SECTION II MISSOURI COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAM: AN OVERVIEW

The Missouri Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (MCGCP) consists of three major elements: content, an organizational framework, and resources. (See Figure II-1.) The content element contains suggested student content standards and grade level expectations (GLE's) that a school district may wish to consider for its students to master as a result of their participation in the district's comprehensive guidance and counseling program. The organizational framework contains six structural components and four program components. Suggested allocations of the school counselor's time across the four program components are also provided. The resource element presents the human, financial, and political resources required to fully implement the program.

CONTENT

One of the assumptions upon which the MCGCP is based is that there is guidance and counseling content that all students should have the opportunity to learn. (See Appendix A.) In the MCGCP, guidance and counseling content is expressed as grade level expectations that students need to achieve along with the grade level expectations they achieve in academic, career education and other subjects so that they can compete successfully in an internationally competitive, technological world. The content element of the MCGCP contains student grade level expectations grouped into three broad areas: Academic Development, Career Development and Personal Social/Development.

Academic Development

- Applying Skills Needed for Educational Achievement
- Applying the Skills of Transitioning Between Educational Levels
- Developing and Monitoring Personal Educational Plans

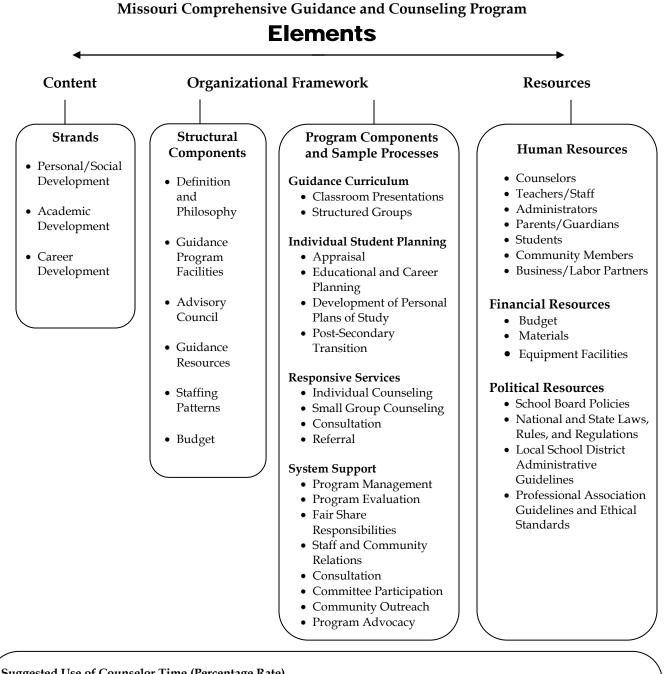
Career Development

- Applying Career Exploration and Planning Skills in the Achievement of Life Career Goals
- Knowing Where and How to Obtain Information about the World of Work and Post Secondary Training/Education
- Applying Employment Readiness Skills and the Skills for On-The-Job Success

Personal/Social Development

- Understanding Self as an Individual and as a Member of Diverse Local and Global Communities
- Interacting with Others in Ways that Respect Individual and Group Differences
- Applying Personal Safety Skills and Coping Strategies

Figure II-1



Suggested Use of Counselor Time (Tercentage Ka	le)		
	Elementary School	Middle/Junior High School	High School
Guidance and Counseling Curriculum	35-45	25-35	15-25
Individual Student Planning	5-10	15-25	25-35
Responsive Services	30-40	30-40	25-35
System Support	10-15	10-15	15-20
Total	100	100	100

Note: 100% of a school counselor's time should be devoted to the implantation, delivery, and management of the guidance and counseling program.



ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

This section describes in detail the organizational framework of the MCGCP. The framework contains six structural components, four program components, and suggested distributions of school counselor time.

SIX STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS

The six structural components are an important part of the organizational framework of the MCGCP because they define it; describe the rationale on which it is based; and highlight the resources, materials, staffing, and equipment that are required to develop and manage it effectively. The six structural components are: (a) definition and philosophy, (b) guidance and counseling program facilities, (c) advisory council, (d) guidance and counseling resources, (e) staffing patterns, and (f) budget.

Program Definition and Philosophy

The definition of a comprehensive guidance and counseling program identifies the centrality of guidance and counseling in education and describes, in broad outcome terms, the grade level expectations, (knowledge and skills) students will master as a result of their participation in the program. It also identifies who delivers the program and how the program is organized. The district's statement of philosophy for its comprehensive guidance and counseling program identifies a belief system and is derived from the overall educational goals of the school district and from the educational goals for the state of Missouri.

