

**Performance Standards, Performance Criteria, and Descriptive Examples**

**Standard I: Counselors are committed to students and their learning.**

Performance Criteria:

**A. Counselors act on the belief that every student can learn with appropriate supports.**

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Communicates through counseling practice that every student can learn through effective effort and strategies | Fails to communicate through counseling practices that all students can learn through effective effort and strategies |
| Utilizes a variety of information sources to  help students determine an appropriately rigorous academic program | Uses limited information sources to determine student academic programs |
| Assists students in knowing their own learning  patterns and using them to plan their educational experience | Provides minimal assistance to students in  knowing their learning patterns and applying that knowledge to educational planning |
| As part of a collaborative team, assists in identifying appropriate supports for students  who need them | Rarely participates in the identification of appropriate student supports |
| Guides students in planning educational experiences which can support their needs and develop their potential | Provides little guidance for educational planning |

**B. Counselors recognize individual differences and advocate for equity of all students.**

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Recognizes and appreciates individual  differences | Rarely demonstrates appreciation of  differences |
| Consistently and proactively promotes equity  for all students through words and actions | Inconsistently or rarely promotes equity for all  students |
| Addresses incidents of inequity and/or bias through a variety of responses | Infrequently addresses incidents of inequity |
| Acts as an advocate for students in any  reasonable cause and assists them in working toward resolving conflicts | Rarely serves as a student advocate or assists them in resolving conflicts |

**C. Counselors share responsibility for student academic, career, personal, interpersonal, and health development.**

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Establishes a counseling and guidance program  and implements it in accordance with the MCPS Comprehensive School Counseling Program | Fails to establish a counseling and guidance program that is in accordance with the MCPS Comprehensive School Counseling Program |
| Collaborates with appropriate staff to  implement Student Services Standards | Does not implement Student Services  Standards or implements without collaboration |
| Helps guide students in their comprehensive  development to support learning | Shows little evidence of guiding students in  their comprehensive development |

**D. Counselors understand theories of child development and their implications for learning.**

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standards** | **Below Standards** |
| Helps guide educational decisions considering student developmental readiness | Does not take developmental readiness into account when guiding educational decision |
| Assists staff and parents in understanding the  implications of child development in the learning process | Rarely helps staff and parents understand the  implications of child development in the learning process |
| Uses a variety of developmentally appropriate strategies to support student growth | Occasionally demonstrates the use of  developmentally appropriate strategies to support student growth |

**Standard II: Counselors know counseling theories and techniques and their application to student learning and development.**

Performance Criteria:

**A. Counselors are knowledgeable about counseling theory and use appropriate skills and techniques in a variety of settings to support student learning.**

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Demonstrates the use of effective counseling skills such as rapport building, reflective  listening, open-ended questioning, use of silence, prompts, and summarizing | Fails to demonstrate the use of effective counseling skills |
| Differentiates techniques, such as expressive and play techniques, modeling, role play, behavior  rehearsal, cognitive restructuring, empty chair or relaxation, based on unique needs of individual students | Infrequently differentiates techniques based on unique student needs |
| Works with students in classrooms, small  groups, and individually to provide prevention, intervention, and crisis support as appropriate | Does not work with students in a variety of  settings to provide prevention, intervention, and crisis support |
| Encourages students, through group guidance and responsive counseling, to utilize the counselor to address issues that have an impact  on learning and motivation | Rarely encourages students to utilize the counselor to address issues which have an impact on learning and motivation |

**B. Counselors use a variety of forms of communication to support student learning.**

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Communicates skills for academic success  through classroom/group guidance, responsive counseling, individual planning, and school program support | Does not provide classroom/group guidance, responsive counseling, individual planning, and school program support |
| Engages in outreach to all parents to  encourage their participation in the educational experience | Infrequently engages in parent outreach efforts |
| Communicates with school staff to support learning | Infrequently communicates with school staff |
| Demonstrates the ability to use technology as a communication tool | Is unable to use technology as a communication tool |

**C. Counselors work from an understanding of cultural and learning style differences to support student learning.**

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Advocates for the use of a variety of instructional strategies and modalities when  working with students’ cultural and learning style differences | Has little awareness of instructional strategies appropriate for cultural and learning style differences |
| Uses and models a variety of strategies and modalities when working with students | Rarely varies strategies and modalities |
| Assists students in understanding their learning styles, abilities, and interests and in using them  for decision making | Provides little assistance to students in understanding and using learning styles, abilities,  and interests |

**Standard III: Counselors collaborate in the process of establishing and facilitating a positive learning environment to enhance student growth and achievement.**

Performance Criteria:

A. Counselors promote a positive learning environment in which students can develop skills for success.

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Demonstrates acceptance, openness, support,  responsiveness, courtesy, and consideration for all students | Rarely demonstrates acceptance, openness,  support, responsiveness, courtesy, and consideration |
| Provides group individual activities which support identified needs of students | Provides inappropriate or few group and individual activities which support identified needs of students |
| Designs, selects, and/or implements activities to  support independent learning, critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, and goal setting skills | Demonstrates little evidence of activities to  support independent learning, critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, and goal setting skills |
| Uses a variety of strategies to increase student awareness of the world of work and its  connection to academic achievement | Does little to increase student awareness of the world of work and its connection to academic  achievement |
| Serves as a resource for teachers, students, and families by sharing knowledge and information | Rarely acts as a resource for teachers, students, and families |

B. In collaboration with staff, counselors involve students in meaningful learning opportunities.

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| In collaboration with staff, supports educational, career, and personal development of all students | Rarely collaborates with staff, typically making unilateral decisions concerning students’  educational, career, and personal development |
| Uses a variety of strategies to generate interest,  access, and participation in school programs | Uses limited or inappropriate strategies to  enhance the level of student involvement |
| Systematically promotes student progress toward graduation and the exploration of post-secondary opportunities | Fails to demonstrate systematic promotion of progress toward graduation and exploration of post-secondary opportunities |
| Collaborates with staff to develop strategies that  assist in meeting the needs of diverse populations | Does not consider the needs of diverse populations when collaborating with staff |

C. Counselors establish and maintain respectful partnerships with families in support of a positive school environment.

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Communicates with families in a proactive  approach using a variety of communication modalities | Little evidence of communication with families |
| Identifies appropriate programs and resources to meet the needs of all students in partnership with families | Limited awareness of programs and resources to meet the needs of all students and families |
| Assists families in accessing resources | Little evidence of assisting families in accessing  resources |
| Considers the uniqueness of families when  planning activities which promote a positive school environment | Does not consider the uniqueness of families  when planning activities which promote a positive school environment |
| Uses counseling strategies to establish relationships with families and communities  which reflect respect for every individual | Establishes relationships with families and communities which do not communicate respect  for every individual |

D. Counselors utilize community resources to support and enhance a positive learning environment.

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Has a working knowledge of community resources and agencies | Is unfamiliar with community resources and agencies |
| Establishes a cooperative relationship with a variety of community agencies | Has little or no relationship with community agencies |
| Collaborates with community resources to facilitate school programming | Rarely collaborates with community resources to facilitate school programming |
| Serves as a liaison to the community by participating in meetings involving parents,  students, and school | Infrequently participates in meeting involving parents, students, and school |

E. Counselors collaborate in the facilitation of continuous improvement of the learning environment.

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Prepares and supports students for transitions | Evidences little involvement in student transition |
| Assists staff and students in developing  sensitivity to and respect for the diversity in  MCPS | Provides minimal assistance to staff and students  in developing sensitivity to and respect for diversity |
| Consults with families and staff to appraise student needs and interests and to discuss  appropriate recommendations for educational options | Rarely consults with others to appraise student needs and recommend options or recommends inappropriate options |

**Standard IV: Counselors collaborate to continually assess and analyze student needs in order to develop appropriate counseling and guidance interventions/programs.**

Performance Criteria:

A. Counselors use a variety of formal and informal techniques to assess student needs.

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Uses needs assessment surveys and a variety of  other data sources to gather information about student needs | Does not assess need through data collection |
| Considers demographic, performance, and other relevant data when planning and developing programs | Plans without consideration of various data sources |
| Collaborates with staff, parents, and the  community to identify and monitor student needs | Is minimally involved in the identification and  monitoring of student needs |

B. Counselors implement counseling and guidance interventions/programs based on the analysis of data.

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Designs interventions based on data analysis | Does not design interventions based on data  analysis |
| Analyzes and uses evaluative data to help determine changes needed in students’ program | Determines program changes without consideration of data |
| Assists students in using data to develop objectives and strategies for achieving goals | Rarely involves students in using data for goal setting |
| Collaborates with school staff to implement programs that address School Improvement Plan  goals | Little evidence of collaborative implementation of the School Improvement Plan goals |
| Demonstrates the ability to use technology to  review student performance data | Is not able to use technology to review student  performance data |

C. Counselors monitor and evaluate counseling and guidance intervention/program effectiveness.

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Uses school data such as grades, work/study skills, attendance, behavior referrals, test scores, and pre/post assessment tools and other  information sources to monitor, evaluate, and revise the counseling program | Does not monitor or assess program effectiveness; does not connect program effectiveness with school data; does not revise programs using evaluation information |
| Communicates student progress information to students, parents, and staff in an effective and  timely manner and involves them in the planning and implementation of follow-up as appropriate | Rarely communicates with students, parents, and staff about student progress in counseling programs or in planning for follow-up |
| Consults with other school professionals and utilizes feedback to modify program | Rarely seeks feedback from other professionals about program |
| Considers parent feedback relevant to the effectiveness of programs and interventions | Infrequently seeks parent feedback or considers it |

