

Russell County School District Comprehensive School Counseling Plan



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Superintendent
Revised October 2023

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Russell County Schools is a unique and steadily growing school system, which has a blend of rural and urban elements. All of our schools are fully accredited through COGNIA. We consist of a population of nearly 3,800 students. Nearly 70% of our school population receives free or reduced lunch. We are a culturally diverse system that consists of an ethnic makeup of many different backgrounds. Russell County Schools employ approximately 500 employees..

The Russell County School Counseling Department consists of one Counselor Supervisor, two high school counselors, two middle school counselors, and five elementary school counselors across a total of seven schools.

The Russell County Schools Counseling Program program is focused on meeting the needs of students. The state model provides information regarding program design, coordination, implementation, management, and evaluation with the goal of ensuring student success in three broad areas: academic, career, and personal/social development. These three areas or domains encompass the specific standards, competencies, and indicators for student learning. The program works with all students through classroom guidance activities and structured group experiences. The program ranges from remediation to prevention and from crisis-based to planned orientation. Approaches include classroom guidance and individual planning sessions with all students.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Russell County Board of Education's Comprehensive School Counseling program is to provide every student socially, academically, and emotionally for present and future challenges. Our comprehensive program addresses students' educational, career, and personal/social competencies.

The Russell County School Counseling Department's program is based upon the following beliefs:

- All children are unique and can benefit from the counseling and guidance services described in the *Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Model for Alabama Public Schools* (the state plan), Bulletin 2003, No. 89.
- Every student has the right to participate in activities that promote self-direction and self-development.
- Every student has the right to make choices and accept responsibility for choices made.
- Every student has the right to participate in a comprehensive school counseling and guidance program designed to assist all students in attaining their maximum potential in academic, career, and personal/social development.

The Russell County School District Comprehensive School Counseling Program is an integral part of the overall educational program and serves as a critical link to the instructional program and the community.

The program:

- is data-driven to meet the specific needs of the students' goals and developmental student competencies,
- involves planning and coordination with other representatives of the school and community with a purposeful and sequential program of activities,
- utilizes many combined resources of the community,
- is evaluated on specific goals and agreed upon student competencies,
- actively involves students and others.

PROGRAM BENEFITS

Benefits for Students

- Ensures every student access to the school counseling and guidance program
- Monitors and interprets data to facilitate student improvement and school success
- Provides strategies for closing the achievement gap
- Promotes the most challenging and appropriate academic curriculum for each student
- Advocates for students and promotes equitable access to educational opportunities

Benefits for Parents/Guardians

- Supports active partnerships for student learning and career planning
- Invites and coordinates access to school and community resources
- Advocates for student academic, career, and personal development
- Provides training and informational workshops
- Provides data for information on student progress

Benefits for Teachers

- Promotes an interdisciplinary team approach to address student needs and educational goals
- Increases collaboration with school counselors and teachers
- Supports development of classroom management skills
- Analyzes data to improve school climate and student achievement

Benefits for Administrators

- Develops and implements a school counseling and guidance plan to promote student success
- Utilizes data for school improvement
- Uses data for implementation of the Russell County teacher evaluation system
- Provides a proactive school counseling curriculum that addresses student needs and enhances school climate

Benefits for School Counselors

- Defines responsibilities within the context of a school counseling and guidance program
- Eliminates non-school counseling program activities
- Supports access to every student
- Provides a tool for program management, implementation, and accountability
- Recognizes school counselors as leaders, advocates, and agents of change
- Ensures the school counseling program contributes to the school's mission
- Provides evidence of ongoing activities for the implementation of the teacher effectiveness evaluation system

Benefits for Communities

- Builds collaboration with businesses and industries and enhances the potential for every student’s postsecondary success
- Provides a workforce with a stronger academic foundation
- Promotes equity and access to the workforce

DELIVERY SYSTEM

The Russell County Schools District Comprehensive School Counseling Program provides services in accordance with the four delivery components. A combination of the four program delivery components (School Counseling Curriculum, Individual Student Planning, Responsive Services, and System Support) is utilized in assisting students to achieve their competencies. This approach ensures that every student has multiple opportunities to acquire competencies in the three domains of Academic Development, Career Development, and Personal/Social Development.

Starting in 2024-2025, the registration process at the beginning of each year will give parents the opportunity to opt-in for ongoing services for students when needed. If students are under the age of 14, parents must choose which options they wish for their child to be considered for during the registration process, but may opt in or out during the course of the school year through written communication with the school. Mental Health Services include service, treatment, surveys, or assessments relating to mental health. Mental Health Services do not include services within school counselors’ normal function, but rather counseling services beyond their normal function that are also conducted on an ongoing basis. School counselors DO NOT provide intensive, long-term psychological counseling services with students, but rather they work with student issues that hinder their success in school.

Mental Health Services

The Russell County School system provides or sponsors the following mental health services:

- Assessment/Surveys - includes questionnaires provided to students related to social behaviors, feelings, etc.
- Crisis Intervention - includes short-term immediate assistance by a school counselor or professional for a specific situation.
- School-Based Mental Health - includes ongoing counseling services by school professionals or private practitioners in the school setting. Parent or legal guardian permission will be obtained before services are provided.

Counseling Curriculum

The counseling curriculum component consists of structured developmental experiences presented systematically to all students through classroom and group activities that address the three primary domains (academic development, career development, and personal/social growth) of human development. The curriculum lessons focus on decision making, goal setting, peer relationships, self awareness, career awareness, the world of work, labor market information and educational and career planning. The counselor's responsibilities include the organization and implementation of classroom counseling lessons and group guidance. The counselors are involved with student orientation and parent orientation. They conduct small and large groups dealing with study skills, problem-solving, test-taking skills, peer relationships, questioning skills, bullying, resume writing, goal setting and many other topics.