Guidance and Counseling Program Facilities

To implement a comprehensive guidance and counseling program, a guidance and counseling center should be established in each building of the district. The guidance and counseling center should be accessible and large enough to adequately house all of the program's personnel, resources, and equipment. The minimum requirements for a guidance and counseling center are:

- A well-organized display of guidance and counseling resource materials and equipment
- Private offices, properly equipped and soundproofed
- Adequate space for individual, small-, and large-group use
- Adequate storage space

Advisory Council

An advisory council provides support, offers advice, reviews present activities, and encourages new activities to meet the goals of a school district's comprehensive guidance and counseling program. Advisory council membership may include parents/guardians, school board members, students, community leaders, agency personnel, and teachers.

The advisory council members should have a shared enthusiasm for students and guidance and counseling. The council may be organized at the district or building level. In small districts, the

council's responsibilities may be assumed by or be organized within existing advisory groups such as building or district-wide career education advisory councils.

Guidance and Counseling Resources

To develop and manage a comprehensive guidance and counseling program effectively, appropriate guidance and counseling resources are required. These resources include equipment and materials, staff expertise, and community resources.

Staffing Patterns

For a comprehensive guidance and counseling program to function fully and effectively, adequate staffing is required. This means that the minimum state standard for school counselor-to-student ratio must be met. The minimum standard requires one school counselor for every 401-500 students in grades K-12. However, the desirable standard is one school counselor for every 301-375 students in grades K-12. If a district has more than one school counselor, a head school counselor or director should be identified. Central coordination ensures that program planning, designing, implementing, evaluating, and enhancing take place in a timely manner. A reduced caseload is highly recommended for head school counselors or directors so that they can manage the comprehensive guidance and counseling program effectively. Finally, and most importantly, adequate secretarial/clerical support personnel must be assigned to the comprehensive guidance and counseling program delivery.

Budget

The guidance and counseling program's budget should be included in the budget-planning process at both the district and building levels. Budgets should be established annually consistent with other departments in the school to ensure that the comprehensive guidance and counseling program has the resources to develop, implement, and manage its program effectively. These budgets should be separate from other district and building budgets (e.g., special education, at-risk, testing).

FOUR PROGRAM COMPONENTS

All of the required activities and services of a comprehensive guidance and counseling program are grouped into four interactive program components: (a) guidance and counseling curriculum, (b) individual student planning, (c) responsive services, and (d) system support.

The first three program components provide direct activities and services to students and parents/guardians. This means that the content of a comprehensive guidance and counseling program – the student grade level expectations – is delivered through the activities and services of these three components. The guidance and counseling curriculum is designed to be the center of the developmental/preventative part of a comprehensive guidance and counseling program and thus contains the bulk of the activities to assist students in achieving appropriate guidance and counseling grade level expectations. At the same time, however, it is important to remember that the activities and services of the individual student planning and responsive services components also provide many opportunities for students to achieve appropriate guidance and counseling grade level expectations contained in the content element of the MCGCP. Thus, all three direct service

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components contribute to student attainment of appropriate grade level expectations in different but important ways. The fourth program component, system support, contains the management activities and services required to support a district guidance and counseling program as well as the other educational programs of a district.

Guidance and Counseling Curriculum

Are there knowledge, skills, and attitudes that all students need to acquire that should be the instructional responsibility of a comprehensive guidance and counseling program? The answer is yes! They are expressed as grade level expectations (GLE's). Thus, a curriculum component is a necessary part of a comprehensive guidance and counseling program that will address a majority of the guidance and counseling grade level expectations contained in the content element.

The guidance and counseling curriculum consists of structured developmental activities presented systematically through classrooms and large groups from kindergarten through grade 12. The purpose of the guidance and counseling curriculum is to facilitate students' optimal growth and development by assisting them to acquire competencies that promote academic development, career development, and personal social development. Guidance and Counseling curriculum activities are delivered through such strategies as the following:

- **Structured Groups -** School counselors conduct structured groups such as career days in the guidance and counseling center or other school facilities.
- Classroom Presentations School counselors working collaboratively with teachers teach, teach in teams, and assist in teaching guidance and counseling curriculum activities in classrooms.

