

SCHOOL COUNSELING

Code **JLD** Issued **9/17**

A comprehensive developmental school counseling program, which provides all students the opportunity for optimum development, is an essential component of the instructional program. Students should develop skills and traits that enable them to become productive citizens.

To ensure that this service is provided to all students, the district will establish a counseling program in each school based on the following beliefs:

- All children are unique and are to be treated with respect and dignity.
- Every student can achieve at high levels.
- Learning is a lifelong process.
- A positive self-concept leads to responsible and productive citizenship. Fostering that positive self-concept is the responsibility of the school, home, and community.
- The school counseling program is an integral part of the educational program and serves as a critical link to the instructional program. The school counseling program provides developmental opportunities and experiences as it addresses student development areas: learning to live, learning to learn, and learning to work.

The school counseling department, working closely with the administration and instructional staff, will accomplish the following:

- Analyze and evaluate students' abilities, interests, skills, and achievements to assist students in making individualized educational, academic, and career-oriented choices; in setting career goals; and in developing individual graduation plans (IGPs) to achieve these goals.
- Help students adjust to new in-school and out-of-school situations through counseling and support and/or referral to outside agencies.
- Assist teachers, staff, and parents/legal guardians in understanding the needs and problems of individuals and groups of students.
- Interpret cognitive, aptitude, and achievement test data to students and parents/legal guardians.
- Interpret student records to include grades earned, test data, personal data, and career development records.
- Ensure student records are maintained in accordance with state and federal regulations.

Career Counseling

The district will make available to all students a comprehensive system of academic counseling and career development that includes career awareness, career exploration, and career preparation.

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Elementary school

The district will lay the foundation for the clusters of study system by providing career awareness activities for students in pre-K through fifth grades.

Middle school

Counseling and career exploration programs on the clusters of study system will be implemented by the district and made available to all sixth through eighth grade students.

The process of creating and updating developmentally appropriate career plans will begin with students in grade six and directly involve the parent/legal guardian as well as the student.

Before the end of the second semester of the eighth grade, students will select a preferred cluster of study and begin to develop an IGP in consultation with their parents/legal guardians. The IGP is a student specific educational plan detailing the courses necessary for a student to prepare for graduation and to successfully transition into the workforce or postsecondary education. The IGP will meet specific requirements as outlined by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) and will be signed by a certified school counselor. The IGP will be reviewed and revised at least annually with the assistance of parents/legal guardians, teachers, and counselors.

High school

Certified school counselors, as well as career specialists under the supervision of these counselors, will advise students during the ninth and 10th grades on further defining their career cluster goals and further refining their IGPs.

Students in their 10th grade year will declare an area of academic focus, known as a career major, within a cluster of study before the end of the second semester.

Work exploration guidance activities and career awareness programs that combine counseling on career options and experiential learning with academic planning will be provided to assist students in fulfilling the IGPs. Work exploration activities may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- traditional mentoring experiences
- community and short-term shadowing experiences
- service learning experiences
- school-based activities providing opportunities to explore basic business practices and entrepreneurial enterprises
- internships and cooperative education experiences
- youth apprenticeships for students 16 years and older
- extended learning opportunities to include senior-year projects or community involvement or leadership

The district will implement the career guidance program model developed by the SCDE or submit a prototype to the department for approval.

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The district will promote increased awareness and career counseling by encouraging students to utilize career counseling technology and by providing access to the South Carolina Occupational Information System (SCOIS) or to another computer-assisted career information system that has been approved by the SCDE.

The district will provide students in middle and high school with the services of a qualified and appropriately trained career specialist as outlined in law. Each middle and high school will have a student-to-school counseling personnel ratio of 300:1. Counseling personnel will include certified school counselors and career specialists.

Counseling services are available for every student in the district's schools as required by state law and State Board of Education regulations. All students will participate in career development activities regardless of their race, religion, sex, disability, national origin, or immigrant or English-speaking status.

Materials or tests used for appraising or counseling students will not be different for students on the basis of their gender. The use of materials will not require different treatment of students on such basis unless different materials cover the same occupations and interest areas and the use of different materials is shown to be essential to eliminate gender bias.

Cf. IG, IGCA, IHAK, IHAQ, IHBC, IHCA, IKF, KB

Adopted 11/13/07; Revised 9/12/17

Legal References:

A. Federal Law:

1. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C.A. Sections 1681-86 - Prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex.

B. S.C. Code, 1976, as amended:

1. Section 59-59-10, *et seq.* - South Carolina Education and Economic Development Act.

C. State Board of Education Regulations:

1. R43-205 - Administrative and professional personnel qualifications, duties, and workloads.
2. R43-234 - Defined program, grades 9-12 and graduation requirements.

D. South Carolina Department of Education:

1. South Carolina Education and Economic Development Act Guidelines (2006).