Classroom Counseling Activities: Counselors facilitate, co-lead, or assist in the delivery of counseling curriculum activities. These activities may be conducted in the classroom, in the counseling center, or in other school facilities.

Group Activities: Counselors conduct small-group counseling sessions outside the classroom to respond to students' identified interests or needs. Small-group counseling may be either immediate-response or long-term counseling.

Interdisciplinary Curriculum Development: Counselors participate on interdisciplinary teams to develop and refine curriculum in content areas. These teams develop classroom units that integrate subject matter with the school counseling curriculum. Counselors assist teachers in the delivery of classroom units that lead to acquisition of competencies in the domains of affective, social, and employability skills for every student in developmentally appropriate ways.

Parent Workshops and Instruction: Counselors conduct workshops and information sessions for parents or guardians to address the needs of the school community and to reflect the school counseling and guidance curriculum.

Topics for school counseling curriculum activities within this component may include, but are not limited to:

- Self-Concept
- Communication Skills
- Peer Relationships
- Substance Abuse Programs
- Post-High School Planning
- Career Awareness and Exploration
- Study Skills
- Choice-Making Skills
- Personal Safety
- Pre-Employment Skills
- Diversity
- Anger Management
- Bullying
- Suicide Prevention
- Erin's Law/Child Sexual Abuse Prevention

Individual Student Planning

The individual student planning component consists of activities that focus on assisting each student with developing, analyzing, and evaluating educational, career, and personal goals/plans. Individual student planning emphasizes test interpretation, while academic counseling includes postsecondary education, career/technical education, and career planning. Examples of individual student planning delivery options within this component may include, but are not restricted to:

Individual or Small-Group Appraisal: Counselors help students assess and interpret individual abilities, interests, skills, and achievements. The utilization of appropriate assessment information becomes an important aspect of individual development of immediate and long-range plans.

Individual or Small-Group Advisement: Counselors help students acquire self-appraisal skills; personal and social development skills; and educational, career, and labor market information. This information assists students in planning for personal, academic, and career aspirations. Counselors recognize the critical need to enlist teachers and parents or guardians in helping students make academic and career choices.

Placement and Follow-Up: Counselors advise students in making transitions by providing information and by assisting in the access of resources.

Topics for individual student planning activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Career Awareness and Exploration
- Career/Technical Education Programs
- Teacher Advisor Programs
- Career Shadowing
- Postsecondary Application Process
- Four-Year Educational Plan
- Honors and Awards Program
- Financial Aid/Scholarship Advising
- Role Playing
- Student Portfolios

The counselors play a role in identifying at-risk students. At-risk students are identified by evaluating their academic record, discipline referrals, attendance, and state assessment data.

Additionally, some Russell County counselors coordinate, facilitate, and/or conduct the following activities:

- Individual advisement
- Educational placement of students
- Program planning (parents and students)
- Interpreting test results
- New student registration

- Educational and career plans (including a four year plan that covers graduation requirements)
- Career interest inventories
- Transcript reviews
- Register and withdraw students
- Issues schedules and make necessary adjustments
- Maintain student records
- Provide requested student information to appropriate agencies on a continuous basis
- Assist with college selection and admission
- Financial aid workshops
- Acquiring scholarship information
- Career fairs
- Career portfolios
- Personal and social issues that affect school performance and future plans

The counselor assists in the identification of at-risk and special needs students. At-risk students are identified by evaluating their academic record, discipline referrals, attendance, and state assessment data. The counselor is often responsible for the coordination and administration of assessments. Counselors should assist with the interpretation of assessments given at their school. These tests include but are not limited to:

- ACAP
- ACT/Pre-ACT
- ASVAB
- WorkKeys
- AP Exams
- iReady

Responsive Services

Responsive services include counseling or referral activities that meet the immediate needs and concerns of students. Responsive services include personal counseling, crisis counseling, problem solving, agency referral, and consultation. Examples of responsive services delivery options within this component may include, but are not restricted to:

Consultation: School counselors serve as student advocates by consulting with students, parents or guardians, educators, and community agencies regarding strategies to help students and families. Advocacy may include participation in student study teams and student management teams.

Personal Counseling: Counseling is provided in small-group or individual settings for students experiencing difficulties dealing with relationships, personal concerns, or developmentally appropriate tasks. Personal counseling assists students in identifying problems, causes, alternatives, and consequences leading to informed decision making.

Crisis Counseling: Counseling and support services are provided to students and families facing emotional crises as outlined in the school crisis management plan. Crisis counseling is normally short-term and temporary, using appropriate referral sources if necessary.

Peer Facilitation: Counselors may train students as peer mediators, conflict managers, tutors, and mentors. Programs should adhere to the ethics standards and practices established by the National Peer Helpers Association.

Referrals: Counselors use referral sources to enhance the services provided through the school counseling and guidance program. These referral sources may include, but are not restricted to:

- Mental Health Agencies
- RCSD Mental Health Service Coordinator
- Employment and Training Programs
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Juvenile Services
- Social Services
- Grief Counseling
- Deployment

Russell County school counselors strive to include activities that meet the immediate needs and concerns of individual students whether those concerns involve individual or group counseling, information dissemination, crisis intervention, peer mediation, consultation or referral.

When cases are identified that require outside, emergency, long-term, and/or intensive treatment, the counselors work closely with the school nurses, the district mental health service coordinator, school resource officers, the juvenile court system, local hospice, local mental health providers, and the Russell County Department of Human Resources. Some of the local agencies that are used for student referral include the Bradley Center, East Alabama Mental Health, Russell County Juvenile and Family Court, East Alabama Hospice, the Child Advocacy Center, the Russell County Department of Human Resources, Youth Villages (for adjudicated youth) and therapeutic programs.

