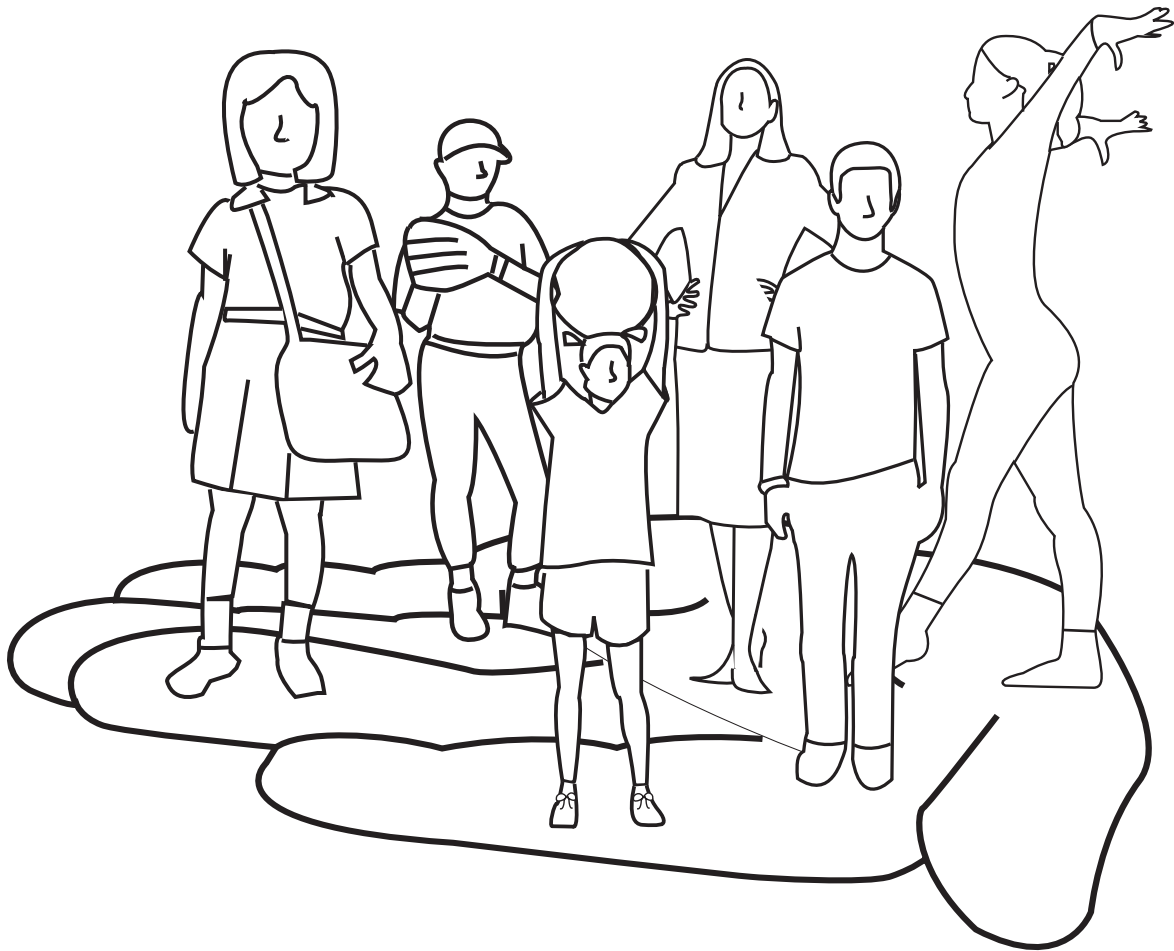


The Overview:

Columbia Public School K-12 Guidance and Counseling Program

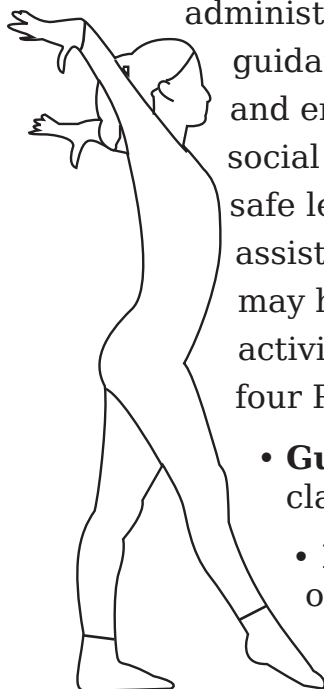


Guidance Program Columbia Public Schools

The Columbia Public School District believes that the Guidance Program is an essential and integral part of the overall educational process kindergarten through grade twelve. The guidance staff includes certified school counselors as well as outreach counselors who are trained counselors and/or social workers. Columbia school counselors, working within the framework of the program, make major contributions to the primary educational mission and Comprehensive School Improvement Plan of the District by providing all students with guidance activities and services that facilitate and enhance their academic, career, and personal and social development. While Columbia school counselors are available to respond to the unique needs of each student, all students along with their parents, receive the full benefits of the Program's guidance activities and services at all levels, K-12, including the Career Center.

