

SPECIALIZED INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL

A K-12 COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION SUPPORT TOOL



School Counseling

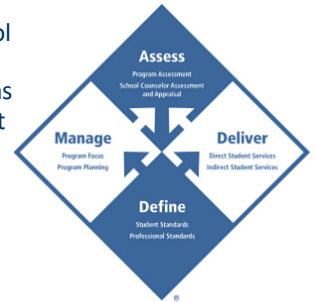
As vital members of the education team, school counselors play an essential specialized role in promoting a school culture that helps to achieve the school's mission of successfully educating the whole child to be a lifelong learner and career and college ready. School counselors design, deliver and assess data-driven school counseling programs that are comprehensive in scope, preventive in design and developmental in nature to improve a range of student learning and behavioral outcomes through evidence-based practices. School counselors help all students

- apply academic achievement strategies
- manage emotions and apply interpersonal skills
- strengthen mental wellness and
- explore and plan for postsecondary options such as higher education, military, and work force

School counselors accomplish this through a variety of activities delivered similarly to the Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) model with core school counseling services for every student, supplemental small group and individual services for some students and limited individual intensive services for select students. Some examples include:

- developmentally appropriate classroom and school-wide guidance curriculum activities focused on emotional intelligence and behaviors all students need for postsecondary readiness and personal success
- career awareness, exploration, and readiness activities
- student academic planning and goal setting
- short-term small group and individual counseling (including crisis intervention) to improve personal skills, address barriers to learning, and support mental wellness
- referrals for long-term support
- collaboration with families, teachers, administrators, other SISP, and community for student success
- data analysis to identify student needs and plan appropriate counseling services.

[Research studies](#) show positive associations between comprehensive school counseling and improved student outcomes.



The ASCA National Model diamond is a registered trademark of the American School Counselor Association.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS

The *North Carolina Professional School Counseling Standards*, [Policy EVAL-026](#), support effective best practices in school counseling with the intention of -

- guiding the professional development of school counselors,
- providing focus for schools and districts as they support, monitor, and evaluate school counselors, and
- assisting higher education programs in developing the content and requirements for school counselor education curricula.

North Carolina Professional School Counseling Standards are also aligned with research- and evidence-based practices provided in the *ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs*.

One has to complete an approved school counseling master's degree program in a regionally accredited college or university in order to be a licensed school counselor in North Carolina. Current school counseling graduate master's programs are typically 48 to 60 semester hours. School Counselors are licensed K-12 by the NC Department of Public Instruction. Many are also eligible to apply for licensure with the NC Board of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors to practice counseling in other settings. Those with a master's degree in another area of counseling must also complete courses required for school counseling specialization to be licensed as a school counselor.

EVALUATION

The evaluation process ([NCEES](#)) for evaluating school counselor implementation of the *North Carolina Professional School Counseling Standards* is similar to that of other licensed school personnel. The evaluation rubric is based on the professional school counseling standards and designed to encourage professional growth. For school counselor roles that cannot be observed due to confidentiality, school administrators may consider requesting related artifacts such as process or outcome data or materials used in activities. Tools to assist administrators with school counselor evaluation can be found on [the School Counseling Standards and Evaluation web page](#).

APPROPRIATE ROLES

For school counselors to be successful on their evaluation and to have the most positive impact on student outcomes, it is vital that they spend the majority of their time in appropriate school counselor roles and that they and the school administrators have common expectations for their work. These appropriate school counselor roles are defined in the *North Carolina Professional School Counseling Standards* and in NC. G.S. 115C-316.1.

Recommended School Counselor-to-Student Ratio 1:250

NC G.S. 115C-316.1

[NC General Statute 115C-316.1 - Duties of School Counselors](#) - requires traditional public school counselors to deliver comprehensive school counseling programs and spend 80% of their time delivering a variety of direct school counseling services. It further states that school counselor services do not include coordination of standardized testing. This general statute reflects and supports the *North Carolina Professional School Counseling Standards* which seek to support student and school success through comprehensive school counseling programs.

You can find the NCDPI School Counseling web pages at nchealthyschools.org

CONTACT INFORMATION

Cynthia Floyd

Consultant for School Counseling
cynthia.floyd@dpi.nc.gov
Phone: (984) 236-2820

Ellen Essick

NC Healthy Schools Section Chief
ellen.essick@dpi.nc.gov
Phone: (984) 236-2818