System Support

System support includes indirect counseling management activities that maintain and enhance the total counseling and guidance program. Responsibilities in this area include staff relations, community relations, task forces, professional development, support teams, test interpretation, data analysis, and curriculum development. This component provides appropriate support to academic programs. Examples of system support delivery options within this component may include, but are not restricted to:

Professional Development: Counselors are regularly involved in updating professional knowledge and skills. This may involve participating in regular school in-service training, attending professional meetings, completing postgraduate course work, and contributing to professional journals.

In-Service: Counselors attend system and school in-service training to ensure counseling skills are updated in the areas of curriculum development, technology, and data analysis. Counselors may provide in-service instruction in school counseling curriculum and areas of special concern to the school and community.

Consultation, Collaboration, and Teaming: Counselors provide important contributions to the school system by consulting, partnering, collaborating, and teaming.

Public Relations: Counselors design activities to orient the staff and community about the comprehensive school counseling and guidance program.

Community Outreach: Counselors forge partnerships with local businesses, industries, and social service agencies. Community outreach requires counselors to be knowledgeable about community resources, employment opportunities, and local labor market information.

Consultation with Staff: Counselors consult regularly with teachers and professional staff members in order to receive feedback on emerging needs of students and to provide information and support to staff.

Curriculum Development Support: Counselors participate in the ongoing review and revision of academic curriculum materials as related to data analysis, student advocacy, postsecondary education, and career/technical education planning.

Advisory Committees: Counselors form counseling advisory committees at both the system and the individual school level. Counselors actively serve on community committees or advisory councils that influence other programs to generate support for system and individual school counseling and guidance programs.

Program Management and Operations: Planning and management tasks include the support of activities conducted in the school counseling and guidance program and responsibilities expected of a member of the school staff. Budget, facilities, policies and procedures, and research and resource development are elements of management activities.

Research and Evaluation: Some examples of counselor research and evaluation include Russell County teacher evaluation program or other personnel counseling evaluations, program evaluations, data analysis, follow-up studies, professional development, and updating of resources.

Fair-Share Responsibilities: Fair-share responsibilities may include such tasks as bus duty, playground duty, class/club sponsorship, and taking tickets at sports events. Non-counseling responsibilities assigned to counselors should not be above and beyond those of other certified staff members, and should not interfere with the delivery of counseling services.

In the Russell County School System, the system support component activities are two-fold. The first includes those activities that establish, maintain and enhance the preceding three program components. Activities in this component include program development, program evaluation and assessment, parent education, materials development, testing and community relations. The second aspect of the system support component includes activities that support other programs in the school. Those activities include, but are not limited to:

- EL Committee Member
- Building Test Coordinators
- Continuing Improvement Plan (CIP) Committee Member
- School 504 Member
- IEP Team Member
- LEA Representative
- Response to Instruction Team (RTI) Member
- Positive Behavior Support (PBS) Team Member

At some schools, counselors register students, withdraw students, schedule students, assist with medication dispensing, assist with lunchroom and bus duty, assist administrators and teachers

with identifying student needs, serve on school and curriculum committees, etc. The counselors conduct classroom counseling assessments and utilize that data to analyze its impact. They collaborate with teachers in determining the factors that are impeding the success of students and conduct follow-up assessments of the students.

The counselors play a role in identifying at-risk students. At-risk students are identified by evaluating their academic record, discipline referrals, attendance, and state assessment data. counseling counselors in Russell County Schools are involved with many community agencies and programs. Some of those agencies and programs include but are not limited to:

- Department of Human Resources (DHR)
- Helping Families Initiative with Russell County Family Court
- Red Cross
- Relay for Life
- Youth Villages
- East Alabama Mental Health (EAMH)
- East Alabama Medical Center HOSPICE
- Russell County Juvenile Court
- Joint projects with Auburn University, Tuskegee University, local firefighters, and EMS

When funding is made available, the counselors continue professional growth by attending seminars, workshops, in-services, and completing classes to maintain certification with the State Department of Education, the National Board of Certified Counselors, and the National Board of Certified School Counselors. Many of the Russell County counselors hold membership in the Alabama Counseling Association and the American School Counselor Association.

STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS

In order to ensure that the Russell County Schools Counseling Program is an integral part of the total school system and community, a comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling program is implemented at each school level (K-12) and appropriate policies and procedures are in place to maintain, enhance, and evaluate the district's guidance and counseling program. An advisory committee provides input and support for the program. Each school's counseling department has a certified school counselor that is also assisted by their advisory committee.

Advisory Committee

The district advisory committee for the Russell County School System consists of representative stakeholders of the school counseling and guidance program, including students, parents and/or guardians, teachers, counselors, administrators, school board members, as well as business and community representatives. The advisory committee reviews program goals, competencies, and results, and participates in making recommendations to the school counseling and guidance

department, principal, and superintendent. It is recommended that the committee meet at least twice a year.

Counseling Department Organization

At the beginning of the school year, counselors meet with principals regarding the counseling and guidance program. If there are two or more counselors in the school, specific/equitable duties and student caseloads are assigned. Each LEA should have a counseling coordinator to work with principals and counselors to ensure that program planning, design, implementation, and evaluation take place in a timely, effective, and equitable manner.

All schools must provide counseling and guidance services from certified school counselors in Grades K-12. Adequate support personnel should be available to counselors to ensure effective program delivery.

Coordinators' Role

Coordination and direction of the LEA's comprehensive counseling and guidance program is critical. Counseling coordinators provide necessary support for comprehensive school counseling program development, implementation, and evaluation of procedures that enhance the effectiveness of the school system's comprehensive counseling and guidance program. Counseling coordinators serve as facilitators, leaders, supporters, and advisors. Counseling coordinators provide leadership to ensure the credibility of the comprehensive counseling and guidance program for faculty, staff, and the community under the supervision of the assistant superintendents or directors for elementary and secondary curriculum.