What is the Guidance Program?

Guidance is a Board of Education approved educational program in the Columbia Public School District. It is developmental by design and includes sequential activities K-12, organized and implemented by certified school counselors in close collaboration with parents, teachers, and



administrators. As a developmental program it addresses the guidance needs of all students in the District by facilitating and enhancing their academic, career, and personal and social development as well as helping to create positive and safe learning environments. At the same time, the Program assists students as they face issues and resolve problems that may hinder their healthy development. Guidance Program activities and services are delivered through the following four Program components:

- **Guidance Curriculum** – large structured group and classroom presentations
- **Individual Planning** – appraisal, educational and occupational planning, and placement

- **Responsive Services** – Individual counseling, small-group counseling, consultation, and referral
- **System Support** – program management, fair-share responsibilities, professional development, staff and community relations, consultation, committee participation, community outreach, and research and development.

What Knowledge and Skills do Students Acquire?

The Guidance Program of the Columbia Public Schools provides all students with regular opportunities to acquire a solid foundation of knowledge and skills in personal and social development, academic development, and career development. The knowledge and skills in these areas represent the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Standards of the Program as follows:

Personal and Social Development

- understanding self as an individual and as a member of local and global communities
- interacting with others in ways that respect individual and group differences
- applying personal safety skills and coping strategies

Academic Development

- applying skills needed for educational achievement
- applying the skills of transitioning between educational levels
- developing and monitoring personal educational plans

Career Development

- knowing where and how to obtain information about the world of work
- applying employment readiness skills and the skills for on-the-job success
- applying career exploration and planning skills in the achievement of life career goals



How are the Activities and Services of the Program Organized?

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

At the elementary level, the Guidance Program assists students in learning the skills and attitudes necessary to be successful. It emphasizes decision-making skill development and awareness and beginning exploration of future educational and occupational possibilities. The program also stresses self-concept development and the acquisition of skills in developing interpersonal relationships.

The middle school and junior high school Guidance Programs focus on the rapidly changing needs of developing adolescents. The Guidance Programs at these levels are especially sensitive to the struggles of middle school students for identity, for balancing the demands for academic, career, and social competence. The activities begun at the elementary level are continued. However, they are adjusted to fit the unique needs of middle and junior high school students. In addition, school counselors work with students and their parents to develop education/career plans that cover graduation requirements and beyond. These plans take into account students' interests, abilities, and educational and career goals.



Building on the goals of the elementary, middle, and junior high schools, the Guidance Program in high school assists students in becoming responsible adults who can develop realistic and fulfilling life plans based on clear understandings of themselves and their needs, interests, and skills. The education/career plans developed in the middle school are reviewed and updated periodically in accordance with students' post-graduation educational and occupational goals. For students at the Career Center, articulation agreements are in place in all program areas for students to gain advanced standing in a two or four-year college or technical school. Dual credit opportunities are available in many Career Center courses from state universities and colleges. Our students are given continued attention in developing competence in decision-making, career planning, working with others, and taking responsibility for their own behavior.

Program Structure:

Four Program Component

The Guidance Curriculum consists of guidance activities presented through the classroom and large structured groups K-12. The curriculum is organized around the three areas of academic, career, and personal and social development. While Columbia school counselors are responsible for organizing and implementing the guidance curriculum, the support of teachers and administrators is critical. Examples of topics covered in each area in elementary, middle, junior high, and high school follow:

Academic Development

Elementary	Middle School	Junior High	High School
Listening Skills	Student Led Conferences	4-Year Plan	Test Taking Skills
Following Directions	Study Skills	Strengths/Interests	Test Interruption
Decision Making	Goals Setting	Study Skills	Essay Writing
Testing Taking Skills	Testing Taking Skills	Testing Taking Skills	Aptitude/Interests
Organizational Skills	Organizational Skills	Organizational Skills	Organizational Skills

Career Development

Elementary	Middle School	Junior High	High School
Strengths/Interests	Work Values	Work Skills	Course Selection
Community Jobs	Interests Inventories	Interest Inventories	Resume Writing
Working Together	Internet Introduction	Career Path Exploration	Career Center Tours
School/Work Skills	Career Path Exploration	Career Path Selection	Job Application
Career Path Introduction	Reasons to Work	Job Shadowing	Major Selection