Guidance and Counseling curriculum activities are developed in a variety of ways. In 2005 and 2006 a state wide committee of counselors, counselor educators, and state department personnel developed learning activities based on the new standards and grade level expectations. These are web-based activities that counselors and teachers can access by linking to <u>the Guidance e-Learning</u> <u>Center</u>: The long-range goal is to develop a 'living curriculum" that can grow as counselors and teachers develop new learning activities that address the guidance and counseling standards and grade level expectations.

Also, it is important to work closely with teachers to organize where and when guidance and counseling curriculum activities will be taught. The format of the learning activities indicate how they are cross-referenced to the Missouri Show-Me Standards and provide effective ways to work closely with classroom teachers to achieve the educational goals of the district.

Individual Student Planning

Do students and their parents/guardians have the right to expect that the school district is sensitive and responsive to students' unique life career needs, including their needs for goal setting and career planning? The answer is yes! Thus, an individual student planning component in a comprehensive guidance and counseling program is needed.

The foundation for individual student planning is established during the elementary school years through guidance and counseling curriculum activities in which students participate. Self-confidence development, the acquisition of learning-to-learn skills, interpersonal relationship skill

development, decision-making skill building, and awareness and beginning exploration of educational and occupational possibilities are sample subjects covered during these years. Subjects such as these continue to be covered through the activities of the guidance and counseling curriculum during middle school and high school, providing new information and experiences to enable students to regularly update, monitor, and manage their plans effectively.

Building on the foundation provided in elementary school, students begin to plan for the future during the middle school years through the individual student planning component. During this period, students' plans focus on high school course selection, considering graduation requirements and the requirements for their postsecondary educational and occupational goals, culminating in a Personal Plan of Study. Guidance and counseling curriculum activities continue to support and guide the planning process.

During the high school years, personal plans of study developed in the middle school are reviewed and updated regularly in accordance with students' post-secondary personal, educational, and occupational goals. The individual student planning component provides time for regular individual work with students as well as group sessions focusing on individual student planning. Guidance and counseling curriculum activities continue to support student planning by giving emphasis to the development and use of skills in decision making, goal setting, and planning. The importance and relevance of strong academic, and career, and personal/social development skills are stressed. The goal is for students' personal plans of study to become pathways or guides through which they can use the past and present to anticipate and prepare for the future.

Individual student planning activities help all students to plan, monitor, and manage their academic, career, and personal/social development. Within this component, activities are designed to help students evaluate their educational, career, and personal goals and to develop personal plans of study no later than the 8th grade in collaboration with parents/guardians. In this component, the school counselor plans and directs the activities. These activities are generally delivered on an individual basis or by working with individuals in small groups. The focus is on having students individualize and personalize their planning. Individual student planning is implemented through such strategies as the following:

- **Appraisal** School counselors work with students in analyzing and evaluating their abilities, interests, skills, and achievements. Test information and other evaluation data form a basis for developing short-term and long-term plans with students and their parents/guardians.
- Educational and Career Planning School counselors work with students to use personal-social, educational, and career and labor market information to manage their personal plans of study. The involvement of parents/guardians and other school staff is critical in planning a program that meets the individual needs of students.
- **Transition** School counselors assist students in making the transition from grade to grade and school to school or school to work.

Educational and career decision making, planning, and goal setting are primarily the responsibility of students and their parents/guardians. Personal plans of study developed as a result of individual student planning activities come in a variety of formats. One format is the traditional 4- to 7-year educational plan. Another format is a student portfolio either in paper or electronic form.



Programs of Study and Personal Plans of Study

Programs of Study

A requirement of Perkins IV is that school districts' CTE programs will create programs of study around career clusters which will include a non-duplicative sequence of academic and technical education instruction, career guidance and counseling, linkages to postsecondary opportunities, and workplace learning opportunities, among others.

The primary purpose of Programs of Study is to provide successful student transitions between secondary and postsecondary education. The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 called upon states and local education agencies to create secondary-to-postsecondary sequences of academic and career education coursework that lead students to attain a postsecondary degree or industry-recognized certificate or credential. At a minimum, Programs of Study must:

- incorporate and align secondary and postsecondary education elements;
- include academic and CTE content in a coordinated, non-duplicative progression of courses; offer the opportunity, where appropriate, for secondary students to acquire postsecondary credits; and
- lead to an industry-recognized credential or certificate at the postsecondary level, or an associate or baccalaureate degree

Missouri has created a model process for schools to use to develop curriculum and model templates. The Program of Study *process* leads to at least two major outcomes:

- 1. A aligned curriculum within a CTE program built around a career cluster pathway that leads to a successful post-secondary transition
- 2. A program of study template that schools can use to guide students in the creation *of their personal plan of study.*

The state plans calls for CTE programs to develop at least 1 program of study within 5 years. The model process allows schools to continue to develop additional programs of study as needed and/or required.

