

Appropriate and Inappropriate School Counseling Program Activities

A school counseling program recommends counselors spend most of their time in direct service to and contact with students. Therefore, school counselors' duties are focused on the overall delivery of the total program through guidance curriculum, individual student planning and responsive services. A small amount of their time is devoted to indirect services called system support. Prevention education is best accomplished by implementing school guidance curriculum in the classroom and by coordinating prevention education programs such as the conflict resolution and anti-violence programs at school sites. Eliminate or reassign certain inappropriate program tasks, if possible, so school counselors can focus on the prevention needs of their program. See below for a comparison between the two similar types of activities and serves as a helpful teaching tool when explaining the school counseling program activities. For example, when considering discipline, counseling students who have discipline problems is the role of the school counselor while performing the disciplinary action itself is the role of the administrator.

Appropriate Activities for School Counselors

- ◆ individual student academic program planning
- ◆ interpreting cognitive, aptitude and achievement tests
- ◆ counseling students who are tardy or absent
- ◆ counseling students who have disciplinary problems
- ◆ counseling students as to appropriate school dress
- ◆ collaborating with teachers to present guidance curriculum lessons
- ◆ analyzing grade-point averages in relationship to achievement
- ◆ interpreting student records
- ◆ providing teachers with suggestions for better management of study halls
- ◆ ensuring that student records are maintained as per state and federal regulations
- ◆ assisting the school principal with identifying and resolving student issues, needs and problems
- ◆ working with students to provide small- and large-group counseling services
- ◆ advocating for students at individual education plan meetings, student study teams and school attendance review boards
- ◆ disaggregated data analysis

Inappropriate Activities for School Counselors

- ◆ registration and scheduling of all new students
- ◆ coordinating or administering cognitive, aptitude and achievement tests
- ◆ responsibility for signing excuses for students who are tardy or absent
- ◆ performing disciplinary actions
- ◆ sending students home who are not appropriately dressed
- ◆ teaching classes when teachers are absent
- ◆ computing grade-point averages
- ◆ maintaining student records
- ◆ supervising study halls
- ◆ clerical record keeping
- ◆ assisting with duties in the principal's office
- ◆ work with one student at a time in a therapeutic, clinical mode
- ◆ preparation of individual education plans, student study teams and school attendance review boards.
- ◆ data entry

Adapted from Campbell, C.A. & Dahir, C.A. (1997). *Sharing the vision: The ASCA national standards for school counseling programs*, Alexandria, VA: American School Counselor Association.