

School Counselors

Effective school counselors develop, implement, and evaluate programs that cultivate a school environment that promotes the academic success and well-being of all students, while using multiple means of communication to promote the academic success and well-being of all students.

Standard One: Professional, Legal, and Ethical Expectations

Criteria	Highly Effective	Effective	Needs Improvement/Developing	Unsatisfactory
1a. Hold self accountable to the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida, pursuant to Rule 6A-10.081 FAC, and adhere to guidelines for student welfare pursuant to section 1001.42(8), FS, the rights of students and parents enumerated in section 1002.20 and 1014.04,FS, local school board and governing board policies.	1. Fully comply with and educate/support all stakeholders in adhering to state, district, and school policies, rules, procedures, state statutes, and the Florida Code of Ethics for Educators. 2. Comply with guidelines for student welfare and student and parental rights. 3. Models professional conduct while ensuring protection of student welfare and student and parental rights.	1. Fully comply with and educate/support all state, district, and school policies, rules, procedures, state statutes, and the Florida Code of Ethics for Educators. 2. Comply with guidelines for student welfare and student and parental rights.	1. Inconsistently complies with state, district, and school policies, rules, procedures, state statutes, and the Florida Code of Ethics for Educators. 2. Inconsistently complies with guidelines for student welfare and student and parental rights.	1. Does not comply with state, district, and school policy.
1b. Seeks opportunities for professional learning applicable to the role of a school counselor.	1. Implements newly acquired professional learning and shares with stakeholders to improve counseling practice.	1. Participates in and applies relevant professional learning.	1. Attends professional learning opportunities with limited application to practice.	1. Does not participate in relevant professional learning.
1c. Adhere to state and federal legal rights of students and parents or guardians with regard to student records per Rule 6A-1.0955, FAC	1. Consistently adheres to and informs stakeholders of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). 2. Maintains secure, highly organized, and compliant	1. Adheres to and informs stakeholders of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). 2. Maintains records in compliance with district and state policies.	1. Adheres to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires consultation and support. 2. Recordkeeping practices lack organization.	1. Inconsistent adherence to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). 2. Student records are insecure or inaccessible to authorized individuals, and

	records, ensuring personally identifiable(PII) is protected.			record-keeping practices are inappropriate.
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- References or shares the Florida Code of Ethics or FERPA guidelines with staff or families.
- Maintains secure, organized student records.
- Participates in or leads professional learning communities (PLCs, attend training on Track, Teachers In Action).
- Displays or distributes materials on student rights or welfare.
- Demonstrates evidence of proactive communication (emails, newsletters, presentations, Parentsquare).
- Maintains documentation demonstrating compliance with professional, legal, and ethical standards (signed forms, training logs, audit reports, Guidance tab on skyward, Educlimber, TA system).
- Serves on and participates in district and/or school committees.
- Membership in and/or participation in School Counseling associations including ACSA and FSCA.
- Demonstrates compliance with all reporting requirements including (mandatory reporting, threat assessment, self-harm protocols).
- Exhibits professional conduct during meetings, crises, and interactions with stakeholders.
- Maintains appropriate professional boundaries with students, parents, and staff.
- Adheres to school board and district procedures (attendance, communication, documentation, crisis protocols).
- Collaborates with administrators when clarification of policy, procedure, or legal guidance is needed.
- Demonstrates student-centered advocacy while respecting parental rights defined in statute.
- Provides evidence of professional development related to counseling practice, such as certificates or agendas for ASCA, SEL, trauma-informed care, MTSS, or crisis response training.
- Participates in district-provided counselor meetings and trainings related to assessment updates, graduation requirements, and dual enrollment processes.
- Maintains timely and accurate student records, including schedule changes, grade-level placement updates, and 504/IEP documentation.
- Uses Skyward, EduClimber, and other district systems appropriately and in accordance with confidentiality and access guidelines.
- Communicates with families in a manner that reflects understanding of parent rights to information, access, and consent.

