

SECTION I

The Basis for the Texas Comprehensive, Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program

Introduction

The ever increasing needs of children and the expectations of today's society are on a collision course with the growing demands on our educational system. Educators and parents are challenged to educate all students at an ever-higher level of literacy to meet the demands of an internationally competitive, technological marketplace, even though societal and other factors cause some of our children to attend school ill-equipped emotionally, physically, and/or socially to learn. Schools must respond by providing support for all students to learn effectively.

As educators continue to seek equity for students through quality programming in all facets of the educational program, this guide describes what constitutes a quality school guidance program--a "developmental guidance program" which provides equal opportunities for all students to receive guidance and counseling. This developmental guidance and counseling program plays a vital role in assisting teachers and other staff in the integration of guidance objectives with other instructional goals.

The implementation of a high quality comprehensive, developmental guidance and counseling program benefits the various populations involved in the program.

- Parents have a fuller understanding of the guidance program and access to guidance services in order to have increased involvement in children's education and educational and career planning.
- Students increase their knowledge and skills in decision-making, goal-setting, planning, problem-solving, communicating, interpersonal effectiveness, and cross-cultural effectiveness. All students will have access to counselors for assistance with personal-social concerns, as well as academic and career planning.
- Teachers collaborate with counselors to enhance the cognitive and affective development of students and will have a fuller understanding of the guidance program.
- Administrators have a fuller understanding of the guidance program, a basis for determining staff and funding allocations, and a means for evaluating the program and expanding the program to the community.
- Boards of Education have a fuller understanding of the developmental guidance program and will gain a more defined rationale for inclusion of guidance in the school system.
- Counselors benefit from clearly defined responsibilities, elimination of non-guidance functions, and a framework to provide developmental guidance through a balanced, developmental program for all students.

The Purpose of the Guide

The purpose of this guide is to describe the Comprehensive, Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program model and to outline a process for tailoring the program model to meet the needs of the vast array of Texas public schools. It provides quality program standards designed to enhance district and campus efforts to improve the guidance programs. During the 1989-90 school year, the Guidance Advisory Committee reached consensus about the definition of and the goals for guidance programs in Texas public schools. This provided the guidance that school counselors will need to respond to the challenges they will face in the complex schools of the future. It is, thus, the nucleus of a training effort for counselors, administrators, and others.

In 1998, a second Guidance Advisory Committee examined the current needs of Texas students and made recommendations to update the work of the 1989-90 Guidance Advisory Committee. The guide presents a model for all schools, regardless of size, the maturity of the guidance program, or characteristics of communities. Districts continue to have the flexibility to modify it to meet local needs and to match local resources. A basic premise of this guide and the programmatic approach to guidance follows:

A guidance program must be designed to use resources that are available, or the campus or district must make available resources that are needed to implement the program as designed.

The design includes the establishment of priorities; the resources include all school staff in a team approach to the delivery of the program.

Both Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Texas Counseling Association (TCA) recommend this guide for use by Texas public schools, the information provided in this guide may be used to assist districts in complying with TEC §§33.005-33.007. The responsibilities of the counselor are defined in the TEA Counselor Job Description and Evaluation Form, developed by TEA in cooperation with TCA and the Texas School Counselors Association (TSCA) revised 2004. The responsibility statements are based on the 2004 Texas Evaluation Model for Professional School Counselors (TEMPSC II). The TEMPSC II is a publication of the Texas Counseling Association (TCA) and is available from TCA at www.txca.org. This evaluation form is congruent with the TEA Developmental Model. Districts are required to evaluate counselors' performance; use of the state form is recommended.

For Whom the Guide is Intended

The guide is intended for all educators and parents seeking to validate or improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the guidance program in their districts and on their campuses.

Parents: to help them understand, contribute and support a quality guidance and counseling program in order to effectively guide their children's development.

Teachers: to help them understand the goals of the guidance program so the teacher-counselor partnership can work to the maximum benefit of students.