Personal and Social Development

Elementary	Middle School	Junior High	High School
Self Awareness	Harassment Issues	Social Skills	Diversity
Personal Safety	Bully Proofing	Self Respect	Relationships
Decision Making	Relationships	Awareness of Others	Social Skills
Social Skills	Social Skills	Self Image	Responsible Citizens
Conflict Resolution	Peer Mediation	Harassment Issues	Healthy Alternatives

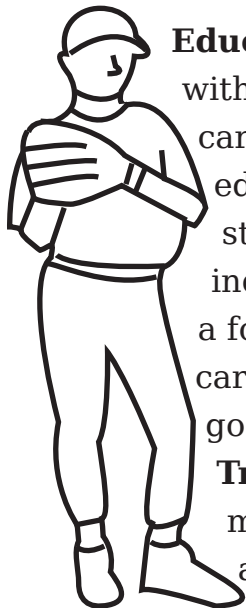
INDIVIDUAL PLANNING

In the Individual Planning component, school counselors, work closely with parents to assist all students in planning, monitoring, and managing their own learning as well as their personal and career development. Within this component, students, in collaboration with parents/guardians, evaluate their educational, occupational, and personal goals and develop individual education/career plans beginning no later than seventh grade. The activities in this component are school counselor planned and directed. These activities are generally delivered on an individual basis or by

working with individuals in small groups. The focus is on individual and personalized next-step planning by each student. Individual planning is implemented through the following strategies:

Individual appraisal: School counselors work with students to help them analyze their abilities, interests, skills, and achievement. Test information and data form one basis for developing immediate and long-range plans with students.

Middle School	Junior High School	Senior High
Informal Interest	Explore	PLAN
Work Skills	(Pre-ACT)	(Pre-ACT)
Values Inventories	Interest and Study Skills	Interest and Study Skills



Educational and Career Planning: School counselors work with students individually to use personal/social, educational, career, and labor market information in planning personal, educational, and occupational goals. The involvement of students, parents, and school in planning a program that meets individual needs of students is critical. Ninth graders develop a four-year high school plan that takes into consideration their career interests, graduation requirements, and educational goals, as well as their academic ability.

Transition Planning: School counselors assist students in making the transition from school to school, school to career, and school to additional education and training.

School to School	School to Postsecondary	School to Career
Course Selection	Postsecondary School Selection	Interest Assessments
Building Orientation	Financial Aid/Scholarships	Intern/Apprenticeships
Building Expectations	Resumes/Applications	Resumes/Applications

RESPONSIVE SERVICES

Responsive Services consists of activities designed to meet immediate needs and concerns of students requiring counseling, consultation, or referral. This guidance component is available to all students and is often student-initiated. While school counselors have special training and skills to respond to these needs and concerns, the cooperation and support of the entire faculty and staff are necessary for successful implementation. Responsive services are delivered through these strategies:

Consultation: As a consultant, the school counselors may confer directly with teachers, parents, administrators, and other helping professionals to assist students in the school setting. They may help others assist students in dealing more effectively with developmental or adjustment needs.

School counselors consult with many individuals about students' concerns or progress. Examples of consultation topics include the following:

Parents	Teachers and Other Educators	Community Agencies
Academic Performance	Academic Performance	Student Behavior
Behavior	Teaching Techniques	Academic Performance
Mental Help	Social Skills	Family Issues
Parenting Skills	Behavior	Emotional Issues
Educational Plans	Classroom Management	Educational Programs

Individual/Crisis Counseling: Counseling is provided by school counselors and outreach counselors on an individual basis for students expressing difficulties dealing with relationships, personal concerns, or normal development tasks. Individual counseling assists students in identifying problems, causes, alternatives and possible consequences so that appropriate action is taken. Examples of individual counseling topics include the following:

Personal	Behavioral	Academic	Crisis
Self-concept	Self-esteem	Performance	Counseling
Personal Hygiene	Anger Control	Incomplete Work	Referral
Family	Substance Abuse	Goal Setting	
Friends	Violence	Tardiness	
Divorce		Study Habits	
Death		Truancy	
Grief		Absences	
Personal Identity			
Stress			
Social Skills			

Small Group Counseling: Counseling is provided on a small group basis for students expressing difficulties dealing with relationships, personal concerns, or normal developmental tasks. Small group counseling assists students in identifying problems, causes, consequences, and alternatives so that appropriate behaviors are developed. Examples of group topics provided for students in small groups are as follows:

Socialization	Career Exploration	Stress Management
Divorce	Self-control	Children of Alcoholics
Dealing With Grief	Attention Deficit Disorder	New Students
Study Skills	Academic Achievement	Eating Disorders
Incarcerated Parents	Healthy Relationships	Substance Abuse

Referral: Referrals are made when the student's needs or issues are beyond the scope and impact of a school guidance program. School counselors and/or outreach counselors make parents aware of a variety of referral sources available to them. School counselor may suggest alternative sources by asking parents if they have considered additional help for their children. School counselors may suggest services that are available to the parent and/or the child through such organizations as mental health services, employment and training programs, vocational rehabilitation, juvenile services, and social services.