Standard Two: Data Driven Planning

Criteria	Highly Effective	Effective	Needs Improvement/Developing	Unsatisfactory
2a. Gather, synthesize and apply data from a variety of sources to inform the School Counseling Program.	1. Consistently gathers, analyzes, and synthesizes data from a variety of sources to inform the School Counseling Program.	1. Gathers and synthesizes data from a variety of sources to inform the School Counseling Program.	1. Rarely gathers and synthesizes data from a variety of sources to inform the School Counseling Program.	1. Does not use data from a variety of sources to inform the School Counseling Program.
2b. Communicate data from a variety of sources to students and parents or guardians.	1. Proactively maintains effective communication using multiple methods and appropriate technology. 2. Regularly communicates relevant data from multiple sources to students, parents/guardians, and stakeholders.	1. Communicates with students and parents/guardians using multiple methods, including documentation. 2. Shares data as needed.	1. Communication relies primarily on one method and is inconsistent. 2. Rarely communicates relevant data.	1. Does not communicate data to students, parents / guardians.
2c. Provide all students with opportunities for academic enrichment while offering targeted support to those identified as academically at risk.	1. Analyzes and utilizes data to foster ongoing collaboration with school stakeholders to ensure all students have opportunities for academic enrichment. 2. Engage in continuous consultation and collaboration with stakeholders to provide support to students identified as academically at-risk. 3. Assist in identifying and implementing evidence-based interventions and support for students academically at risk.	1. Analyze and apply data to ensure all students have opportunities for academic enrichment. 2. Collaborates and consults with stakeholders to provide support to students identified as academically at risk.	1. Practice is developing and would benefit from continued professional development to ensure all students have opportunities for academic enrichment. 2. Does not consistently consult and collaborate with stakeholders to provide support to students identified as academically at-risk.	1. Does not use data to provide students with opportunities for academic enrichment. 2. Does not consistently consult and collaborate with stakeholders to provide support to students identified as academically at-risk.

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- Demonstrates evidence of data-informed interventions, including MTSS plans and progress monitoring.
- Communicates student progress data to students and families through multiple methods, such as emails, phone calls, ParentSquare, newsletters, and conferences.
- Maintains meeting notes or documentation reflecting collaboration with stakeholders based on data analysis.
- Develops and maintains at-risk student rosters using early warning indicators (e.g., attendance, behavior, course failures, GPA, credits earned, assessment data, retention history, acceleration status, and 504 documentation).
- Applies data to guide intentional, data-driven scheduling decisions, including ESE and 504 accommodations, behavioral supports, credit recovery placement, and OJT participation.
- Communicates identified student needs clearly and appropriately with relevant stakeholders.
- Participates in school-based leadership or problem-solving teams that analyze and apply data to support student success.
- Facilitates, documents, and reports Child Study Team meetings in accordance with district procedures.
- Manages 504 plans, including documentation, compliance, and ongoing monitoring.
- Supports gifted referral processes, including administration or coordination of KBIT or Naglieri assessments and referrals.
- Uses multiple data sources: including Skyward, EduClimber, FAST/EOC results, attendance reports, behavior referrals, and academic history, to identify and address student needs.
- Uses pre- and post-assessment data from classroom lessons or small-group counseling to refine and improve interventions.
- Identifies students requiring additional support through the use of early warning systems and indicators.
- Applies data findings directly to scheduling decisions, intervention planning, small-group development, and student referrals.
- Incorporates district and state data (e.g., Florida graduation requirements, CTE enrollment trends, assessment requirements) to inform and shape the school counseling program.
- Provides individualized academic updates to students and families, including credit checks, GPA, graduation progress, and assessment requirements.
- Uses Xello or similar platforms to share career interest survey results and pathway recommendations with students.
- Conducts parent nights or classroom lessons explaining academic requirements and expectations, including graduation requirements, promotion criteria, assessment scores, Bright Futures eligibility, GPA, academic skills, and executive functioning.

- Communicates with families regarding assessment performance, academic progress, and remediation or intervention needs.
- Maintains documentation of academic interventions, such as tutoring referrals, study-skills groups, credit recovery enrollment, check-in/check-out systems, and MTSS supports.