Counselors: to help them establish, implement, and manage programs which will benefit all of their students.

Principals: to help them collaborate with counselors to design and deliver a quality guidance program.

District Administrators such as Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents, as well as Guidance Directors, and Curriculum Directors: to help them provide appropriate support for guidance program development efforts, to establish procedures which enhance the effectiveness of the guidance program, and to provide guidance for site-based committees.

Boards of Education: to help them set policies which cause the modernization of the guidance programs in their schools.

What is Included in the Guide

Section I includes background and contextual information about guidance programs and describes the philosophical foundation for guidance programs in Texas. It details the resources needed to support effective guidance programs.

Section II defines the structure of the model and presents recommendations for designing for appropriately balanced programs.

Section III defines the Responsibilities of the School Counselors, including statements about their training, specialized competencies, appropriate assignments and suggests considerations regarding counselor-to-student ratios.

Section IV further details The Scope and Sequence of a Guidance Curriculum component.

Section V outlines a process for implementing the Texas Comprehensive, Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program at both district and campus levels. Suggestions are included for program development and for steps to take in planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating the program.

Section VI provides some guidelines for evaluating the Texas Comprehensive, Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program, including the program as a whole, program improvements, and student growth due to program participation.

Rationale

Educational Reform. The educational reform movement with the ensuing laws, policies, and regulations has renewed interest in quality education for all students including students with special needs. Educational program and staff performance standards and accountability requirements have been established that improve education for all students. Alternative programs and special services that are responsive to the special needs of some students also have been created.

In the late 1990's increases in societal problems are being seen in indicators such as school drop-outs, adolescent and youth suicides, substance abuse by youth, harassment issues, gang involvement, racial tension and turmoil, and violence on school campuses.

In their efforts to reduce and eliminate these indicators, parents and educators have helped students to set high goals, hold high expectations for themselves, envision valuable futures, and strive to fully develop their potential.

Recognizing that the status quo is not good enough and that many challenges face the schools and school counselors, the College Board's Commission on PreCollege Guidance and Counseling recommended that local schools accomplish the following:

- establish school guidance improvement plans,
- define a broader role for school counselors,
- involve parents more fully in the learning and educational / career planning of their children, and
- provide fuller guidance and counseling support for children and young adolescents.

The Commission also recommended that collaboration with or the support of the following agencies is essential to the program:

- collaboration of schools and community groups to enhance student services,
- support of state education agencies through increased support for local initiatives,
- support of the federal government through continued programs that increase equity of opportunity for disadvantaged students, and
- support of higher education institutions through updated training programs to better prepare counselors for their new roles.

State Law and Policy. The Texas Education Agency *2001-2006 Long Range Plan of the State Board of Education for Public School Education* (p. 3) “We live in an age of transformation. It is illustrated by changing demographic and social patterns, made manifest by changing work force needs, and based upon changing ideas of education and what it means to be educated. Full participation in our society and economy now requires all of our citizens to achieve their full potential through learning. It means that high school diplomas and post-secondary degrees must be seen as steps, rather than end points, in a lifetime of continuous learning.”

Certification Required. The law (TEC §21.003) requires counselors to hold certification from the State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) or the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

The law (TEC §§33.003-33.007) specifies the duties of counselors and outlines components of the guidance program. The language describing guidance and counseling programs and the role of the counselor were updated when the new code was adopted in 1995. Specifically the legislation states:

The counselor shall work with the school faculty and staff, students, parents, and the community to plan, implement, and evaluate a developmental guidance and counseling program. The counselor shall design the program to include:

- a guidance curriculum to help students develop their full educational potential;
- a responsive services component to intervene on behalf of any student whose immediate personal concerns or problems put the student's continued educational, career, personal, or social development at risk;

- an individual planning system to guide a student as the student plans, monitors, and manages the student's own educational, career, personal, and social development; and
- system support to support the efforts of teachers, staff, parents, and other members of the community in promoting the educational, career, personal, and social development of students.