Personal Plans of Study

Students will have the opportunity to build their own personal plan of study, <u>the foundation of</u> <u>which will be the PROGRAM of STUDY within their identified career cluster</u>. Through comprehensive career guidance and counseling the personal plan of study will reflect the coursework needed to complete the program of study including state and local graduation *and assessment* requirements, grade appropriate work-based opportunities and relevant co-curricular activities in which the student will engage. Such activities may include but are not limited to job shadowing, service learning, internships, volunteer activities, after school employment, and CTSO activities. The personal plan of study will further reflect the postsecondary goals of the student which will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary. *The state required assessments in which students will participate will be determined by the educational and career goals as set out in the Personal Plan of Study.* The Missouri School Improvement Program requires that all students have a personal plan of study built around a career path and/or cluster beginning no later than the end of 8th grade.

At this point, only a few programs of study templates will have been developed. However, all students will still have a personal plan of study. If a student is pursuing a career area for which a program of study template has not been developed through the model process, then the personal plan of study will be developed without a template or a school can use sample templates that can be found on the career clusters website: <u>www.careerclusters.org</u>. Even small schools with a limited number of courses can develop templates for the personal plan of study using the career path framework. The idea is that we provide students with a way to frame their career and educational planning – a language so to speak – about careers that does not limit their options but expands them by helping them envision a number of ways in which their skills and interests can be used.

The Role of the Professional School Counselor

School counselors are aware that:

- individual student planning is a key component of their comprehensive guidance and counseling program
- developing, reviewing, and revising personal plans of study is an essential piece of individual student planning
- individual student planning is at the heart of a strong career development process of career awareness, exploration and decision making that begins in the elementary grades.

Thus, school counselors play a pivotal role in helping students gain the knowledge and skills necessary for them to be able to make good decisions regarding their post-secondary plans.

The Guidance Grade Level Expectations provide the roadmap for schools to develop a strong and meaningful career development process for all students, and the Program of Study process provides schools an effective way to develop a rigorous and relevant curriculum and to create the templates that can guide the individual planning process and the development of rigorous and relevant personal plans of study.



Responsive Services

Should school counselors be available and responsive to special or unexpected needs of students and parents/guardians? The answer is yes! Thus, the purpose of the responsive services component is to work with students whose personal circumstances, concerns, or problems are threatening to interfere with or are interfering with their healthy academic, career, and personal/social development. Specific issues some students face include academic success, career choice, child abuse, cultural diversity, dropping out of school, educational choices, family loss, relationships, school attendance, stress, substance abuse, and suicide. As a result, there is continuing need for individual counseling, small-group counseling, consultation, and referral. The responsive services component also supports the activities in the guidance and counseling curriculum and individual student planning components.

Parent/guardian involvement with and participation in the activities of this component are critical in helping students overcome barriers to their, academic, career, and personal/social development. Parent/guardian involvement may include referring their children for assistance, working with school counselors to identify issues of concern, giving permission for needed services, and providing help in resolving issues. Responsive services are implemented through the following: individual counseling, small-group counseling, consultation, and referral.

- **Individual Counseling -** School counselors provide individual counseling for students who are experiencing educational difficulties, personal concerns, or normal developmental tasks. Individual counseling assists students in identifying problems, causes, alternatives, and possible consequences so that appropriate action can be taken.
- **Small-Group Counseling** School counselors provide small-group counseling to students who need and will benefit from a small-group setting to address their needs and concerns. Interventions may take the form of short-term issue groups or crisis intervention groups that deal with such topics as social skills, anger management, relationship issues, grief issues, and study skills.
- **Consultation** Consultation is an interactive process that school counselors provide to help parents/guardians, teachers, and administrators address the academic, career, and personal social needs of students.
- **Referral** School counselors use school and community referral sources that deal with crises such as suicide, violence, abuse, and terminal illness. These referral sources may include mental health agencies, employment and training programs, vocational rehabilitation, juvenile services, and/or social services.