Standard Three: School Counseling Program and Services

Criteria	Highly Effective	Effective	Needs Improvement/Developing	Unsatisfactory
3a. Apply evidence-based strategies that promote academic success, career readiness, resiliency education, civic and character education, and life skill education as defined in Rule 6A-1.094124, F.A.C.	1. Works collaboratively to consistently and proactively implement strategies that promote academic success, career readiness, resiliency education, civic and character education, and life skill education as defined in Rule 6A-1.094124, F.A.C.	1. Implements strategies that promote academic success, career readiness, resiliency education, civic and character education, and life skill education as defined in Rule 6A-1.094124, F.A.C.	1. Practice is emerging but requires supervision, support, and/or training to independently implement strategies that promote academic success, career readiness, resiliency education, civic and character education, and life skill education as defined in Rule 6A-1.094124, F.A.C.	1. Fails to demonstrate an understanding of how to implement strategies that promote academic success, career readiness, resiliency education, civic and character education, and life skill education as defined in Rule 6A-1.094124, F.A.C.
3b. Apply practices for identifying and closing gaps in student achievement.	1. Analyzes data consistently to identify and close gaps in student achievement utilizing various resources.	1. Uses data to identify and close gaps in student achievement.	1. Does not consistently use data to identify and close gaps in student achievement.	1. Does not use data to identify and close gaps in student achievement.
3c. Develop strategies that promote academic success, career readiness, resiliency education, civic and character education, and life skill education.	1. Strategies or instruction are consistently age and developmentally appropriate as outlined in 1001.42. (8)(c)3., FS. 2. Works collaboratively to facilitate and contribute to the development of plans to meet the requirements of state/district initiatives.	1. Strategies or instructions are age and developmentally appropriate as outlined in 1001.42. (8)(c)3., FS. 2. Supports and contributes to the implementation of state and district-mandated initiatives.	1. Strategies or instruction are somewhat age and developmentally appropriate. 2. Practice is developing but requires supervision, support, and/or training to be independently effective. 3. Accesses data but shows little application when	1. Strategies or instruction are not age and developmentally appropriate. 2. Little to no evidence of strategies that promote academic success, career readiness, resiliency education, civic and character education, and life skill education.

	3. Strategies are developed using state, district, or school- level data to intentionally align with school-level initiatives.	3. Strategies are developed using state, district, or school level data.	developing school-based strategies.	3. Does not consider data when developing school-based strategies.
3d. Provides response and support to students in a crisis.	1. Consistently provides verbal de-escalation strategies and techniques. 2. Consistently utilizes district policy and procedures in crisis using available resources. 1001.42(8), F.S 3. Proactively collaborates with family service providers, students, and parents/guardians.	1. Provide verbal de-escalation strategies and techniques. 2. Adheres to district and state policy/procedures in crisis. 1001.42(8), F.S.3Collaborates with family service providers, students, and parents/guardians, and other school staff.	1. Developing verbal de-escalation strategies and techniques. 2. Inconsistently applies district policy and procedures in crisis. 3. Inconsistently collaborates with family service providers, students, and parents/guardians, and other school staff.	1. Does not use verbal de-escalation strategies or techniques. 2. Does not comply with district policy and procedures in crisis. 3. Does not collaborate with family service providers, students, and parents/guardians, and other school staff.

Look fors:

- Plans and/or deliver activities promoting life skills, character education, resiliency, or career readiness.
- Maintains documentation of interventions and supports for students identified as at risk.
- Demonstrates implementation of gap-closing strategies, including tutoring referrals, mentoring programs, MTSS supports, and collaboration with social services. (e.g., tutoring referrals, mentoring, MTSS, social work).
- Maintains crisis response documentation, including protocols and logs of student support provided.
- Conducts and documents risk and threat assessments in accordance with district procedures.
- Uses an established system to routinely analyze academic, behavioral, attendance, and other relevant data.
- Maintains documentation of tiered interventions within approved data platforms (e.g., Skyward, EduClimber).
- Keeps records of group counseling sessions and classroom guidance lessons focused on conflict resolution and social-emotional skills.
- Utilizes career exploration and planning tools such as Xello to support student development.
- Coordinates and documents credit recovery placement, progress monitoring, and program management.
- Implements interventions addressing bullying and harassment.
- Collaborates with administrators to conduct and document bullying investigations.

- Plans, participates in, and promotes schoolwide initiatives such as Red Ribbon Week and Kindness Week.
- Integrates evidence-based and district-approved curricula (e.g., Second Step, Sanford Harmony) into classroom lessons, small groups, or schoolwide programs.
- Designs and/or co-leads schoolwide programming (career fairs, resilience lessons).
- Collaborates with MTSS teams, school social workers, and school psychologists to support student needs.
- Uses multiple data sources (academic, attendance, behavioral, and career interest data) to create intentional scheduling plans that support student success.

Standard Four: Consultation, Collaboration, and Coordination

Criteria	Highly Effective	Effective	Needs Improvement/Developing	Unsatisfactory
4a. Model and support respectful collaboration practices between school leaders, parents or guardians, district and school personnel and community partners.	1. Consistently initiates and sustains respectful collaboration with all stakeholders. 2. Proactively engages school leaders, families, and community partners in decision-making and program development.	Collaborates respectfully with all stakeholders. Makes regular efforts to engage school leaders, families, and community partners in decision-making and program development.	1. Minimally collaborates with stakeholders. 2. Inconsistently engages with school leaders, families, and community partners in decision-making and program development.	1. Does not engage school leaders, families, and community partners in decision-making and program development.
4b. Demonstrates professionalism through visibility, accessibility, and collaboration with stakeholders.	1. Actively promotes a two-way partnership between school and home to support student expectations and academic performance. 2. Consistently and successfully connects to families and communities to address stakeholder's concerns. 3. Develops and utilizes effective communication tools, including documentation, to meet the	1. Frequently provides information about student expectations and academic performance between school and home. 2. Makes regular efforts to successfully connect with families, schools, and communities to stakeholders' concerns. 3. Uses multiple communication tools to provide visibility and accessibility.	1. Inconsistently provides information between school and home. 2. Partially addresses stakeholders' concerns. 3. Uses some communication tools to provide visibility and accessibility.	1. Does not provide information. 2. Does not respond to stakeholders' concerns or needs. 3. Uses few to no communication tools to provide visibility and accessibility.

	needs of stakeholders maintaining consistent visibility and accessibility.			
4c. Utilize policies and procedures to make appropriate community-based referrals.	1.Consistently utilizes policies and procedures to make appropriate community-based referrals and proactively follows-up with students and/or family.	1. Utilizes policies and procedures to make appropriate community-based referrals and follow-up with students.	1. Inconsistently utilizes policies and procedures to make appropriate community-based referrals and inconsistently follows-up with students.	1.Does not utilize policies and procedures to make appropriate community-based referrals or follow up with students or family.
4d. Apply effective methods and skills for coordinating with community partners in the implementation of a school counseling program.	1. Initiates and develops opportunities for community partners to support the school counseling program.	1. Regularly utilizes community partners to support the school counseling program.	1.Provides limited opportunities for community partner support.	1. Does not connect with community partners.
4e. Apply appropriate use of data and technology in supporting student learning and development.	1. Consistently uses technology to organize data to support student learning and development.	1. Uses data and technology to support student learning and development.	1. Minimally uses technology to support student learning and development.	1. Does not use technology to support student learning and development.

Look for:

- Maintains meeting agendas or documentation demonstrating collaboration with community partners and families.
- Completes referral forms and maintains follow-up documentation for community-based services (e.g., People Helping People, McKinney-Vento, BayCare, Phoenix).
- Uses multiple communication tools to engage stakeholders, including ParentSquare, newsletters, emails, phone calls, and district social media.
- Provides evidence of stakeholder engagement in program planning through surveys, School Advisory Council (SAC) participation, meeting agendas, or sign-in sheets.
- Plans and delivers parent workshops focused on supporting student academic, social-emotional, and behavioral growth.
- Maintains communication logs documenting strategies shared with families to support students at home.
- Distributes newsletters and resources to families to promote awareness of school programs and student supports.
- Maintains documentation or meeting notes reflecting participation and advocacy in IEP, 504, MTSS, and parent-teacher conferences (PTC).
- Provides documentation of recommended accommodations and student supports.
- Maintains communication records with teachers and parents related to student needs and interventions.

