

GUIDANCE/COUNSELING SERVICES

The Governing Board recognizes that a structured, coherent and comprehensive counseling program promotes academic achievement and serves the diverse needs of all district students.

The district shall provide an educational counseling program that offers students services and supports within a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework, in accordance with law. Counseling staff shall be available to provide students with individualized reviews of their educational progress toward academic and/or career and vocational goals and, as appropriate, may discuss social, personal, or other issues that may impact student learning.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that all persons employed to provide school counseling, school psychology, and/or school social work services to students, and/or implement equitable school programs and services that support students' academic and social emotional development and college and career readiness shall possess the appropriate credential from the Commission on Teacher Credentialing authorizing their employment in such positions. Responsibilities of each position shall be clearly defined in a job description.

(cf. 4112.2 - Certification)

Responsibilities of school counselors include, but are not limited to:

1. Engaging with, advocating for, and providing support for all students with direct services, such as individual counseling, group counseling, risk assessment, crisis response, and instructional services, including mental health and behavioral, academic, and postsecondary educational services and indirect services, including but not limited to, positive school climate strategies, teacher and parent consultations, and referrals to public and private community services
2. Planning, implementing, and evaluating programs
3. Working within a MTSS that uses multiple data sources to monitor and improve student behavior, attendance, engagement, and achievement
4. Developing, coordinating, and supervising comprehensive student support systems in collaboration with teachers, administrators, other pupil personnel services professionals, families, community partners, and community agencies, including county mental health agencies

(cf. 5131 - Conduct)

(cf. 5131.2 - Bullying)

(cf. 5138 - Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation)

(cf. 5144 - Discipline)

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5. Promoting and maintaining a safe learning environment for all students by providing restorative practices, positive behavior interventions, and support services, and by developing a variety of intervention strategies, and using those strategies, to meet individual, group, and school community needs before, during, and after a crisis
6. Intervening to ameliorate school-related problems, including issues related to chronic absences

(cf. 5113.1 - Chronic Absence and Truancy)

7. Using research-based strategies to promote mental wellness, reduce mental health stigma, and to identify characteristics, risk factors, and warning signs of students who develop, or are at risk of developing, mental health and behavioral disorders and who experience, or are at risk of experiencing, mistreatment, including mistreatment related to any form of conflict or bullying
8. Improving school climate and student well-being by addressing the mental and behavioral health needs of students during a period of transition, separation, heightened stress, and critical changes, accessing community programs and services to meet those needs, and providing other appropriate services

(cf. 5137 - Positive School Climate)

9. Enhancing students' social and emotional competence, character, health, civic engagement, cultural legacy, and commitment to lifelong learning and the pursuit of high-quality educational programs

(cf. 6142.4 - Service Learning/Community Service Classes)

10. Providing counseling interventions and support services for students classified as English learners, or foster youth, homeless children, and students eligible for free or reduced-priced meals, including intervention and support services that enhance equity and access to the education system and community services

(cf. 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan)

(cf. 6173 - Education for Homeless Children)

(cf. 6173.1 - Education for Foster Youth)

(cf. 6174 - Education for English Language Learners)

11. Engaging in continued development as a professional school counselor

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

Educational Counseling

Beginning in grade 7, parents/guardians shall receive a general notice at least once before career counseling and course selection so that they may participate in the counseling sessions and decisions. (Education Code 221.5)

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(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

The educational counseling program shall include academic counseling in the following areas: (Education Code 49600)

1. Development and implementation, with parent/guardian involvement, of the student's immediate and long-range educational plans
2. Optimizing progress towards achievement of proficiency standards
3. Completion of the required curriculum in accordance with the student's needs, abilities, interests, and aptitudes
4. Academic planning for access and success in higher education programs, including advisement on courses needed for admission to public colleges and universities, standardized admissions tests, and financial aid
5. High-quality career programs at all levels, in which students are assisted in doing all of the following:
 - a. Planning for the future, including, but not limited to, identifying personal interests, skills, and abilities, career planning, course selection, and career transition
 - b. Becoming aware of personal preferences and interests that influence educational and occupational exploration, career choice, and career success
 - c. Developing realistic perceptions of work, the changing work environment, and the effect of work on lifestyle
 - d. Understanding the relationship between academic achievement and career success, and the importance of maximizing career options
 - e. Understanding the value of participating in career technical education, industry certifications, college preparation and credit, and employment opportunities and work-based learning activities and programs, including, but not limited to, service learning, regional occupational centers and programs, partnership programs, job shadowing, and mentoring experiences

(cf. 6178 - Career Technical Education)

(cf. 6178.1 - Work-Based Learning)

(cf. 6178.2 - Regional Occupational Center/Program)

- f. Understanding the need to develop essential employable skills and work habits

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- g. Understanding the variety of four-year colleges and universities and community college vocational and technical preparation programs, entrance requirements to the Armed Forces of the United States, including the benefits of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test, as well as admission criteria and enrollment procedures

The district's educational counseling program also may include, but not be limited to, identification of students who are at risk of not graduating with the rest of their class, development of a list of coursework and experience necessary to assist students to satisfy the curricular requirements for college admission and successfully transition to postsecondary education or employment, and counseling regarding available options for a student to continue his/her education if he/she fails to meet graduation requirements.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish and maintain a program of guidance, placement, and follow-up for all high school students subject to compulsory continuation education. (Education Code 48431)

(cf. 6184 - Continuation Education)

As part of the district's educational counseling program, students may be offered mental and behavioral health services under which a student may receive prevention, intervention, short-term counseling services, and mental health related classroom instruction to reduce stigma and increase awareness of counseling support services

No counselor shall unlawfully discriminate against any student. Guidance counseling regarding school programs and career, vocational, or higher education opportunities shall not be differentiated on the basis of any protected category specified in BP 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities.