Principals' Role

Administrative support is critical to full implementation of the comprehensive counseling and guidance program. Principals, as chief administrators in schools, are ultimately responsible for the success of all instructional programs, including the school counseling and guidance program. Principals understand the role of school counselors and provide the necessary support for counselors to fulfill that role. Such support includes the provision of adequate facilities, materials, and clerical staff to allow counselors to use their specialized training in an effective manner. Principals provide input into program development and encourage and support participation of all school personnel in the implementation of the counseling and guidance program.

Counselors' Role

Counselors assume the leadership role for managing and implementing the comprehensive counseling and guidance program in their school. Counselors are responsible for the systematic delivery and evaluation of structured developmental counseling services to all students. Counselors work directly with students, individually and in small groups, to deal with unique or problem-centered concerns that require more privacy or attention than can be accommodated in structured counseling activities. Counselors serve students indirectly by acting as consultants to

administrators, teachers, parents, and others to help them understand and respond to the developmental, emotional, and social needs of students. Counselors coordinate various activities within the school that are related to student welfare. Appropriate referrals, placements, and follow-ups are activities that are particularly pertinent to counseling.

Elementary School Counselors

Elementary school counselors assist students with learning the skills and attitudes necessary to be successful in school. They emphasize to students that the classroom is their workplace and that communication, decision-making, interpersonal and career awareness skills are important to their success.

Middle School School Counselors

Building upon those skills taught at the elementary level, a major focus of middle school/junior high school counselors is to provide services that address the career, personal/social and educational needs and concerns of students. Counselors at this level facilitate the expansion of career awareness and exploration activities to assist in the development and utilization of short and long-range educational and career plans. This includes but is not limited to the formation of a high school four-year plan.

High School Counselors

High school counselors work with students in acquiring counseling competencies that form the foundation for the next educational and occupational levels. The counselors assist students in developing realistic educational and career plans based on a clear understanding of themselves, their needs, interests, skills, and abilities.

Teachers' Role

Teachers play a vital role in the planning and implementation of a comprehensive school counseling and guidance program. As professionals who have the greatest contact with students, teachers are in the best position to recognize and help provide for the developmental and individual needs of students. Through appropriate communication and referral, teachers facilitate the interaction between students and counselors. Teachers demonstrate support for the program by providing adequate opportunities for student-counselor contact. Teachers contribute directly to the school counseling and guidance program by helping counselors deliver programs that facilitate the academic, career, and personal/social development of students. Teachers strengthen and follow through on concepts presented to help students retain the knowledge, skills, and understanding established through the program. Teacher support, input, and expertise make it possible for the school counseling and guidance program to become an integral part of the total educational program.

Counseling Resources

Appropriate counseling resources are required for each of the four program delivery components: School Counseling Curriculum, Individual Student Planning, Responsive Services, and System Support. These resources include equipment and materials, staff expertise, and community resources. Resource materials must be relevant to the program, appropriate for the diversity of

the school and community, and of sufficient quantity to be useful. All counselors should be provided the necessary equipment and materials to implement the comprehensive counseling and guidance program.

Materials, Supplies and Equipment

- Materials are relevant to the program and appropriate for the community.
- The school counselor consults with the advisory committee and the local school board policy concerning the evaluation and selection of program materials.
- Materials, supplies, and equipment are easily accessible and of sufficient quantity to support the program.
- All school counselors have locking file cabinets, private telephone lines, and computers with Internet access in their offices.

Facilities

- All facilities are easily accessible and provide adequate space to organize and display school counseling materials.
- The school counselor has a private office that is designed with consideration of the student's right to privacy and confidentiality.
- Access is provided to facilities for meeting with groups of students.

Technology

- School counselors use technology daily in their work, including the Internet, word processing, student database systems, and presentation software.
- School counselors use technology to help students perform career and advanced educational searches for use in their education development plans.
- School counselors register, withdraw, and evaluate transcripts for students using the PowerSchool student information system.
- School counselors use data regarding their school population to work with the principal, teachers, and the advisory committee in making recommendations to improve academic achievement.
- School counselors receive ongoing training in appropriate areas of technology advancement and updates.
- School counselors maintain an up-to-date counseling website with pertinent information for students and parents.
- School counselors use technology in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the school counseling program.
- School counselors use technology as a tool to gather, analyze and present data to drive systematic change.
- School counselors communicate with teachers, administrators, central office, outside agency representatives, and other counselors via email.

Use of Time

The Russell County school counselors utilize the Alabama State Department of Education’s recommended distribution of counseling time as a guide in determining the adequate percentage of service to be provided in each program area. The counselors keep daily records (often through programs like SCUTA and PowerSchool Log Entries) that document time and activities performed. These records allow counselors and administrators to determine the actual amount of time spent in each of the four program delivery components and in non-school counseling activities. By analyzing this data, adjustments can be made to better utilize counselor time so that the greatest amount of time is spent in direct service to students.

	<i>Percentage Rate</i>		
	Elementary School	Middle/Junior High School	High School
School Guidance Curriculum	35—45	25—35	15—25
Individual Student Planning	5—10	15—25	25—35
Responsive Services	30—40	30—40	25—35
System Support	10—15	10—15	15—20
	100	100	100

SUGGESTED DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL COUNSELOR TIME: Reprinted with permission, Gysbers, N.C., and Henderson, P. (2000). *Developing and Managing Your School Guidance Program*, (3rd ed.), Alexandria, Va.: American Counseling Association.

PROGRAM GOALS

The goals of the Russell County Schools District Comprehensive Counseling Program are defined as follows:

The **Academic Domain** states that students will:

1. Acquire the attitudes, knowledge and skills that contribute to effective learning in school and across the life span.
2. Complete school with academic preparation essential to choose from a wide range of substantial post-secondary options, including college.
3. Understand the relationship of academics to the world of work and to life at home and in the community.