- Completes and manages Student Services Intervention (SSI) paperwork in accordance with district procedures.
- Actively participates in schoolwide initiatives such as PBIS.
- Participates in schoolwide events such as Open House and Open Campus to engage families and stakeholders.
- Provides or facilitates professional development for staff on topics such as coping strategies, executive functioning skills, and college and career readiness.
- Leads or co-facilitates professional learning communities (PLCs) focused on student well-being and support systems.
- Demonstrates the use of respectful, strengths-based language in communication artifacts when engaging families, staff, and community partners.
- Evidence of accommodations or supports recommended.

Standard Five: Academic Advisement and Planning

5a. Implements and supports instruction for student success.	1. Consistently plans and implements approved skills and strategies by using a variety of resources. 1001.42.(8)(c), FS 2. Proactively communicates regarding the safety, mental health, and well-being of students.	1. Plans and supports approved skills and strategies in individual or group settings. 1001.42.(8)(c), FS 2. Communicates regarding the safety, mental health, and well-being of students.	1. Inconsistently applies approved skills and strategies in individual or group settings. 1001.42.(8)(c), FS 2. Limited communication regarding the safety, mental health, and well-being of students.	1. Does not apply approved skills and strategies in individual or group settings. 1001.42.(8)(c), FS 2. Provides little to no communication regarding the safety, mental health, and well-being of students.
5b. Assist all students with developing a path to effectively prepare for secondary and postsecondary educational and employment opportunities.	1. Ongoing collaboration with students, parents, or guardians to develop a path for secondary and postsecondary educational and employment opportunities.	1. Prepare students to develop a path for secondary and postsecondary educational and employment opportunities.	1. Practice is emerging but requires supervision, support, and/or training to effectively prepare students to develop a path for secondary and postsecondary educational and employment opportunities.	1. Fails to prepare students in developing a path for secondary and postsecondary educational and employment opportunities.
5c. Promote awareness of student progression, assessment requirements, appropriate educational placement, and high school graduation requirements.	1. Effectively understands and communicates student progression, assessment requirements, and appropriate educational placement for promotion	1. Understands student progression, assessment requirements, and appropriate educational placement for promotion	1. Emerging understanding of student progression, assessment requirements, and appropriate educational placement for promotion	1. Lack of understanding of student progression, assessment requirements, and appropriate educational placement for promotion

	and/or high school graduation requirements to all stakeholders.	and/or high school graduation requirements.	and/or high school graduation requirements.	and/or high school graduation requirements.
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- Maintains student academic plans or graduation checklists, including Bright Futures evaluations.
- Plans and documents parent nights, advisement sessions, and outreach activities, including flyers and sign-in sheets.
- Maintains communication logs documenting discussions with students and families regarding academic progress, placement, or pathway decisions.
- Plans, coordinates, or supports career and college planning events, such as workshops, fairs, or informational sessions.
- Ensures students are scheduled into appropriate courses aligned to academic performance, remediation needs, course prerequisites, and graduation pathways.
- Creates and manages elementary class placements based on data, student needs, and district guidelines.
- Conducts ESSA-required communications or outreach, as applicable.
- Evaluates student transcripts to determine accurate credit status, graduation progress, and eligibility for academic pathways.
- Coordinates and supports postsecondary transition events, including college fairs, college visits, Dual Enrollment/AP nights, and district transition initiatives.
- Provides essential student-related information while consistently upholding FERPA confidentiality standards.
- Proctors required assessments in accordance with testing protocols.
- Supports completion of Common Application requirements and senior clearance processes.
- Manages and submits accommodation requests for ACT, SAT, and CLT assessments.

- Conducts routine credit checks to monitor student progress toward graduation.
- Supports documentation related to valedictorian and salutatorian determinations.
- Maintains documentation of participation in MTSS meetings and academic intervention planning.
- Develops and maintains individualized student academic and career plans (e.g., Xello outputs, credit checks, course requests, future planning forms).
- Documents academic and career advising sessions with students and families related to college, career, vocational, and military pathways.
- Provides guidance and support for students completing postsecondary planning requirements, including: FAFSA, College applications, Scholarship applications, Bright Futures submissions, Credit recovery referrals.
- Provides students and families with accurate information about available acceleration options, including Dual Enrollment, Advanced Placement (AP), Honors, and CTE pathways.