(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)
(cf. 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment)

In addition, counselors shall affirmatively explore with students the possibility of careers, or courses leading to careers, that are nontraditional for that student's sex. (Education Code 221.5)

For assessing or counseling students, the district shall not use testing or other materials that permit or require impermissible or unlawful differential treatment of students. (5 CCR 4931)

Colleges and prospective employers, including military recruiters, shall have the same access to students for recruiting purposes. (Education Code 49603; 10 USC 503; 20 USC 7908)

The Superintendent or designee shall collaborate with businesses, government agencies, postsecondary institutions including universities and career technical schools, community organizations, and/or other employers to provide students with actual or simulated work-based learning opportunities through college and/or career fairs.

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When planning to hold a college or career fair, the Superintendent or designee shall notify each apprenticeship program in the county. The notification shall include the planned date, time and location of the college or career fair. (Labor Code 3074.2)

(cf. 5125.1 - Release of Directory Information)

Personal or Mental Health Counseling

A school counselor, school psychologist, or school social worker may provide individualized personal, mental health, or family counseling to students in accordance with the specialization(s) authorized by his/her credential. Such services may include, but are not limited to, support related to the student's social and emotional development, behavior, substance abuse, mental health assessment, depression, or mental illness. As appropriate, students and their parents/guardians shall be informed about community agencies, organizations, or health care providers that offer qualified professional assistance.

(cf. 1020 - Youth Services)

(cf. 5113 - Absences and Excuses)

(cf. 5131.6 - Alcohol and Other Drugs)

(cf. 5141.4 - Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting)

(cf. 5141.6 - School Health Services)

(cf. 5145.9 - Hate-Motivated Behavior)

(cf. 5147 - Dropout Prevention)

(cf. 6164.5 - Student Success Teams)

Written parent/guardian consent shall be obtained before mental health counseling or treatment services are provided to a student, except when the student is authorized to consent to the service pursuant to Family Code 6920-6929, Health and Safety Code 124260, or other applicable law.

Any information of a personal nature disclosed to a school counselor by a student age 12 years or older or by his/her parent/guardian is confidential and shall not become part of the student record without the written consent of the person who disclosed the confidential information. The information shall not be revealed, released, discussed, or referred to except under the limited circumstances specified in Education Code 49602. (Education Code 49602)

(cf. 5022 - Student and Family Privacy Rights)

(cf. 5125 - Student Records)

A counselor shall consult with the Superintendent or designee and, as appropriate, with the district's legal counsel whenever unsure of how to respond to a student's personal problem or when questions arise regarding the possible release of confidential information regarding a student.

Crisis Counseling

The Board recognizes the need for a prompt and effective response when students are confronted with a traumatic incident. School counselors shall assist in the development of

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the comprehensive school safety plan, emergency and disaster preparedness plan, and other prevention and intervention practices designed to assist students and parents/guardians before, during, and after a crisis.

(cf. 0450 - Comprehensive Safety Plan)

(cf. 3516 - Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness Plan)

In addition, the Superintendent or designee shall identify crisis counseling resources to train district staff in effective threat assessment, appropriate response techniques, and/or methods to directly help students cope with a crisis if it occurs.

Early identification and intervention plans shall be developed to help identify those students who may be at risk for violence so that support may be provided before they engage in violent or disruptive behavior.

(cf. 5136 - Gangs)

(cf. 5141.52 - Suicide Prevention)

Teacher-Based Advisory Program

The Board recognizes that a supportive, ongoing relationship with a caring adult can provide a student with valuable advice, enhance student-teacher relationships, and build the student's feelings of connectedness with the school. The Board authorizes the development of a teacher-based advisory program in which teachers advise students in such areas as academic planning, character development, conflict resolution, and self-esteem. Any teacher participating in this program shall be under the supervision of a credentialed school counselor as appropriate, receive related information and training, and be subject to this Board policy and law, including requirements pertaining to student confidentiality and nondiscrimination.

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

Legal Reference: (see next page)

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Legal Reference:

221.5 *Prohibited sex discrimination*
44266 *Pupil personnel services credential*
48431 *Establishing and maintaining high school guidance and placement program*
49600-49604 *Educational counseling*
51250-51251 *School age military dependents*
51513 *Personal beliefs*
FAMILY CODE
6920-6929 *Consent by minor for treatment or counseling*
HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE
124260 *Mental health services; consent by minors age 12 and older*
PENAL CODE
11166-11170 *Reporting known or suspected cases of child abuse*
WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE
5850-5883 *Mental Health Services Act*
CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5
4930-4931 *Counseling*
80049-80049.1 *Pupil personnel services credential*
80632-80632.5 *Preparation programs for pupil personnel services*
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 10
503 *Military recruiter access to directory information*
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20
1232g *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act*
7908 *Armed forces recruiter access to students and student recruiting information*
CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34
99.1-99.67 *Family educational rights and privacy*

Management Resources:

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS
California Results-Based School Counseling and Student Support Guidelines, 2007
WEB SITES
American School Counselor Association: <http://www.schoolcounselor.org>
California Association of School Counselors: <http://www.schoolcounselor-ca.org>
California Department of Education: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>
Commission on Teacher Credentialing: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov>
*U.S. Department of Education, access to military recruiters:
<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/hottopics/ht10-09-02.html>*

Policy
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revised: December 10, 2002
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VISALIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Visalia, California