

# POLICY

## BOARD OF EDUCATION OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

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**Related Entries:** IJA-RA

**Responsible Office:** Special Education and Student Services

### **School Counseling Programs and Services**

#### **A. PURPOSE**

The Board of Education is committed to ensuring high quality school counseling programs that are comprehensive, developmentally appropriate, foster academic achievement and personal growth, and are provided to all Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) students in an equitable manner.

#### **B. ISSUE**

Comprehensive, developmentally appropriate, school counseling programs and services provided by credentialed school counselors are essential to achieving the MCPS mission of academic excellence and success for all students. School counselors are critical partners in the delivery of a high quality education and contribute significantly to the removal of barriers to learning. In partnership with school staff, school counselors teach the knowledge and skills necessary for success in a rigorous instructional program and promote healthy social and emotional development as it pertains to academic achievement. Counselors collaborate with staff, parents, and community members to mobilize resources needed to support student success. Counselors support students in attaining their full potential and achieving their academic and personal aspirations.

#### **C. POSITION**

1. In all schools:
  - a) Counselors provide a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate school counseling program to all students
  - b) The school counseling program aligns with the MCPS educational mission
  - c) Counselors provide information and support to students and families about academic programming, community supports, and other relevant information

- d) School counselors are essential to the articulation process and communicate information needed to ensure a student's continued success
  - e) The school counseling program is based on national standards and includes prevention, intervention, and crisis response services
  - f) School counselors promote personal, interpersonal, health, academic, and career development for all students through proactive classroom programs and other services
  - g) School counselors address the unique needs of individual students through interventions which are culturally appropriate
  - h) School counselors communicate the role and goals of the school counseling program with all stakeholders including students, parents, staff, administrators, and community
  - i) The school counseling program and school counselors address equitably the needs of the diverse school population and advocate for educational excellence for all students
  - j) School counselors collect and analyze both qualitative and quantitative data to identify and address student needs and to develop, implement, evaluate, and continuously improve the counseling program
2. The school counseling program is implemented in grades preK-12. Because the academic and developmental needs of students change as they mature, the counseling program addresses the unique academic and developmental needs of students at each school level in collaboration with staff, parents, and community.
- a. At the elementary level:
    - (1) The school counseling program promotes school success by assisting students in acquiring the skills and attitudes necessary for academic achievement
    - (2) The school counseling program teaches decision making, problem solving, and resiliency skills
    - (3) School counselors foster the development of positive self-concept and interpersonal skills

- b. At the middle school level:
  - (1) The school counseling program focuses on building academic and social competence and career awareness
  - (2) School counselors coordinate, monitor, and manage the process by which students develop a rigorous, appropriate comprehensive plan that meets high school graduation requirements and reflects post secondary goal setting
- c. At the high school level:
  - (1) School counselors meet with students regularly to review, guide, and support them through the academic and career planning process. School counselors plan and manage the process for students reviewing and updating rigorous comprehensive plans to support students' post-secondary educational and career goals
  - (2) The school counseling program equips students to develop competence in decision making, career planning, interpersonal relationships, personal responsibility, and other skills essential to being a productive citizen

#### **D. DESIRED OUTCOMES**

Throughout MCPS, all students will have access to comprehensive, developmentally appropriate school counseling programs and services which support academic achievement and personal growth. At all school levels, school counselors collaborate with parents, students, staff, and community to remove barriers to learning and provide opportunities and supports to empower students to embrace their full potential and achieve their academic and personal aspirations.

#### **E. REVIEW AND REPORTING**

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the Board of Education policy review process.

*Policy History:* Adopted by Resolution No. 410-78, June 12, 1978; amended by Resolution No. 621-04, November 9, 2004.