Standard Six: Career Development and Postsecondary Planning

6a. Utilize resources and data to provide counseling services that promote college and career readiness and career success (includes financial resources for high school students).	1. Consistently integrates a wide range of local, state, and national resources into counseling services. 2. Uses comprehensive data analysis to design targeted interventions that significantly improve college and career readiness. 3. Proactively engages families and community partners to expand access to financial literacy and postsecondary planning. 4. Demonstrates leadership in training staff and mentoring peers on best practices in college/career advising.	1. Uses available resources and data to support college and career readiness. 2. Provides students with accurate and timely information on financial aid, scholarships, and career pathways. 3. Collaborates with families and community partners to ensure students have access to relevant planning tools and advising, and financial literacy.	1. Rarely uses resources and data inconsistently or superficially in college and career counseling. 2. Financial literacy and postsecondary planning are addressed but lack depth or personalization. 3. Limited collaboration with families and community partners.	1. Does not use resources or data to guide college and career counseling. 2. Fails to provide students with essential financial aid for career planning information. 3. Counseling is inaccurate or inaccessible to students.
6b. Apply counseling services to address financial or educational challenges experienced by students.	1. Proactively and consistently applies counseling services to address financial and/or educational challenges experienced by students.	1. Applies counseling services to address financial and/or educational challenges experienced by students.	1. Occasionally applies counseling services to address financial and/or educational challenges experienced by students.	1. Does not apply counseling services to address financial or educational challenges experienced by students.
6c. Apply 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.	1. Proactively utilizes and promotes resources, to include formal and informal inventories and data driven methods to promote college and career readiness. 2. Utilizes school data to develop and coordinate initiatives to address career	1. Utilizes and promotes a variety of resources to support college and career readiness. 2. Collaboration with stakeholders to support career development across all grade levels.	1. Inconsistently utilizes resources to support college and career readiness. 2. Minimal collaborations with stakeholders to support career development across all grade levels.	1. Little evidence to demonstrate the utilization of resources to support college and career readiness. 2. Does not collaborate with stakeholders to support career development across all grade levels.

	readiness needs of all students. 3. Develops an approach to sharing personalized information related to career and educational opportunities.			
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Look fors:

- Plans, coordinates, or supports FAFSA workshops, ACT/SAT fee waiver distribution, scholarship information sessions, and college visits.
- Demonstrates evidence of students completing career inventories or interest surveys and maintaining individualized career portfolios or plans within Xello.
- Collaborates with Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and workforce or industry partners to support student career readiness.
- Maintains student career portfolios showcasing individual strengths, interests, and goals, including documentation related to ESE transition meetings or vocational rehabilitation planning.
- Develops and distributes flyers, agendas, or promotional materials for college and career exploration events.
- Facilitates or refers students in grades K–5 for weekly food support, holiday assistance, and community-based resources.
- Facilitates or refers students in grades 6–8 for weekly food support, holiday assistance, and community-based resources.
- Facilitates or refers students in grades 9–12 for weekly food support, holiday assistance, community-based resources, FAFSA completion, and scholarship opportunities.
- Maintains student academic plans or graduation checklists to support progression and postsecondary readiness.
- Maintains documentation of advising meetings and postsecondary planning resources shared with students and families.
- Prepares and submits counselor letters of recommendation in support of student applications for postsecondary education, scholarships, and specialized programs.
- Manages dual enrollment processes, including eligibility determination, scheduling, documentation, and clear communication with students and families.
- Delivers or supports presentations or workshops on Bright Futures eligibility, dual enrollment tuition coverage, financial aid processes, and application deadlines.

- Coordinates on-campus and/or off campus college admissions events, instant-decision days, recruiter visits, and related postsecondary engagement activities.
- Maintains documentation of individualized support provided to students experiencing barriers such as homelessness (McKinney-Vento referrals), food insecurity, transportation challenges, mental health concerns, or lack of technology or school supplies.
- Collaborates with case managers, school social workers, and student services personnel to address student financial, academic, and social-emotional needs.
- Participates in ESE transition IEP meetings to address postsecondary, financial, and service-based needs.
- Provides evidence of long-term academic and postsecondary planning conversations that may include: four-year plans, graduation pathways, technical school options, and military opportunities.
- Plans, coordinates, or supports college and career events and maintains participation documentation, including student sign-in sheets for planning sessions.