The primary responsibility of a school counselor is to counsel students to fully develop each student's academic, career, personal, and social abilities. Additionally, the counselor shall:

- participate in planning, implementing, and evaluating a comprehensive, developmental guidance program to serve all students and to address the special needs of students who are:
 - at risk of dropping out of school, becoming substance abusers, participating in gang activity, or committing suicide; or
 - in need of modified instructional strategies;
- consult with a student's parent or guardian and make referrals as appropriate in consultation with the student's parent or guardian;
- consult with school staff, parents, and other community members to help them increase the effectiveness of student education and promote student success;
- coordinate people and resources in the school, home, and community;
- with the assistance of school staff, interpret standardized test results and other assessment data that help a student make educational and career plans; and
- deliver classroom guidance activities or serve as a consultant to teachers conducting lessons based on the school's guidance curriculum.

In 1995, the Commissioner of Education was directed by TEC §21.356 to develop and periodically update a counselor job description and evaluation form. The law further directed the Commissioner of Education to consult state guidance education associations in the development and updating of a counselor job description and evaluation form. Evaluation must be based on job related performance. Counselors are to be evaluated annually.

To appropriately update school guidance and counseling, services must be integrated into programs and the programs must have a developmental basis that helps all students develop and practice specific competencies. Programs also must be systematically planned and delivered, and include a component that is responsive to students with special needs.

TEC Chapter 37 requires that a disciplinary alternative education program provide for student "behavioral needs" and requires that a disciplinary alternative education program provide supervision and counseling." Additionally, the law states that a program of educational and support services may be provided to a student and the student's parents when the offense involves drugs or alcohol."

State and Federal law concerning Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that students receive services as determined by the ARD and IEP which may include counseling.

The comprehensive, developmental guidance and counseling program model described in this document differs from historical models as compared in the following:

Historical	Developmental
Reactive	Planned, based on priorities
Crisis counseling only	Preventive and crisis counseling
Individual guidance & counseling only	Group guidance & counseling
Uneven service to students	Consistent service to all students
Emphasis on services	Emphasis on program
Information dissemination	Developmental curriculum
Clerical/administrative task oriented	Student goal attainment oriented
Unstructured program	Designed program
Unmeasurable	Evaluated and improved, based on evaluation results
Counselors only	Counselors + all school staff

The Comprehensive, Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program Model outlined in this guide reflects the characteristics of High Performing Counseling Programs.

FIGURE 1
Characteristics of High and Low Performing Counseling Programs

Recommendation #1: Establish a School Plan	
Low Performing Programs	High Performing Programs
A set of loosely related services performed almost exclusively by counselors	A well-defined planning process that leads to well-coordinated services for all students
Students “fall through the cracks”	An ongoing monitoring system is set up to constantly assess student performance and provide services where needed
Counselors operate in isolation from the school, community, and district	Counselors are part of planning teams
No coordinated planning process to provide for the needs of students; plans are viewed as a bureaucratic requirement	Planning process involves everyone in the school, community: students, parents, teachers, administrators, and counselors
Little district support	District provides services and support to schools by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing technical assistance in their assessment of needs and evaluation • providing special allocation of resources to schools serving large numbers of “at-risk” students • periodically reviewing school plans • identifying elements that should be coordinated across and among schools
Do not use data on a regular basis to analyze and improve students’ learning	Use data regularly to analyze and improve students’ learning
Recommendation #2: Clarify the Role of the Counselor	
Low Performing Programs	High Performing Programs
School principals view counselors as quasi-administrators whose primary function is to schedule students into classes	School principals emphasize the importance of the counselor as a monitor and promoter of student potential as well as a coordinator of school’s guidance plan
Counselors spend most of their time doing technical tasks, paperwork, and seemingly unrelated jobs as assigned (bus duty, supervision)	Counselors develop close alliances with teachers and link their work with students in the classroom
Counselors work with students exclusively on an individual basis	Counselors use group counseling, classroom presentations, and computer technology as well as individual counseling
Counselors operate in isolation	Schools create conditions for collaboration of counselors, teachers, and administrators—particularly for high-risk populations—to devise strategies for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving student performance and interest in school • understanding and addressing the needs of a changing student population • encouraging minority and poor students to continue their education • involving parents in the educational process • forging partnerships with community agencies, businesses, and universities to better serve the needs and interests of all students

