



Supporting Student Mental Health in PWCS

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School-Based Mental Health Professionals

School
Psychologists

School Social
Workers

School
Counselors



School Counselors

Modern school counselors are required to spend 80% of their time in direct/indirect service to students.

Address all students' social/emotional development, academic success, and college and career development.

Comprehensive programs contribute to safe, supportive, & inclusive school climate.

Provide education, prevention and early identification and intervention.

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR IS OUT SCHOOL COUNSELOR IS IN



- Is focused on one or two domains.
- Works in isolation.
- Delivers limited services primarily through individual sessions.
- Is reactive, 90% of services with only 10% of students.
- Is driven by administrative assignments or needs.
- Uses their personal judgement to determine what works.
- Has no connection to the school-improvement plan.
- Rarely addresses the mental health needs of students through their delivery of direct services.
- Relies heavily on outside referrals or others to provide support.
- Has an undefined or unclear role. Stakeholders are also unaware of what the counselor does. Some students know who



- Has equal focus on social, emotional, academic, and college/career development.
- Collaborates with multiple stakeholders in school community.
- Delivers support through schoolwide, large/small group, and individual counseling services.
- Is proactive and preventative, delivering services that benefit ALL students.
- Designs a school counseling program driven by students' needs.
- Uses data/research to determine what works and continuously evaluates program.
- Designs counseling plan with goals aligned with school's mission and improvement plan.
- Addresses mental health needs of students by providing direct services, accessing community resources, and working with school staff and community service providers.
- Has a clearly defined role. Stakeholders have accurate understanding of role. All students know who school counselor is and have positive, meaningful relationships with them.



§ 22.1-291.1:1. School counselors; staff time.

“Each school counselor employed by a school board in a public elementary or secondary school shall spend at least 80 percent of his staff time during normal school hours in the direct counseling of individual students or groups of students and may spend up to 20 percent of his staff time during normal school hours on program planning and school support.”



WHY DID THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOCUS ON STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH?

NOVEMBER 2022 – Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission submits its report to the Governor and the Virginia General Assembly titled the *Pandemic Impact on K-12 Education*.

A recommendation was made in this report:

The General Assembly may wish to consider amending the Code of Virginia to define direct school counseling services to include only those activities established as direct counseling services by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Principals' Memo 1014-19 and to expressly exclude from the definition administrative and support activities that are not considered direct counseling.

It is specifically noted that:

"School counselors typically perform activities that are not related to counseling, consuming valuable time that could be spent providing counseling services to students. School counselors make up the majority of school-based mental health staff and have lower vacancy rates than other mental health positions, so schools should use existing counselors' time effectively."



K-12 SCHOOL COUNSELING PLAYBOOK

2024-25

Prescribed months to deliver mandatory lessons.	Parameters for group counseling to include minimum number of groups set for each school level.	Standard end of lesson or service delivery outcome reports.	Protocols for Middle and High School Academic Advising and rebranding to "Vision Meetings."	Templates provided for parent/guardian communication about academic advising and career planning.	Lesson plan content monitoring and supplemental materials approval process.
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School Social Workers

Direct Services to Students - IEP counseling as a related service, individual and small group counseling, attendance support.

Service to Families - Student/family referral to community-based mental health or therapeutic service providers [public and private], basic needs support.

Special Education Eligibility process - conducts developmental/ sociocultural assessment to help eligibility committee determine if a child has disability.

Crisis Intervention - Suicide assessments, responsive services (threat assessment, Critical Incident Team).



School Psychologists

Direct services to students: Individual and group counseling

General and Special Education services: Consultation with teachers and administrators

Services through the MTSS process: Student Support Team, FBA/BIP process

Services Under IDEA: Individual evaluations for special education eligibility

Crisis Intervention Counseling: Suicide and threat assessments, responsive services



Activities Promoting Positive Student Mental Health Division-wide

Suicide Prevention Awareness Month (September)



“You Matter” video



No Place for Hate & bullying prevention programming



Month of the Military Child and military-connected student support



Mental Health Awareness Month (May)



Activities Promoting Positive Student Mental Health Systemic

PWCS Support Corps

School-based mental health professionals.

Work outside of school hours.

Support students who have mental health barriers to attendance.

Parent/guardians are offered optional support when a mental health crisis occurs during the school day.

Support the transition from in-patient or out-patient treatment to the normal school day.



Staff Education Examples

Mental Health First Aid – Youth & Adult



Creative Arts Therapies for Treatment and Self Care



Mental Health Awareness Training



Suicide Prevention and Awareness Training



Parent Education Examples

Talk Saves Lives – American Federation for Suicide Prevention



Practical Strategies for Reducing Stress and Increasing Success



Empowering Parents: Strategies for Supporting Children and Adolescents in Mental Health



Community Partnerships

PWC Community Services Board - Emergency Services, CR2, Prevention & Wellness



Behavioral Health Hospitals, like North Springs, Dominion



Area Mental Health Providers, like Ellie, Sandstone Care, George Mason



Committee participation/collaboration - Promoting Behavioral Health, Prevention Coalition of Greater Prince William, Trauma Informed Network, American Federation for Suicide Prevention, NAMI Prince William, etc.