The new school should then have students go through SLDS and login to My Career Plan. When asked 'If you have existing portfolio, students should click on yes and enter their GCIS login credentials. The portfolio will be linked and student and counselors would be able to see students' past and current progress.

Training and Support Resources

25. *Is there a web page with helpful information about Counselor Companion?*

Yes, that page is <http://www.gadoe.org/Technology-Services/SLDS/Pages/CounselorCompanion.aspx>

26. *Where can I find the recorded Counselor Companion training webinar that took place in October 2017 for middle and high school counselors?*

It is posted on the page above as a YouTube video. Or you may click here if you have trouble viewing the video on YouTube: [Counselor Companion.mp4](#)

27. *I am a Data/SIS Coordinator. Where can I find instructions for setting up Counselor Companion Roles in the SLDS Profile Manager?*

http://www.gadoe.org/Technology-Services/SLDS/Documents/Add Role_CounselorCompanion.pdf

28. *What are the functions of a GCIS site coordinator (site admin) vs. staff account holder?*

A GCIS Site Coordinator manages the Administration Tools, a management resource system designed to help administrators, counselors, teachers, and career advisors organize and manage individual student "My Portfolios" in GCIS and GCIS Junior. These tools can be used to view aggregate site usage reports, create "My Portfolios, organize users into groups, send messages, create and manage staff accounts, customize features such as the Course Planner (Individual Graduation Plan), set the privacy policy, and generate BRIDGE Law and compliance reports for the Georgia Department of Education.

A staff account holder has 90% of the rights that a Site Coordinator possesses; however, they:

- Cannot create and manage other staff account holders' information
- Cannot modify the Course Planner (Individual Graduation Plan)

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- Cannot alter Privacy Policy

Function	Site Coordinator	Staff Account Holder
View aggregate site usage reports	X	X
Generate BRIDGE Law reports	X	X
Create "My Portfolios"	X	X
Reset "My Portfolio" passwords	X	X
Organize users into groups	X	X
Send messages	X	X
Customize Checklists	X	X
Customize Course Planner (Individual Graduation Plan)	X	
Create and manage staff accounts	X	
Set privacy policy	X	

Please note that the Georgia Career Information Center at Georgia State University **DOES NOT** grant access to the SIS/SLDS/Counselor Companion nor assign roles. Your school district's data/student information system (SIS) Administrator makes these assignments.