The **Career Domain** states that students will:

1. Acquire the skills to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self and to make informed career decisions.
2. Employ strategies to achieve future career goals with success and satisfaction.
3. Understand the relationship between personal qualities, education, training and the world of work.

The **Personal/Social Domain** states that students will:

1. Acquire the knowledge, attitudes and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others.
2. Make decisions, set goals, and take necessary action to achieve goals.
3. Understand safety and survival skills.

COUNSELING CURRICULUM SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

The following competencies for Alabama students at each grade-cluster level (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12) are linked directly to the nine national standards as presented in *The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs*. The competencies describe the attitudes, knowledge, and skills that students should be able to demonstrate as a result of participating in an effective school counseling and guidance program.

Counselors should determine the student competencies and the corresponding indicators (listed below each competency) to be utilized in planning and developing the school counseling curriculum and the individual student planning components appropriate for specific grade-cluster levels within the school program. counseling activities must be outcome-based and linked to the appropriate indicators.

The following chart is a tool to be used to assist counselors in planning the overall counseling curriculum. The solid dots highlight the grade-cluster level where each competency indicator is introduced. The competency indicators are intended to be cumulative; therefore, the hollow dots highlight the grade-cluster level(s) in which the competency indicator may be expanded or reinforced. Careful analysis of the scope and sequence of the local school counseling curriculum ensures that all students master all competency indicators by the end of Grade 12.

ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT DOMAIN

Standard A: Students will acquire the attitudes, knowledge and skills that contribute to effective learning in school and across the life span.

Competency A:A1		Improve Academic Self-Concept			
		K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
A:A1.1	articulate feelings of competence and confidence as learners		●	○	○
A:A1.2	display a positive interest in learning	●	○	○	○
A:A1.3	take pride in work and achievement	●	○	○	○
A:A1.4	accept mistakes as essential to the learning process		●	○	○
A:A1.5	identify attitudes and behaviors leading to successful learning			●	○
Competency A:A2		Acquire Skills for Improving Learning			
		K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
A:A2.1	apply time-management and task-management skills			●	○
A:A2.2	demonstrate how effort and persistence positively affect learning		●	○	○
A:A2.3	use communications skills to know when and how to ask for help when needed	●	○	○	○

A:A2.4	apply knowledge and learning styles to positively influence school performance			●	○
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Competency A:A3		Achieve School Success			
		K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
A:A3.1	take responsibility for their success	●	○	○	○
A:A3.2	demonstrate the ability to work independently, as well as the ability to work cooperatively with other students		●	○	○
A:A3.3	develop a broad range of interests and abilities			●	○
A:A3.4	demonstrate dependability, productivity and initiative		●	○	○
A:A3.5	share knowledge		●	○	○

Standard B: Students will complete school with the academic preparation essential to choose from a wide range of substantial postsecondary options, including college.

Competency A:B1		Improve Learning			
		K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
A:B1.1	demonstrate the motivation to achieve individual potential		●	○	○
A:B1.2	learn and apply critical-thinking skills		●	○	○
A:B1.3	apply the study skills necessary for academic success at each level	●	○	○	○
A:B1.4	seek information and support from faculty, staff, family and peers			●	○
A:B1.5	organize and apply academic information from a variety of sources			●	○
A:B1.6	use knowledge of learning styles to positively influence school performance			●	○
A:B1.7	become a self-directed and independent learner		●	○	○
Competency A:B2		Plan to Achieve Goals			
		K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
A:B2.1	establish challenging academic goals in elementary, middle/junior high and high school		●	●	●
A:B2.2	use assessment results in educational planning			●	○
A:B2.3	develop and implement annual plan of study to maximize academic ability and achievement			●	●
A:B2.4	apply knowledge of aptitudes and interests to goal setting			●	○
A:B2.5	use problem-solving and decision-making skills to assess progress toward educational goals			●	○
A:B2.6	understand the relationship between classroom performance and success in school	●	○	○	○
A:B2.7	identify postsecondary options consistent with interests, achievement, aptitude and abilities			●	○

Standard C: Students will understand the relationship of academics to the world of work and to life at home and in the community.

Competency A:C1		Relate School to Life Experience			
		K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
A:C1.1	demonstrate the ability to balance school, studies, extracurricular activities, leisure time and family life		●	○	○
A:C1.2	seek co-curricular and community experiences to enhance the school experience			●	○
A:C1.3	understand the relationship between learning and work	●	○	○	○
A:C1.4	demonstrate an understanding of the value of lifelong learning as essential to seeking, obtaining and maintaining life goals			●	○
A:C1.5	understand that school success is the preparation to make the transition from student to community member			●	○
A:C1.6	understand how school success and academic achievement enhance future career and vocational opportunities		●	○	○

CAREER DEVELOPMENT DOMAIN

Standard A: Students will acquire the skills to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self and to make informed career decisions.

Competency C:A1		Developing Career Awareness			
		K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
C:A1.1	develop skills to locate, evaluate and interpret career information			●	○
C:A1.2	learn about the variety of traditional and nontraditional occupations	●	○	○	○
C:A1.3	develop an awareness of personal abilities, skills, interests and motivations	●	○	○	○
C:A1.4	learn how to interact and work cooperatively in teams		●	○	○
C:A1.5	learn how to make decisions		●	○	○
C:A1.6	learn how to set goals		●	○	○
C:A1.7	understand the importance of planning			●	○
C:A1.8	pursue and develop competency in areas of interest			●	○
C:A1.9	develop hobbies and vocational interests	●	○	○	○
C:A1.10	balance between work and leisure time		●	○	○

Competency C:A2		Develop Employment Readiness			
		K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
C:A2.1	acquire employability skills such as working on a team and problem-solving and organizational skills			●	○
C:A2.2	apply job readiness skills to seek employment opportunities				●
C:A2.3	demonstrate knowledge about the changing workplace				●
C:A2.4	learn about the rights and responsibilities of employers and employees				●
C:A2.5	learn to respect individual uniqueness in the workplace				●
C:A2.6	learn how to write a resume				●
C:A2.7	develop a positive attitude toward work and learning	●	○	○	○
C:A2.8	understand the importance of responsibility, dependability, punctuality, integrity and effort in the workplace			●	○
C:A2.9	utilize time- and task-management skills	●	○	○	○

Standard B: Students will employ strategies to achieve future career goals with success and satisfaction.