SYSTEM SUPPORT

System Support consists of management activities that establish, maintain, and enhance the total Comprehensive Guidance Program. This component is implemented through activities in the following areas:

Professional Development: School counselors are involved in continually updating their professional knowledge and skills. They participate in regular school in-service training, hold memberships in professional organizations, attend professional meetings, complete post-graduate work, and contribute to professional literature.

Shared responsibilities: These responsibilities are required of all staff members in the district, including school counselors. Fair-share responsibilities may include such tasks as class/club sponsorship, and taking tickets at sports events.

Staff and community relations: This activity involves orienting the staff and the community to the District's Comprehensive Guidance Program through newsletters, local media, and school-community presentations.

District advisory committees: Serving on departmental curriculum committees, community committees, or advisory boards are examples of ways school counselors support other programs in the school and community and to gain support for the District's Comprehensive Guidance Program.

Community outreach: Activities are designed to help counselors gain knowledge about community resources and referral agencies, field trip sites, employment opportunities, and local labor market information. This may require school counselors to visit local businesses, industries, and social service agencies periodically.

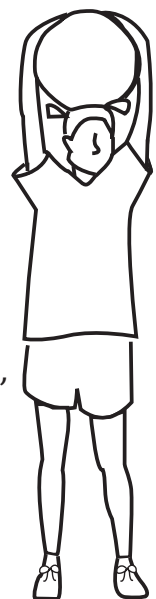
Research and evaluation: Examples of school counselors' research and development work include Guidance Program evaluation, data analysis, follow-up studies (by district and guidance staff), and the continued development and updating of guidance learning activities and resources.

Evaluation and accountability: In order to assess the effectiveness of the Guidance Program of the Columbia Public School District and to provide methods for systematic improvement of the Program, the Guidance Department uses the Comprehensive Guidance Program Evaluation System (program + personal = results). This allows for a variety of evaluation methods for all components of the District's Guidance Program, such as activities log/calendar, school counselor/teacher administered curriculum evaluation, office logs and surveys, and personnel evaluation.

School-Community Guidance Advisory Committee: The School-Community Guidance Advisory Committee acts as a liaison between the school and community and provides recommendations concerning the needs of students, their parents, and the community. The Advisory Committee, made up of parents, teachers, school counselors, and community members, provides support, offers advice, reviews present guidance activities and services, and suggests new activities and services when needed to meet the needs of students, the schools, and the community.

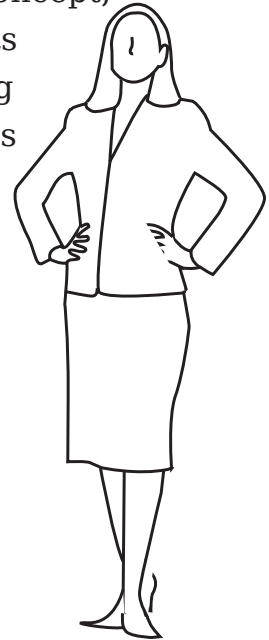
What Ethical Standards Govern the Work of the Columbia Public School Counselors?

Columbia Public School District school counselors' professional work is governed by the ethical standards of the American School Counselor Association and the American Counseling Association. These guidelines state that Columbia school counselors have certain responsibilities to students, parents, colleagues and professional associates, the school and community, and to self. Further explanation of these responsibilities can be found in the Columbia Public School Guidance Procedural Handbook.



Summary

The Columbia Public Schools' Guidance Program focuses on all students and is preventative as well as remedial in nature. While school counselors continue to respond to the unique needs of individuals, all students benefit from experiential activities that enhance their knowledge and skills in career planning and exploration, in self-awareness and interpersonal relationships, and in educational/vocational development. Proficiency in these areas serves to improve students' self-concept, fosters better peer and adult interactions, and lends students a sense of purpose and direction in more effectively planning and controlling their own lives. Such enhanced competencies result in students who are prepared to cope with life's decisions and to manage human relationships in order to be lifelong successful, productive citizens.



The Overview

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