The responsive services component is different from the guidance and counseling curriculum and individual student planning components in that the services involved are provided in response to individual needs. To conduct the services of this component, it would be useful to have district-wide written plans and policies concerning confidentiality, the reporting of suspected child abuse, and referrals. A clear district-wide policy about confidentiality of information will enable school counselors to respond to inappropriate requests for information and will help guide their work with students, parents/guardians, teachers, and administrators. As mandated reporters, school counselors are required by law to report suspected child abuse. A district-wide written policy and plan will inform those involved of the procedures the district follows. It is also necessary to compile a listing of referral sources available as well as have guidelines regarding when and how to make referrals.

System Support

Does a district's comprehensive guidance and counseling program require an ongoing support system to work effectively? Do the educational system of the district and the staff involved require ongoing support that can best be provided by school counselors? The answer to these questions is yes! Thus, a comprehensive guidance and counseling program requires a system support component. The administration and management activities of a district's comprehensive guidance and counseling program are located in this component as are activities that support other educational programs. The system-support component is implemented through activities such as program management, fair-share responsibilities, professional development, staff and community relations, consultation, committee participation, community outreach, and evaluation.

- **Program Management** This includes the planning and management tasks needed to support activities conducted in the district's comprehensive guidance and counseling program. Such activities might include conducting time/task analyses; developing a yearly calendar of activities; developing a yearly budget; writing reports regarding the comprehensive guidance and counseling program; establishing priorities for the year; and, identifying resources needed to implement the program.
- Fair-Share Responsibilities These are the responsibilities that are required of all members of the school staff. Fair-share responsibilities may include tasks such as bus duty, playground duty, class/club sponsorship, and taking tickets at sporting events. Non-guidance and counseling responsibilities are tasks such as these that school counselors are assigned above and beyond those of other staff members. It is important to note that when these types of activities are assigned to school counselors above and beyond those assigned to other staff members, these activities are considered non- guidance and counseling responsibilities. For further explanations of non-guidance and counseling responsibilities, see Section III for additional information.
- **Professional Development** School counselors need to be involved in regularly updating their professional knowledge and skills. This may involve participation in regular school in-service training, attending professional meetings, completing postgraduate course work, and contributing to professional literature.
- **Staff and Community Relations -** This activity involves orienting the staff and the community to the comprehensive guidance and counseling program through newsletters, local media, and/or school-community presentations.
- **Consultation and Collaboration** School counselors consult and collaborate with teachers and other staff members in order to provide information and receive feedback on the emerging needs of students.
- **Committee Participation** Serving on departmental curriculum committees, community committees, or advisory boards represents examples of ways to support other programs in the school and community and to gain support for the guidance and counseling program.
- **Community Outreach** Community outreach activities are designed to help school counselors gain knowledge about community resources and referral agencies, field trip sites, employment opportunities, and local labor market information. This may require school counselors to periodically visit postsecondary schools and local businesses, industries, and social service agencies.



- **Evaluation** Evaluation consists of three major components which is conceptualized as "Program + Personnel = Results. "
 - **Program** evaluation asks the question, "To what extent is the program in place?" and is measured using the Internal Improvement Document found in <u>Appendix D</u>.
 - **Personnel** Evaluation asks the question, "To what extent is the program staffed with highly skilled school counselors?", and is measured using the *Guidelines for Performance-Based School Counselor Evaluation*.
 - **Results** evaluation asks the question, "To what extent is the program having an impact on relevant student outcomes such as achievement, attendance, and behavior?" See Section III for detailed information on results evaluation.

Suggested Distribution of Total School Counselors' Time

Appropriate use of a school counselor's time is crucial in developing and implementing a district's comprehensive guidance and counseling program. The four program components provide the structure for judging appropriate allocation of the school counselor's time. One criterion to use in making such judgment is the concept of program balance. The guidance and counseling curriculum, individual student planning, and responsive services program components represent the direct services school counselors provide to students, parents/guardians, teachers, and the community. The system support program component organizes the indirect services of the program. The assumption is that school counselors' time should be spread across all four program components. However, the first three components will likely need more than 75% of the time. Perhaps total time should be in an 80:20 ratio with 80% toward providing direct services to students, parents/guardians, teachers, and the community and 20% toward providing indirect services to these groups. Care must be taken, however, to watch the time given to system support tasks because the prime focus for the school counselors' time is the direct services to students and parents/guardians through the program components of guidance and counseling curriculum, individual student planning, and responsive services. Finally, it is important to realize that if the district's program is well run, it already provides substantial support for other school programs and personnel as well as the community.

Another criterion is that different grade levels require different allocations of school counselors' time across the program components. For example, at the elementary level, more of the school counselors' time may be spent working in the guidance and counseling curriculum with less time spent on individual student planning. In high school, those time allocations will most likely be reversed. How personnel in a school district or school building allocate their time depends on the needs of their students, parents/guardians, teachers, and their community. Further, once chosen, the time allocations are not fixed forever. The purpose for making them is to provide direction to the program, administration, and school counselors involved. Time allocations can be changed based on newly arising needs. However, when something new is added, decisions will have to be made about what needs to be removed or reprioritized. The assumption is that school counselors should spend their time on fully implementing the guidance and counseling program. Remember that this includes the fair-share responsibilities found in the system support component. School counselors and administrators who participated in field-testing the MCGCP recommended the suggested time percentages seen in Figure II-1 on page 11.

RESOURCES

Human Resources

The human resources of a district's comprehensive guidance and counseling program – school counselors, teachers, administrators, parents/guardians, students, community members, and business and labor partners – all have roles to play in the guidance and counseling program. Although school counselors coordinate the program and are the main providers of guidance and counseling services, the involvement, cooperation, and support of teachers and administrators are necessary for a successful program that offers a full array of guidance and counseling activities. The

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involvement, cooperation, and support of parents/guardians, community members, and business and labor partners are also critical for full student participation in the guidance and counseling program.

Financial Resources

Appropriate and adequate financial resources are critical to the success of a comprehensive guidance and counseling program. The financial resource categories required for a program include budget, materials, equipment, and facilities. A budget for the guidance and counseling program is needed to fund items in these categories and then allocate those funds across the buildings and grade levels of the district. Materials and equipment are needed so that the guidance and counseling activities across the four program components can be fully implemented. Well-designed guidance and counseling facilities in each building, organized to meet the needs of the guidance and counseling program are also required.

Political Resources

The political resources of a comprehensive guidance and counseling program include school board policies, pertinent state and federal laws, rules, and regulations, local school district administrative guidelines, and professional association position statements and ethical standards. Clear and concise board of education policies are mandatory for the successful operation of comprehensive guidance and counseling programs in school districts. They represent statements of support and courses of action or guiding principles designed to influence and determine decisions in school districts; those that pertain to guidance and counseling programs must consider pertinent laws, rules, and regulations and standards as they are being written, adopted, and implemented.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS SUMMARY CHART

When the four program components are fully developed in a local district, a chart can be created that provides brief descriptions of each of the four program components. Such a chart includes the purposes of the components; the topics addressed, and school counselors' roles. Figure II-2 is a sample of such a chart showing sample topics. A chart like this one can be created for a district's program to show at a glance the services and activities school counselors deliver through a comprehensive guidance and counseling program to students, parents/guardians, and the community.

Figure II – 2

Program Component	Missouri Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling				
Guidance and Counseling CurriculumIndividual Student PlanningRespon ServicProvides guidance and counseling content in a systematic way to all students K-12Assists students in planning, monitoring, and managing their academic, career, and personal/social and developmentAddresses the needs and cond studentsPurpose Student awareness, skill development, and application of skills needed in everyday lifePurpose Development and application of skills needed in everyday lifePurpose Development and use of Personal Plans of StudyPurpose Developing Personal Plans of StudyPurpose Developing Personal Pre-employment SkillsTopics Addressed • Career Awareness • School to Career• Course Selection • Transitioning: • Grade to Grade • School to Career• Career Awareness • School to Career • Multiple-Year Planning • Financial Aid • Conflict Resolution • Personal Responsibilities • Peer Friendship • Decision-Making Skills • Substance Abuse Prevention Program • Cross-Cultural UnderstandingsSchool Counselor's RoleSchool Counselor's RoleSchool Counselor's RolePapraisal • Cansultation• Consultation • ReferralSchool Counselor's Role	tsusive cesSystem Supportimmediate cerns ofIncludes program, staff, and school support activities and servicesterventionPurpose Program delivery and supportssed Concerns tedTopics Addressed • Guidance and Counseling Program, Development and Managementss es and vavior Avoidance t ion pTopics Addressed • Guidance and Counseling Program, Development and Managementss es and vavior Avoidance t ion pCounseling Program, Development and Managementexual/ Abuse (Death Abuse tes ssues h StressResearch and Public Relationsetor's RoleFair-Share Responsibilities • Bus Duty • Playground Duty • Class/Club Sponsorship • Taking Tickets at Sporting Events				