FIGURE 1 (continued)

Counselors act as “gatekeepers” to limit access by performing screening functions	Counselors serve as “advocates” for all students, encouraging them to maximize their potential
Counselors’ sphere of influence is limited to working with students and other counselors	Counselors are viewed as having a central role in schoolwide change to improve student achievement and services
Recommendation #3: Involve Parents	
Low Performing Programs	High Performing Programs
Parent involvement is minimal and usually limited to PTA, fundraising, or attending open houses	Parent and family involvement means ensuring their participation in students’ academic planning, course selections, and options regarding postsecondary choices
Regular day schedule prevails regardless of the needs of the community; parents are expected to adjust their schedules to the school’s	Information for parents is provided at a time and in places that are convenient for family work schedules; this may mean flexible scheduling for counselors, teachers, and administrators
Recommendation #4: Provide Guidance and Support for Children and Young Adolescents	
Low Performing Programs	High Performing Programs
Too many excuses for why poor kids can’t learn	All students are viewed as potential high achievers
Students separated by “perceived” ability into homogeneous groups	Most/all instruction in heterogeneous groups
Only high-ability students taught advanced-level material or given college information	All students get same rigorous core curriculum and are offered the full range of postsecondary opportunities
Low achievement and poor school functioning blamed on others	Staff views improving achievement and school functioning as its responsibility
Few support services for students	Ample support services closely integrated with instructional program
Little college information given to students and parents until high school and usually not until 11th and 12th grades	Extra efforts are made at elementary and middle school to work with students and parents in understanding college options and financial aid opportunities
Recommendation #5: Provide Better Services Through Collaboration	
Low Performing Programs	High Performing Programs
Few students get served-schools try to “do it all”	Schools build a support system with human service agencies, colleges, and other community organizations
School services focus on students who are academically successful or potential dropouts; the students “in the middle” get ignored	“Average” students get the needed extra attention by collaboration with colleges and businesses through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mentorships • grants • employment • college transition programs

Source: Selected from table in *Making the Vision a Reality* (College Entrance Examination Board, CEEB 1996), pp. 10-17

Student Needs. The contributions of school counselors and guidance programs to the educational mission and to the individual student's development are many and varied. Although the basic goal of school guidance is to enhance the student's educational development, studies show that through guidance and/ or counseling, some students achieve identified results in a range of related areas:

- academic achievement,
- improved school attendance,
- improved school attitudes,
- improved school behavior,
- social skills,
- information to assist in choosing potential careers,
- self-confidence development,
- interpersonal relationships, and
- life satisfaction.

Counseling issues that have been identified by students are wide-ranging:

- school attitudes and behaviors,
- test anxiety,
- peer relationships,
- study skills,
- career planning,
- suicide,
- school safety,
- harassment issues,
- bullying & victimization,
- gang pressures,
- conflict resolution,
- college choice,
- death of a family member,
- family divorce,
- substance abuse,
- family abuse,
- scholarships, and
- financial aid.

Definition

Comprehensive, developmental guidance and counseling programs are vital to the achievement of excellence in education for all students. The Texas Comprehensive, Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program is an integral part of each school's total educational program. In order to preserve the academic day, team planning is necessary when delivering the developmental guidance and counseling program. The counselors primary focus is to facilitate instruction by removing impediments to student learning. It is developmental by design and includes sequential activities organized and implemented by certified school counselors with the support of teachers, administrators, students, and parents.

