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COUNSELING PROGRAM

Policy Code: **3610**

Guidance and counseling programs are provided by the school system with the ultimate aim of improving student performance by implementing strategies and activities that support and maximize student learning; helping students to grow in their personal and social development; and providing a foundation for acquiring the skills that enable students to graduate career and college ready and prepared to be lifelong learners. ~~make a successful transition from school to higher education or a career.~~ The principal of each school shall ensure the development of a data-driven counseling program to meet the objectives of the State Board of Education’s comprehensive school counseling program curriculum and the academic, career, and social/emotional developmental needs of the student population at that school. The program will include individual and group counseling, classroom presentations, academic advising, career development services, consultation, parent education, and other responsive services.

In addition, the counseling program will incorporate the following specific elements.

~~School counselors and other guiding adults in middle and high schools shall provide guidance and information to students about high school course selections and requirements prior to ninth grade in order to inform them about the requirements for college entry and career planning, including opportunities for accelerated preparation for college entry.~~

Commented [JC_SC1]: Moved to Section C Academic Advising

A. INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS AND OTHERS

The counseling program is the shared responsibility of administration, teachers, counselors, parents and community members, and should operate with the collaboration of all individuals involved in educating students, including those who assist children with special needs or students who are at risk of dropping out of school or not meeting performance expectations. Input from parents and students should be sought in accordance with the school's parent engagement ~~al involvement~~ plan ~~for involvement of the community in school programs.~~

~~Each year, the principal or designee shall inform parents of the guidance and counseling services available to students. Parents will be notified of the right to opt their students out of participation in certain group academic or career guidance or personal or social counseling services of a generic nature. All school personnel must follow the Parental Involvement Plan in regard to parental notification and permission for counseling programs. In addition, school personnel shall annually provide all students in Grades 9 through 12 with information on the manner in which a parent may lawfully abandon a newborn baby with a responsible person in accordance with G.S. 7B-500.~~

Commented [JC_SC2]: Moved to Section D Notification of Safe Surrender Law

B. PROVISION OF COUNSELING SERVICES

Effective school counseling programs are a collaborative effort between the school counselor, students, parents and other educators to create an environment that promotes student achievement. Counseling services may be provided on an individual basis or in small or large groups. ~~School counselors should refer students who have extensive needs or needs that go beyond the purpose of the counseling program to community resources.~~

Commented [JC_SC3]: Moved to 2nd paragraph in this section

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Students may seek counseling or be referred by staff or parents. School officials and teachers may recommend a counseling program to help a student meet standards of conduct and academic performance established by the Board and school system administrators. If students have extensive needs or needs that go beyond the purpose of the counseling program, school counselors may communicate with families to refer students them to community resources. Any staff member who is aware that a student is contemplating suicide or is otherwise suffering from an emotional or psychological crisis must immediately notify the counseling program in accordance with any rules established by the superintendent or principal. Any counselor or other staff member who knows or has cause to suspect child abuse, neglect, dependency or death as a result of maltreatment must report the information as required by law.

Commented [JC_SC4]: Moved to Section E Employee Mandatory Reporting

Effective school counseling programs are a collaborative effort between the school counselor, students, parents, and other educators to create an environment that promotes student achievement. School officials and teachers may recommend a counseling program to help a student meet standards of conduct and academic performance established by the Wake County Board of Education and school system. Students will not be required to attend individual or small group counseling sessions to address identified significant personal issues unless agreement has been reached with the parent and student in a behavior contract, an intervention plan, or, for special education students, an individualized education plan.

Commented [JC_SC5]: WCPSS staff moved SBA language to 1st paragraph within this section

C. ACADEMIC ADVISING

School counselors and other guiding adults in middle and high schools shall support equitable access to opportunities and rigorous and relevant curricula for all students. Prior to the ninth grade, students will be informed about the course requirements for regular and accelerated college entry. School counselors shall encourage ninth grade students to complete the requirements for college entry in less than four years, if feasible and appropriate.

D. NOTIFICATION OF SAFE SURRENDER LAW

School personnel shall annually provide all students in grades 9 through 12 with information on the manner in which a parent may lawfully abandon a newborn baby with a responsible person, in accordance with G.S. 7B-500.

E. EMPLOYEE MANDATORY REPORTING

Any staff member who is aware that a student is contemplating suicide or is otherwise suffering from an emotional or psychological crisis must immediately notify the counseling program in accordance with any rules established by the superintendent or principal.

Any counselor or other staff member who knows or has cause to suspect maltreatment of a child must report the information as provided in policy 4240/7312, Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety, and as required by law.

F. CONFIDENTIALITY

Information obtained in a session with a counselor may be privileged and protected from disclosure as provided by law. A counselor cannot be required to testify concerning privileged information unless, as provided by G.S. 8-53.4, the student waives the privilege or the court compels testimony as necessary to the proper administration of justice. The school counselor privilege does not, however, exempt the counselor from reporting child abuse as required by law and policy 4240/7312 ~~G.S. 7B-301~~.

Any notation made by a counselor for his or her own use is a confidential document and is neither a public record nor a part of the student's record. Such confidential documents do not have to be shared with parents or others except as required by law. Any document prepared by a counselor that is shared or intended to be shared with other staff is considered an educational record of the student and is available to the parent or eligible student.

Legal References: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g; G.S. 7B-301, -500; 8-53.4; ~~110-105.4~~; 115C-12, -47, ~~-400~~, -401; State Board of Education Policies ~~GRAD-006~~, SCOS 011 ~~GCS F-011, GCS L-006~~

Adopted: June 7, 2016

Revised: