

MSIP 5

Implications for Guidance and Counseling

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MISP OVERVIEW

The Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) establishes the performance guidelines for accreditation as well as the recommended resources standards schools should strive to meet in order to offer all students a quality education.

The performance standards make up the heart of MSIP and schools are held accountable on a variety of measures which include:

- Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) tests
- End of Course Exams
- ACT, SAT
- Compass and ASVAB scores
- Successful completion of advanced courses
- Career education placement
- College placement
- Graduation rates
- Attendance rates
- Subgroup achievement

Each year, Annual Performance Reports (APR) are generated for every school, and the APR results are used to determine accreditation. The report can also help determine what supports and interventions are needed to maintain or achieve full accreditation. *All schools are required to develop Comprehensive School Improvement Plans (CSIP) that address these performance standards.* A draft of the performance guidelines entitled “MSIP 5 Guidance Document” can be found at: http://www.dese.mo.gov/qs/documents/MSIP_5_APRcalculationsOctober30topost.pdf

The Resource and Process Standards are designed to provide the necessary structures to support school improvement. The Resource Standards include:

- Academic content required for elementary, junior high/middle school and high school grade levels
- Class size ratios
- Staff ratios for administrators, guidance counselors and librarians
- Staff qualifications
- Teacher planning time

The Process Standards include best practices around

- Teacher/Leader
- Instruction
- Governance

MSIP 5 & GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

Staff ratios for guidance and counseling are a part of the resource standards. The standard for guidance and counseling has been established at 1-500 ratio, K-12. However, the *recommended* ratio is 1-250. This is a reduction of 100 students from MSIP 4 which came as a result of the solid body of evidence that has built up over the years that demonstrates the positive impact on student achievement in schools with lower ratios. [Guidance and Counseling Research](#) School counselors can make a positive difference when provided the resources and time to work with students.

The process standards of MSIP define what a quality guidance and counseling program should look like in schools and the standard is found under the “Instruction” Standard. Specifically the standard states:

I-6—Guidance and counseling is an essential and fully integrated part of the instructional program. Indicators for this standard include:

1. A district-wide guidance and counseling program has been developed and is fully implemented in every building consistent with the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program framework (as outlined in 2-6 below).
2. The PK-12 guidance curriculum is in place and integrated into the regular curriculum where appropriate. It is systematically reviewed and revised.
3. The guidance curriculum is regularly reviewed and revised and is part of the district’s evaluation plan.
4. All students, beginning no later than seventh grade, participate in an individual planning process designed to assist in a successful transition to college, technical school, the military, or the workforce.
5. All students have access to responsive services that assist them in addressing issues and concerns that may affect their academic, career, and personal/social needs.
6. System support and management activities are in place to ensure full implementation, evaluation, and continued improvement of the district’s comprehensive guidance program.

Basically the standard is saying that every school should have a fully implemented and accountable comprehensive guidance and counseling program that addresses the academic, career and personal/social development of all students and is *integral to the instructional process*. The program addresses these areas through the *guidance curriculum* and *individual student planning*; barriers to student learning are addressed through *responsive services*; and management and evaluation activities are addressed through *system support*.

There are two fundamental points that school counselors need to be cognizant of as they look at their program in relation to MSIP 5. The first point is that the program is ***fully implemented***. In most schools this has not yet been achieved, but it should be a long range goal for all schools to address. To be fully implemented means that school counselors are spending 100% of their time implementing the program which means providing direct services to students through the guidance curriculum individual planning, and responsive services, including consulting and collaborating with teachers, parents, and administrators. It also means providing indirect services through system support activities such as program evaluation and committee assignments that serve to advance the overall mission of the school and district, and guidance and counseling program management activities. Although times will vary, the state model recommends 80-85% of counselor time be devoted to direct student services, and 15-20% of counselor time be devoted to system support activities.

Few schools can truly say they are fully implemented. However, it is a vision and a goal that all schools should strive for through a long-range planning process that includes demonstrating the positive impact that the program is having in schools, which leads to the second major point.

The second fundamental point within the standards is that the program is ***fully integrated into the instructional process***. In other words, the fully implemented guidance and counseling program should be working to support the school's CSIP and should be a partner with teachers and administrators in addressing the local CSIP. A fully implemented comprehensive guidance and counseling program can most likely address any goal within the CSIP that deals with student behavior/outcomes. Helping to raise achievement by helping to address barriers to achievement (study skills, test anxiety, etc), helping to improve attendance by working with students with chronic attendance problems, and ensuring that every student have a successful transition through the development of a rigorous and relevant personal plan of study and a meaningful K-12 career development component within the guidance and counseling programs are just a few of the ways that guidance and counseling can support APR standards and CSIP Goals, and by doing so, assuring that the program is indeed integrated into the instructional process.

Gaining Administration Support

Moving toward full implementation will require administration and school board support. And as indicated earlier, this should be a part of a long-range vision that should have a specific action plan to achieve the vision. An action plan might include but would not be limited to such steps as:

- Educating the administration and school board on the ***programmatic concept*** of guidance and counseling. Administrators, much less school board members have no formal training in comprehensive guidance and counseling programs. It is up to school counselors to provide the leadership in informing the administration that they have a program to implement with specific content and activities.
- Showing how the guidance and counseling program can support the mission of the school by being actively involved in the CSIP process.

- Developing a comprehensive evaluation plan based on Program + Personnel = Results that provides data on the impact of guidance and counseling interventions.
- Working with the administration to develop a long range plan to remove barriers that prevent full implementation. Conducting Internal Improvement Reviews and time /task analyses can provide data on where problem areas might exist and then setting specific goals to address those areas.

Such steps require a collaborative working relationship with the administration. Principals are the instructional leaders of the school, and if they are going to be co-leaders with school counselors in moving toward full implementation, there has to be on-going communication and understanding.

The College Board's National Office for School Counselor Advocacy has developed information and tool kits designed to improve and strengthen the counselor-principal relationship. The link to this resource is: <http://nosca.collegeboard.org/research-policies/principal-counselor> Our Guidance System of Support has also addressed this topic. Missouri materials can be found in the Fall 2011 Consortium Materials section at [Guidance System of Support Materials](#).

Over the last few years, a growing body of evidence has demonstrated the positive impact guidance and counseling programs and school counselors play in student success. School counselors can build on that success by:

- Having a clear vision of a fully implemented guidance and counseling program that is integral to the instructional process
- Addressing key goals within a school's CSIP
- Providing collaborative leadership along with the administration to ensure goals of the school are being addressed
- Implementing evaluation and accountability procedures that demonstrates impact on student outcomes

And, by doing so guidance and counseling programs will meet MSIP 5 standards and contribute to the overall success of the school.