

Dardanelle Middle School Guidance, Counseling, and Career Education Services

Objectives of the counseling department are to:

- Assist students in the areas of personal, social, and academic growth.
- Assist students in the acquisition of problem-solving skills.
- Increase our students' knowledge of the various careers available to them and the skills that they will need to be productive workers.
- Collaborate with the members of the Response to Intervention Team to assist them in helping students be successful.
- Assist families in their efforts to understand the developmental growth of children.

Role of the school counselor:

The primary role of the school counselor is to assist in the maintenance of sound mental health of administrators, faculty, staff, and students. In addition the counselor has the following primary responsibilities:

- Plan and evaluate the developmental guidance program.
- Provide classroom guidance sessions for all students.
- Counsel small groups of students.
- Counsel individual students.
- Consult with teachers, parents, and staff.
- Consult with outside agencies.
- Conduct classroom observations for students referred for evaluation for learning disabilities.
- Inform students and their parents about special programs/specialists.
- Serve as building Parent Involvement coordinator.
- Serve as mediator for parties involved in conflicts.
- Assist with orientation activities.
- Assist with scheduling of students by establishing academic goals.
- Consult with parents, faculty, and outside agencies to resolve student problem or meet their needs.

Career Awareness and Planning:

- Provide classroom lessons/activities related to the world of work, career choices, and the skills, aptitudes, and interests required for different occupations.
- Students are reminded of the necessary skills that they will need in order to be an efficient and productive worker.
- Schedule members of our community to come in and share their career with our students.

Facilities for the Guidance Program:

- The counselor has a private office with adequate space to conduct individual and small group counseling.
- A private telephone line is provided for conducting confidential telephone conferences.
- Permanent cumulative records for each student are located in the school's main office.
- Professional reading materials are available for teachers in the guidance office.
- Informational books, pamphlets, and videos are available for students and/or parents in the guidance office and in our Parent Center.

School Suicide/Crisis Plan:

- Every staff member serves as part of this team which is directed by the administrators and the counselor.
- Staff members make immediate referrals to the counselor when they identify a student to be at risk for self-destructive behavior.
- Any student who is referred is screened by the counselor, parents are notified, and a referral is made to a mental health professional.
- If a student death occurs, the faculty will be notified immediately. Staff members will meet so that complete, accurate information can be disseminated and plans for the aftermath of the tragedy can be reviewed.
- Additional counseling services provided by representatives of area mental health agencies, members of the ministerial alliance, and other school district counselors will be made available to students and staff members.
- Announcement/acknowledgement of the event will be made during planning period.
- Emotionally distraught students will be escorted to the guidance office.
- Follow-up counseling will be available to those who need it.

Psychological Services:

- Recommend evaluation of students with learning and adjustment problems as well as evaluation of students in exceptional programs.
- Provide consultation and counseling with parents, students, and school personnel.
- Provide a system for the identification of learning potential and factors which affect the child's educational performance.
- Provide policies which assure ethical procedures in psychological activities.
- Provide a system of liaison and referrals with resources available outside the school.
- Coordinate and participate on teams for academic and behavioral intervention strategies.

Conflict Resolution Services:

- These services include educational and social programs (prevention and intervention) which help students develop skills that enable them to resolve conflicts between groups and promote understanding, positive communications, and opportunities for the development of inter-group skills.
- The administrator, counselor, and/or grade level team leader will act as mediator for those involved in conflict.
- Students receive instruction in the following conflict-solving strategies:

Dealing constructively with conflict

Building positive self-esteem

Respecting human differences

Making responsible decisions

Developing sensitivity to others

Practicing conflict resolution

Anger management skill building

Developing positive interpersonal skills

At-Risk Students:

- At-risk children are those enrolled in school or eligible for enrollment whose progress toward graduation, school achievement, preparation for employment, and future productive workers and citizens are jeopardized by a variety of health, social, educational, familial, and economic factors. They are children with special needs for whom expectations are often low.
- Appropriate steps will be taken to identify at-risk students and determine the appropriate services that are needed.

Alternative Educational Services:

- In-School Suspension (ISS) – Every effort is made to keep students in school and provide the best education possible. At times, student behavior will necessitate a change in schedule on a temporary or long-term basis. At such times, in-school suspension is used, the length of which depends upon the seriousness of the misbehavior. The student does his regular classroom work for credit, and no absence is recorded. The primary objective of ISS is to deter further misbehavior.
- Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) – Out-of-school suspension occurs for a period up to a maximum of ten (10) days. Class work cannot be made up for credit, and the days out of school are recorded as absences.
- Homebound Instruction – Homebound instruction is at times recommended for special situations, such as serious medical problems which prohibit a student from attending school or for students whose behavior warrants such intervention. A certified teacher is responsible for providing instruction in the student's home or at a mutually agreed upon site.

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