

6A-5.079, Florida School Counseling Standards.

(1) Purpose and Structure of the Standards.

(a) Purpose. The purpose of these standards is to establish Florida’s expectations for school counselors. These standards inform the foundation for school counseling preparation programs, educator certification requirements, professional learning for school counselors, and school counselor evaluation systems.

(b) Structure. There are seven (7) standards, each comprised of a title, description, and descriptors that further clarify and define the work required to demonstrate mastery of the standard.

(2) Definitions.

(a) “School Counselor” means staff members certified under Rule 6A-4.0181, F.A.C., who are responsible for: advising students with regard to their abilities and aptitudes, educational and occupational opportunities, and personal and social adjustments; providing placement services; and similar functions as described in Section 1012.01(2)(b), F.S.

(b) “School Counseling Program” means a set of focused resources and supports designed by schools and districts to meet the unique needs of the students. The key aspects of the program include academic advisement and planning, career guidance and postsecondary planning, responsive mental health counseling services, community partnerships, and support with the provision of resiliency education, civic and character education, and life skill education.

(3) PK-12 School Counseling Standards.

(a) Standard one (1). Professional, Legal, and Ethical Expectations. School counselors act ethically and according to professional standards to promote the academic success and well-being of all students. School counselors:

1. Hold self accountable to the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida, pursuant to Rule 6A-10.081, F.A.C., and adhere to guidelines for student welfare pursuant to Section 1001.42(8), F.S., the rights of students and parents enumerated in Sections 1002.20 and 1014.04, F.S., local school board, and governing board policies;

2. Adhere to the state and federal legal rights of students and parents or guardians with regard to student records per Rule 6A-1.0955, F.A.C.; and

3. Seek opportunities for professional learning applicable to the role of a school counselor.

(b) Standard two (2). Data-Driven Planning. Effective school counselors utilize resources including available school data to guide decision making and counseling services. School counselors:

1. Gather and synthesize data from a variety of sources to inform the School Counseling Program;

2. Communicate data from a variety of sources to students and parents or guardians; and

3. Apply appropriate use of data and technology in supporting student learning and development.

(c) Standard three (3). School Counseling Program. Effective school counselors develop, implement, and evaluate programs that cultivate a school environment that promotes the academic success and well-being of all students. School counselors:

1. Apply evidence-based strategies that promote academic success; career readiness; and resiliency education, civic and character education, and life skill education as defined in Rule 6A-1.094124, F.A.C.

2. Apply principles and practices of crisis planning, response, and preventative programs;

3. Apply practices for identifying and closing gaps in student achievement; and

4. Apply strategies for progress monitoring and sharing School Counseling Program outcomes.

(d) Standard four (4). Consultation, Collaboration, and Coordination. Effective school counselors utilize multiple means of communication to promote the academic success and well-being of all students. School counselors:

1. Model and support respectful collaboration practices between school leaders, parents or guardians, district and school personnel and community partners;

2. Maintain high visibility and accessibility, and actively listen to and respond to parents or guardians, students, district and school personnel and community partners;

3. Recognize parents or guardians, students, district and school personnel and community partners for contributions and engagement that enhance the school community; and

4. Utilize appropriate technologies and other forms of communication with parents or guardians, students, district and school personnel and families on student expectations and academic performance.

5. Utilize state, local school board, and governing board policies and procedures to make appropriate community-based referrals.

6. Apply effective methods and skills for coordinating with community partners in the implementation of a school counseling program.

(e) Standard five (5). Counseling Services. Effective school counselors provide direct and indirect services that support the safety, mental health, and well-being of all students. School counselors:

1. Apply counseling skills when delivering evidence-based, direct services to individual students and groups;

2. Assist with the provision of resiliency education, civic and character education, and life skill education in the classroom setting; and

3. Apply verbal de-escalation strategies to assist in the response and support of students in a crisis situation.

(f) Standard six (6). Academic Advising and Planning. Effective school counselors cultivate a caring, rigorous, and supportive school community that promotes the academic success and well-being of all students.

1. Promote awareness of student progression, assessment requirements, appropriate educational placement, and high school graduation requirements;

2. Assist all students with developing a path to effectively prepare for secondary and postsecondary educational and employment opportunities;

3. Provide all students with opportunities for academic enrichment; and

4. Support students who are identified as academically at-risk.

(g) Standard seven (7). Career Development and Postsecondary Planning. Effective school counselors provide opportunities for all students to develop the behaviors necessary to learn work-related skills, resilience, perseverance, an understanding of lifelong learning as a part of long-term career success, the value of volunteerism and mentorship, and a strong work ethic. School counselors:

1. Promote awareness of application and admission processes for various postsecondary options, including financial resources such as the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and Florida Financial Aid Application for all students and families;

2. Apply school counseling strategies and activities that address students' college and career readiness across developmental levels, including decision-making approaches for students in various stages of career development;

3. Apply procedures of formal and informal career inventories and data-driven methods for evaluating students' college and career readiness;

4. Apply college and career readiness counseling services and schoolwide approaches across all levels that promote lifelong learning and career success;

5. Utilize resources that provide students with personalized information about postsecondary and career and technical educational opportunities and sources of financial assistance; and

6. Apply counseling services to address the challenges experienced by students.

Rulemaking Authority 1001.02, 1012.55, 1012.56 FS. Law Implemented 1012.55, 1012.56 History-New