Comprehensive, developmental guidance and counseling programs organize resources to meet the priority needs of students through four delivery system components. The identified needs of all students in prekindergarten through grade twelve provide the basis for the developmental guidance program, delivered through the Guidance Curriculum and Individual Planning System components. The identified special needs of some students provide the basis for the Responsive Services component. The identified needs of the school system itself are met through the System Support component.

Assumptions

For effective implementation of the comprehensive, developmental guidance program to occur, certain programmatic conditions must exist and resources must be allocated as outlined below.

Conditions Required. The Texas Comprehensive, Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program model is based on the following assumptions regarding conditions:

The minimum level program provides for each of the four delivery system components and employs a professionally certified school counselor.

All students, parents, teachers, and other recipients of the guidance program have equal access to the program regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, cultural background, disability, socioeconomic status, learning ability level, or language.

Parents will be full partners with educators in the education of their children. (TEC Chapter 26)

Counselors who are employed in a setting that is characterized by adequate physical and attitudinal resources are able to make their unique contributions to the educational program and to the healthy growth and development of the students. The conditions required for effective program implementation include being in a positive work environment (one with favorable interpersonal relations among the school staff); administrative commitment to and support of the guidance and counseling program; and an adequate budget and guidance materials.

School administrators understand and support the program's priorities and its demands. Administrators make decisions and establish policies and procedures in light of this understanding. For example, since counselors must have access to students and vice versa, schedules will be developed which allow student accessibility. The Texas Education Agency will continue to provide, through the Guidance Unit, leadership and technical assistance as the schools implement the Comprehensive, Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program.

Resources Needed. The more resources a program has to support it, the bigger the contribution that can be made to students' education and development.

Staff:

- Staff responsibilities: All staff members accept responsibility for guidance program goals and objectives.
- Counselors' qualifications: School counselors should be fully certified either by the Texas Education Agency or by the State Board of Educator Certification and have the special training needed to carry out specialized job assignments.
- Staffing Patterns: For appropriate implementation of the guidance program, the roles of each of the staff members and their organizational relationships must be clearly defined.
- Professional relationships are characterized by respect, collaboration, and cooperation.
- Ratios: The counselor-to-student ratio has to be adequate to implement the designed program, or the program has to be designed within the parameters of the ratio.

Parent Awareness and Support. Parents have access to preview guidance program and materials that may be used with their children in the delivery of the comprehensive, developmental guidance and counseling program. Parent and family involvement in education is essential to the intellectual growth and academic achievement of their children.

Program and Staff Development: Time and opportunity need to be provided for guidance programs to be designed and evaluated and for implementation plans and products (e.g., program component resource guides) to be developed. Inservice training to facilitate counselors' achievement of professional growth goals should be provided.

Budget: An adequate guidance department budget should be established to support program needs and goals. Budget sources should include:

- Campus budgets: similar to those of other departments;
- District budgets: for categories of items that are centrally managed; for example, program materials, audiovisual, computer or other capital outlay equipment;
- State and Federal appropriations where applicable; for example, the following funded programs are allowed to spend money for guidance and counseling:
 - Bilingual Education
 - Compensatory Education
 - Drop-Out Prevention
 - Safe and Drug-Free Schools
 - Gifted and Talented Students Education
 - Migrant Education
 - Special Education
 - Career and Technology Education
 - Communities In Schools

Materials, Supplies, and Equipment: These should be easily accessible to support the program. Materials should be relevant to the program, appropriate for the community, and of sufficient quantity to be useful. The counselor should have locked files and private lines on telephones.

Facilities: All facilities must be easily accessible and adequate to allow for implementation of the developmental program; specifically, the counselor must have the following:

- a private office, properly equipped and soundproofed, built with consideration of the students' right to privacy and confidentiality,
- access to facilities for conducting small group counseling and large group guidance,
- adequate space to organize and display guidance materials, and
- storage space.