Competency C:B1		Acquire Career Information			
		K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
C:B1.1	apply decision-making skills to career planning, course selection and career transition			●	○
C:B1.2	identify personal skills, interests and abilities and relate them to current career choice	●	○	○	○
C:B1.3	demonstrate knowledge of the career-planning process			●	○
C:B1.4	know the various ways in which occupations can be classified		●	○	○
C:B1.5	use research and information resources to obtain career information			●	○
C:B1.6	learn to use the Internet to access career-planning information			●	○
C:B1.7	describe traditional and nontraditional career choices and how they relate to career choice		●	○	○
C:B1.8	understand how changing economic and societal needs influence employment trends and future training			●	○
Competency C:B2		Identify Career Goals			
		K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
C:B2.1	demonstrate awareness of the education and training needed to achieve career goals	●	○	○	○
C:B2.2	assess and modify their educational plan to support career				●

C:B2.3	use employability and job readiness skills in internship, mentoring, shadowing and/or other work experience			●	○
C:B2.4	select course work that is related to career interests			●	○
C:B2.5	maintain a career-planning portfolio			●	○

Standard C: Students will understand the relationship between personal qualities, education, training and the world of work.

Competency C:C1		Acquire Knowledge to Achieve Career Goals			
		K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
C:C1.1	understand the relationship between educational achievement and career success	●	○	○	○
C:C1.2	explain how work can help to achieve personal success and satisfaction		●	○	○
C:C1.3	identify personal preferences and interests influencing career choice and success			●	○
C:C1.4	understand that the changing workplace requires lifelong learning and acquiring new skills			●	○
C:C1.5	describe the effect of work on lifestyle			●	○
C:C1.6	understand the importance of equity and access in career choice		●	○	○
C:C1.7	understand that work is an important and satisfying means of personal expression	●	○	○	○
Competency C:C2		Apply Skills to Achieve Career Goals			
		K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
C:C2.1	demonstrate how interests, abilities and achievement relate to achieving personal, social, educational and career goals		●	○	○
C:C2.2	learn how to use conflict management skills with peers and adults	●	○	○	○
C:C2.3	learn to work cooperatively with others as a team member		●	○	○
C:C2.4	apply academic and employment readiness skills in work-based learning situations such as internships, shadowing and/or mentoring experiences			●	○

PERSONAL/SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DOMAIN

Standard A: Students will acquire the knowledge, attitudes and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others.

Competency PS:A1		Acquire Self-Knowledge			
		K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
PS:A1.1	develop positive attitudes toward self as a unique and worthy person	●	○	○	○
PS:A1.2	identify values, attitudes and beliefs	●	○	○	○
PS:A1.3	learn the goal-setting process		●	○	○
PS:A1.4	understand change is a part of growth	●	○	○	○
PS:A1.5	identify and express feelings	●	○	○	○
PS:A1.6	distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate behavior	●	○	○	○
PS:A1.7	recognize personal boundaries, rights and privacy needs	●	○	○	○

Competency PS:A1		Acquire Self-Knowledge (Continued)			
PS:A1.8	understand the need for self-control and how to practice it	●	○	○	○
PS:A1.9	demonstrate cooperative behavior in groups		●	○	○
PS:A1.10	identify personal strengths and assets		●	○	○
PS:A1.11	identify and discuss changing personal and social roles		●	○	○
PS:A1.12	identify and recognize changing family roles	●	○	○	○
Competency PS:A2		Acquire Interpersonal Skills			
		K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
PS:A2.1	recognize that everyone has rights and responsibilities	●	○	○	○
PS:A2.2	respect alternative points of view		●	○	○
PS:A2.3	recognize, accept, respect and appreciate individual differences	●	○	○	○
PS:A2.4	recognize, accept and appreciate ethnic and cultural diversity	●	○	○	○
PS:A2.5	recognize and respect differences in various family configurations	●	○	○	○
PS:A2.6	use effective communication skills	●	○	○	○
PS:A2.7	know that communication involves speaking, listening and nonverbal behavior	●	○	○	○
PS:A2.8	learn how to make and keep friends	●	○	○	○

Standard B: Students will make decisions, set goals and take necessary action to achieve goals.

Competency PS:B1		Self-Knowledge Application			
		K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
PS:B1.1	use a decision-making and problem-solving model		●	○	○
PS:B1.2	understand consequences of decisions and choices	●	○	○	○
PS:B1.3	identify alternative solutions to a problem	●	○	○	○
PS:B1.4	develop effective coping skills for dealing with problems	●	○	○	○
PS:B1.5	demonstrate when, where and how to seek help for solving problems and making decisions	●	○	○	○
PS:B1.6	know how to apply conflict-resolution skills	●	○	○	○
PS:B1.7	demonstrate a respect and appreciation for individual and cultural differences	●	○	○	○
PS:B1.8	know when peer pressure is influencing a decision	●	○	○	○
PS:B1.9	identify long- and short-term goals			●	○
PS:B1.10	identify alternative ways of achieving goals			●	○
PS:B1.11	use persistence and perseverance in acquiring knowledge and skills		●	○	○
PS:B1.12	develop an action plan to set and achieve realistic goals			●	○

Standard C: Students will understand safety and survival skills.

