

Tips for Parent Conferences

Parent conferences are an important way to learn about your child. Here are tips to help you have a more successful parent-teacher conference.

Plan for it

Before you come to your conference, write out questions you would like to ask. Here are a few suggestions:

- Does my child get along with others?
- How is my child's behavior in class?
- Does my child read at the level you would expect?
- Is my child able to do the math that you would expect?
- What are my child's strengths and weaknesses?

Keep an open mind

Your goal is to work for cooperation with your child's teacher. Even if the teacher says something with which you disagree, try and listen to what she or he has to say.

Ask to see your child's work

There is no better way to see how your child is progressing.

Ask for suggestions

If your child is doing well, ask what you can do to keep things on a positive track. If there are problems, ask what you can do to help.

Clarify and summarize as you go

Teachers sometimes may use educational terms you or your child do not understand. If this occurs, just ask for clarification.

Counselors Work With...

Students

Counselors work with students individually and in small or large groups. The counseling method differs with the student, situation and need.

Teachers

Classroom teachers and school counselors support each other's work through classroom observation, consultation, sharing information and cooperating on intervention strategies for students with special needs.

Parents

Consulting with parents is an important part of the school counselor's job. Guidance activities may include consulting with parents regarding their children; providing parent workshops; meetings for special purposes such as achievement test interpretation; school orientation programs; and providing programs for parents of children with specific needs.

Other School Staff

Counselors assist administrators in such areas as evaluating specific programs, discussing student needs and keeping administrators informed about services.

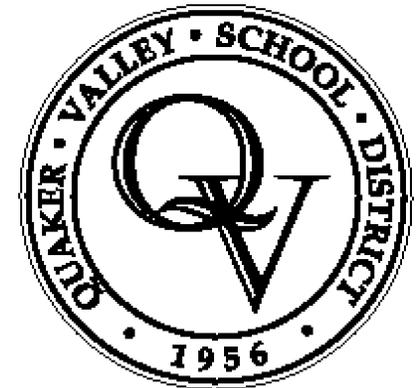
They also work closely with curriculum specialists, other pupil services specialists, and community service agencies.

Qualifications of the School Counselor

As certified educational specialists, school counselors understand human behavior and relationships. Consequently, they are integral in assisting students in maximizing their potential. All school counselors are required to have at least a masters degree in counselor education and be appropriately certified through the PA Department of Education.

Quaker Valley School District

www.qvdsd.org



Guidance Services

Pupil Services Department

www.qvdsd.org

Edgeworth Elementary

412-749-3629

Osborne Elementary

412-749-4004

Quaker Valley Middle School

412-749-5097

412-749-5098

Quaker Valley High School

412-749-6004

412-749-6015

The Role of the School Counselor

- To provide classroom and small group activities that focus on developing relationships, conflict resolution, problem-solving and decision-making skills in all grade levels
- To assist students and families in acquiring help from within the school and from community agencies when needed
- To help students develop an understanding of differences and responsibility in their interaction with others
- To provide parent education and information
- To provide consultation and support services to parents
- To serve as a resource and support to teachers and other staff
- To prepare students for standardized testing and interpret the results to students, parents and teachers
- To provide orientation and services to prepare students for transition as they enter and move through the school system
- To identify and prevent potential academic, personal and social problems
- To help identify and support children with special needs
- To provide crisis intervention when necessary

Comprehensive Guidance Services

- ◆**Curriculum** - Units are integrated with the academic curriculum to enhance age-appropriate skills.
- ◆**Educational Planning** - Students are provided opportunities for academic planning, goal setting and career exploration.
- ◆**Responsive Services** - Small-group experiences for students with specific concerns are provided during the school day. Individual short-term counseling is provided as needed. Students may self-refer, or be referred by parents and school staff.
- ◆**Partnerships** - Counselors collaborate with parents, peers, teachers and community agency specialists to provide services to students and families.



Sequential Guidance Services

Comprehensive guidance services are sequential. Guidance activities appropriate to each level are planned, beginning in kindergarten and continuing through graduation. By introducing and reinforcing skills at each level, guidance counselors help students to develop to their potential.

Counselors help children deal with the social problems that confront them, including bullying and also problems associated with family issues and changes.

Elementary Level

Research in child development shows that children establish lifelong behavioral patterns when they are between six and ten years of age - the first years of school. For this reason, it is critical that counseling services and early intervention be available to students during their early years. Elementary counselors identify students who need interventions to succeed, and work with high-risk students with such difficulties as poor attendance, peer relationships, behavior problems, poor work habits, and family transitions.

Middle School Level

Middle school counselors continue the service begun in the elementary school. Large group instruction, small focus groups, individual assistance and crisis intervention comprise a great majority of student contact time. They recognize students' struggles with emerging independence and their need to manage the accompanying responsibility. Counselors work closely with academic teams to develop the whole child. Self discovery, student achievement, and the acquisition of decision-making and interpersonal skills are at the core of the middle school experience. The middle school counselor is deeply engaged in that process and supports students and families on a successful journey toward high school.

High School Level

High school guidance services continue to focus on preparing students to become contributing members of society. Counselors work closely with administrators, teachers and parents to assist at-risk students or refer them to appropriate community resources. The high school counseling team also monitors and advises students in appropriate academic course selection. Through career exploration activities, large and small group instruction, preparation, organization and administration of standardized testing, and interpersonal skills development, high school counselors help promote students' successful transition to post-secondary endeavors.