**Standard V: Counselors are committed to continuous improvement and professional development.**

Performance Criteria:

A. Counselors continually reflect upon their practices in promoting student achievement, growth, and development.

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Incorporates feedback from teachers, parents,  students, and administrators when determining counselor effectiveness | Fails to incorporate appropriate feedback when determining counselor effectiveness |
| Participates in self-assessment activities | Rarely participates in self-assessment activities |
| Integrates knowledge and skills gained through  professional development experiences into counseling practice | Does not integrate current best practices into their counseling |
| Knows when case consultation is necessary and seeks assistance as appropriate | Does not recognize the need for consultation and/or does not seek assistance when appropriate |

B. Counselors maintain awareness of current, effective counseling trends, practices, and materials.

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Acquires knowledge and skills in best practices  through professional activities such as:   attending workshops and conferences   participating in seminars and in-service trainings   reading professional literature   affiliating with professional organizations | Does not pursue knowledge about counseling best practices through a variety of professional activities |
| Utilizes school-based, county, and/or community resources for professional growth | Evidences little awareness of resources available for professional growth |
| Participates in professional activities to enhance knowledge related to cultural sensitivity | Rarely participates in professional activities to enhance knowledge related to cultural sensitivity |
| Collaborates with other professionals in the field | Shows little or no evidence of collaboration with other professionals in the field |

C. Counselors are members of learning communities.

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Participates actively in school and/or systemwide  committees and workgroups | Participates infrequently in school and/or  systemwide committees and workgroups |
| Consults regularly with teachers and other staff | Rarely consults with teachers and other staff |

**Standard VI: Counselors exhibit a high degree of professionalism.**

Performance Criteria:

A. Counselors uphold the vision of the Montgomery County Public Schools.

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Is knowledgeable about and adheres to Board of  Education goals and priorities & MCPS policies and procedures | Demonstrates limited knowledge of or adherence  to Board of Education goals and priorities & MCPS policies and procedures |
| Assists students, parents, and staff in understanding relevant policies and procedures | Provides minimal and/or inaccurate assistance to students, parents, and staff in understanding relevant policies and procedures |

B. Counselors share responsibility for total school program and support school-wide goals.

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Participates actively in the implementation of  schoolwide goals | Is uninvolved in the implementation of  schoolwide goals |
| Supports total school program by:   serving on committees   helping to plan and implement meetings and staff development opportunities   sharing knowledge and expertise with colleagues   utilizing facilitative skills when collaborating | Rarely demonstrates total school program support |
| Engages in collaborative problem solving | Does not collaborate across disciplines to address problems |
| Participates in school management activities and  share responsibility for total school program, as appropriate to the counselor role | Participates minimally in school management  activities and/or fails to share appropriate responsibility for total school program |

C. Counselors demonstrate the ethical standards of their profession.

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Follows federal, state, and local policies, procedures, and protocols regarding professional  issues and responsibilities | Fails to follow federal, state, and local policies, procedures, and protocols regarding professional  issues and responsibilities |
| Adheres to the ethical standards of the American Counseling Association and the American School Counselor Association | Is unaware of or fails to adhere to the ethical  standards of the American Counseling Association and the American School Counselor Association |
| Respects the confidentiality in the school  counseling relationship, understands the privacy of student records, and recognizes the duty to warn when a student is in danger of harming self and/or others. | Does not respect confidentiality, understand the privacy of student records, recognize the duty to warn, or warns inappropriately |

D. Counselors are knowledgeable and respectful of diverse cultural backgrounds of all individuals.

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Demonstrates sensitivity to individual  differences without exception | Is insensitive to individual differences |
| Demonstrates awareness of the demographics  of Montgomery County and of assigned school | Demonstrates little awareness of county or  school demographics |
| Demonstrates a command of the demographics  of the assigned school and cluster | Is unable to articulate the demographics of the  assigned school and cluster |
| Is aware of personal biases and the impact these have on counseling practices | Is unaware of personal biases or displays inappropriate biases in counseling practice |

E. Counselors conduct themselves in such a manner as to advance respect for the profession.

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| *Descriptive Examples* | |
| **Meets Standard** | **Below Standard** |
| Meets professional obligations in a timely manner | Fails to meet professional obligations in a timely manner |
| Is appropriately prepared for professional obligations | Is rarely prepared or inappropriately prepared for professional obligations |
| Follows school operating procedures | Infrequently or inconsistently follows school  operating procedures |
| Builds positive relationships with students, staff,  and community | Does not build positive relationships with  students, staff, and community |