Competency PS:C1		Acquire Personal Safety Skills			
		K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
PS:C1.1	demonstrate knowledge of personal information (telephone number, home address, emergency contact)	●	○	○	○
PS:C1.2	learn about the relationship between rules, laws, safety and the protection of rights of the individual	●	○	○	○
PS:C1.3	learn about the differences between appropriate and inappropriate physical contact	●	○	○	○
PS:C1.4	demonstrate the ability to set boundaries, rights and personal privacy		●	○	○
PS:C1.5	differentiate between situations requiring peer support and situations requiring adult professional help		●	○	○
PS:C1.6	identify resource people in the school and community, and know how to seek their help	●	○	○	○
PS:C1.7	apply effective problem-solving and decision-making skills to make safe and healthy choices	●	○	○	○
PS:C1.8	learn about the emotional and physical dangers of substance use and abuse	●	○	○	○
PS:C1.9	learn how to cope with peer pressure		●	○	○
PS:C1.10	learn techniques for managing stress and conflict	●	○	○	○
PS:C1.11	learn coping skills for managing life events			●	○

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE PROGRAMS IN ALABAMA

School counselors function in a manner consistent with the educational philosophy and mission of the school system and the school. As a member of the educational team, each counselor has special responsibilities for helping all students meet their needs. School counselors provide a comprehensive counseling and guidance program for students; consult and collaborate with teachers, parents, and staff to enhance their effectiveness in helping students; and follow the Minimum Requirements for Comprehensive School Counseling and Guidance Programs in Alabama.

Organizational Framework, Activities, and Time

1. Every school system and school must implement a comprehensive counseling and guidance program that:
 - a. Ensures that each counselor develops and follows a planned calendar of activities;
 - b. Ensures that 100 percent of each counselor's time is spent in providing counseling services through the four program delivery components: School counseling Curriculum, Individual Student Planning, Responsive Services, and System Support; and
 - c. Ensures that each counselor participates annually in a planned professional development program designed to strengthen identified needs of the counseling and guidance program and/or the counselor as well as to foster ethical standards.
2. Every school system and school must provide for performance-based evaluation of counselors. The elements of this evaluation must conform to the duties and responsibilities of the counselor as stated in the *Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance State Model for Alabama Public Schools* (the State Plan), Bulletin 2003, No. 89.
3. Every school system and school should make provisions for new counselors to attend the Alabama Department of Education Counselor Academy as well as encourage experienced counselors to attend this professional development opportunity.
4. Every school system and school must establish a counseling and guidance advisory committee to assist in the development and implementation of the comprehensive counseling and guidance program.

Competencies

Every school system and school must implement a comprehensive counseling and guidance program that ensures that every student has the opportunity to achieve the minimum competencies at each appropriate grade level.

Structural Components

5. All schools must provide counseling and guidance services performed by certified school counselors for all students in Grades K-12.
6. Every school system and school must implement a comprehensive counseling and guidance program and ensure that a person is appointed at the system level to coordinate and monitor the delivery of counseling and guidance services to all students.

School Counseling Curriculum

7. Every school system and school must implement a comprehensive counseling and guidance program that:
 - a. Ensures that each counselor engages in counseling with students in small groups to influence responsible student behavior and enhance student academic achievement; and
 - b. Ensures that each counselor implements a planned sequential program of large group counseling activities designed to teach students the competencies identified in the three domains of Academic Development, Career Development, and Personal/Social Development in a fashion that enhances the instructional program and focuses on increasing student achievement.
 - c. Russell County school counselors are required to conduct small group sessions as well as address individual needs of students. Data indicates that small group counseling is a more effective means of serving students, and it decreases the number of individual sessions needed. Counselors can conduct 2-3 small groups (20-40 minutes in duration within a 4-6 week period) when the need is evident and/or when students have been referred.

Individual Student Planning

8. Every school system and school must implement a comprehensive counseling and guidance program that:
 - a. Ensures that each counselor engages in counseling with students in individual settings that facilitate responsible student behavior and enhance student academic achievement;

- b. Ensures that each Grades 8-12 counselor guides students in the development and annual revision of a high school four-year educational plan and requires students to maintain an educational/career planning portfolio of study based on legislative and other graduation requirements. (The selection of the high school four-year educational plan shall be approved in writing by the parents or guardians and become part of the educational/career planning portfolio.);
- c. Ensures that each counselor demonstrates accurate and appropriate interpretation of assessment data and the presentation of relevant, unbiased information; and
- d. Ensures that each counselor provides equal access and appropriate placement for all students by utilizing test data and other available information that identifies interests, achievement levels, and aptitudes.

Responsive Services

- 9. Every counselor must assist in the early identification of students at risk of school failure and must help in the facilitation of the delivery of preventive and interventive services.
- 10. Every counselor must consult with students, parents, teachers, community agencies, and others (nurses, attendance officers, school psychologists, and district mental health service coordinator) regarding strategies to help students achieve personal and academic advancement.

System Support

- 11. Every school system and school must implement a comprehensive counseling and guidance program that:
 - a. Ensures that each counselor organizes and manages the counseling and guidance program to provide equal access and the most effective delivery of services to students, staff, parents, and the community;
 - b. Conducts systematic evaluations and follow-up studies to determine the need for program revision;
 - c. Promotes awareness of the program components to students, staff, and the community; and
 - d. Ensures that each counselor coordinates counseling services with all aspects of the school program in conjunction with other school staff and community resources.

Resources

12. Every school system and school must provide facilities that are easily accessible and allow for the implementation of a comprehensive counseling and guidance program. Minimum facility requirements for delivery of counseling and guidance services include facilities that:
 - a. Provide private office(s) properly equipped with locked files for counseling records,
 - b. Provide private telephone line(s) for confidential telephone conversations,
 - c. Are adequate in size for conducting small-group counseling and classroom counseling activities, and
 - d. Ensure adequate space for reception areas and for organizing and displaying counseling materials.
13. Every school system and school must provide resource materials that are relevant to the program, appropriate for the community, and of sufficient quantity to be useful.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability and evaluation of school counselors and the school counseling and guidance programs are integral components of quality programs. Alabama's comprehensive school counseling and guidance programs should be data driven. Data should be collected to validate certain counseling and guidance activities as well as to determine if any change in student perception and behavior has occurred as a result of counseling and guidance activities. The monitoring of student progress and program progress in addition to performing personnel evaluations requires the collection of data that support and link school counseling and guidance programs to students' academic success.

Counselor/Principal Management Agreements

The counselor/principal management agreement is one of the single most important documentation outcomes that includes students, staff, parents, and the counselor's own professional development. The counselor completes the agreement at the beginning of the year and revisits the agreement during the second term of the school year for revisions if needed. Assignments are made by each counselor specifying the results and plan of operation for which she/he will be accountable. The counselor specifies how the students will access him/her: alpha assignments, domain specialization, grade level, random, counselor of the day, etc. Each assignment has a separate area where the counselor identifies the percentage of his/her time that he/she will spend providing services within the four delivery components. The principal, or his/her designee, is active in the negotiation of the agreement. Each counselor sends a copy of the agreement to the district counseling coordinator. The district counseling coordinator audits the agreements to assure compliance. (See appendix.)

Master Calendars

Each school's guidance and counseling department must have a master calendar of its counseling events. The calendar includes each month's activities including the name of the activity and the targeted grade level for which the activity is planned. The calendar shows the overall picture and time frame of the guidance and counseling program. The calendars should be used to publicize planned events to let the school community know what is happening in the guidance and counseling department. The calendars should be distributed to teachers, administrators, and parents. Calendars should be posted in the counseling and main offices for parents and students to view. Calendars should be posted to the school's website.

Contact Logs

The Russell County school counselors must maintain records of their daily contacts with students, teachers, parents, and outside agencies. Counselors should use a log that allows them to easily tally the types of services provided and the appropriate program delivery component.

Monitoring Student Progress

Student Data

Using student, school, and system data to monitor student progress ensures that each student receives the necessary support to be successful in school. School counselors must be proficient in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of student achievement and related data. Student progress is monitored through three types of data: student-achievement data, achievement-related data, and standards- and competency-related data.

Student-achievement data measures academic progress. Data includes:

- Standardized test data
- Grade point averages
- American College Testing (ACT) Program scores
- Graduation rate
- Grade level (at or above) in reading, math, and other content areas
- Successful completion of all courses
- Promotion and retention rates
- Completion of specific academic programs (academic honors, Tech/Prep)

High school counselors in Russell County Schools are responsible for keeping a tracking log of potential at-risk students. A number of factors are used to determine if a student is at-risk. Such factors include but are not limited to course grades, daily attendance, classroom discipline, course failures, standardized test data and attainment of a College and Career Ready Credentials.

Achievement-related data measures those areas shown to be correlated to academic success. Data includes:

- In-school and out-of-school suspension and expulsion rates
- Alcohol, tobacco, and other drug violations
- Attendance rates, including tardies to school/class, check-outs, and truancy
- Parent or guardian involvement
- Extracurricular participation rate

Standards- and competency-related data measures student mastery of the competencies delineated in the comprehensive counseling and guidance program. Data includes:

- Percentage of students having a four-year plan on file
- Percentage of students participating in job shadowing
- Percentage of students setting and attaining academic goals
- Percentage of students applying conflict resolution skills

Disaggregated Data

Ensuring academic success for every student includes counselor-initiated activities designed to meet the needs of under-served, under-performing, and under-represented populations. School counselors examine student academic achievement data and develop outcome-based interventions designed to help students succeed. School counselors must be able to separate data by variables to determine if there are any groups of students who may not be performing as well as others.

The counselors in Russell County Schools have input into the school's Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) each year. The CIP addresses "closing the achievement gap" activities.

Data Over Time

Assessing the current school counseling and guidance program reveals how well the program is meeting the academic, career, and personal/social needs of students. School counselors should determine student needs that are unique to their school and community.

Monitoring Program Progress

Program Evaluations

Evaluation of the comprehensive counseling and guidance program is a vital element in determining the effectiveness of the school program. An evaluation of the counseling and guidance program using process data, perception data, and results data measures the degree to which students have acquired the skills and knowledge defined by the competencies and the Minimum Requirements for School Counseling and Guidance Programs in Alabama. Each curriculum plan utilized in the Russell County Schools Counseling Program includes the above-mentioned components.

Process Data (What did the counselor do and for whom?)

Process data includes an evaluation of the number of students served, how many groups and classroom visits were conducted, what activities were completed, etc.

Perception Data (What do students think they know, believe, or can demonstrate?)

Perception data is collected through the pre/post assessments, tests, or skill demonstration opportunities (role plays, evaluation/feedback forms).

Results Data (What was changed or learned as a result of the activity?)

Results data is derived from the observed impact on the students' ability to utilize their knowledge, attitudes, and skills to affect behavior change.

Student Results Evaluations

Results evaluations are used to show change in student behavior and student learning. The results evaluations and reports can be used to ensure the program is carried out as planned; to ensure that every student is served; to ensure that developmentally appropriate materials are used; to analyze the program's effectiveness; to improve the program; etc.

Program Audits

The Russell County school counselors are expected to periodically (at least annually) audit their counseling and guidance program. The primary purpose for the audit is to guide future actions within the program and to improve future results for students.

Personnel Evaluations

School-level principals are responsible for conducting counselor evaluations; however, the system coordinator can assist them with the process. If a counselor is split between two schools, both principals contribute to the evaluation process.