

Elementary School Counselors Report

R.S. 17:3005
December 2024

Overview

As required by [R.S. 17:3005](#), the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall annually report to the legislature on the implementation and effectiveness of elementary school counselors for all students in kindergarten through grade six in the public elementary schools in the state.

Background

A professional school counselor helps to support academic success, assists with the development of interpersonal skills, and provides input toward the career development of students.

As such, R. S. 17:3005 (C) states school counselors provide preventive and developmental counseling services to all public elementary school students in kindergarten through grade six to prepare them for middle, junior, and senior high school responsibilities. The statute states the following:

1. Aid children in academic development through the use and interpretation of test scores, improved pupil self-concept, and early identification and attention to problems that are deterrents to learning and development.
2. Serve as consultants to teachers relative to the use of test scores and improvement of the learning environment, use of out-of-state school resources and agencies, and development of a home-school liaison.
3. Offer services related to the identification and placement of children with handicapping conditions.
4. Serve as a consultant to parents, in a liaison capacity, as a resource in understanding growth and development problems, and as an aid in understanding how some non-school factors affect the learning and achievement of children.
5. Serve as a resource in decreasing discipline and other at-risk behavioral problems through an understanding of peer relations, teacher-pupil relations, social awareness, drug awareness, and others.
6. Aid in improving school attendance and retention by implementing an early identification and prevention program for potential attendance and retention problems.
7. Serve as a resource to parents in decreasing the incidence of juvenile delinquency by early intervention through guidance and counseling services.
8. Consult with teachers in implementing a career development program that, at the elementary school level, includes self-awareness, job awareness, and prevocational orientation.
9. Provide an available source for youngsters needing someone to "just listen" to their problems or concerns.

Methodology

A survey was created to assess the preventive and developmental counseling services provided by elementary schools. Administrators and elementary school counselors with students in grades K-6 were asked to complete and submit the Elementary School Counselor Survey by October 1, 2024. Notices about the survey were included in the System Leader monthly call, the Career and College Readiness monthly call, the System Leader newsletter, and the Counselor Connect newsletter.

Findings

More than 700 administrators and elementary school counselors completed the Elementary School Counselor Survey. Seventy-six percent (76%) of the survey respondents stated they have at least one school counselor on their campus full-time. Approximately 20% have a school counselor on campus part-time, or they share a counselor with other schools within their school district.

Some of the challenges reported include schools having to be creative with the ways they provide counseling-related services to students. For example, if there is no school counselor on campus, schools utilize social workers and/or an on-site community health clinic, student support team advisors, administrators, etc. to provide counseling-related services to students.

Elementary school counselors are also challenged with engaging in non-counseling-related tasks such as serving as the 504 coordinator, serving as the testing coordinator, participating in SBLC committees, performing duty tasks, etc. Engaging in those and a myriad of other potential tasks prevents elementary school counselors from providing counseling services to students in need.

Another barrier reported by administrators and school counselors is the need for additional counselors at their schools because of the high counselor-to-student ratios. One school counselor reported that she serves two elementary schools in her school system and that each school has over 500 students. Another school counselor reported that the school has over 700 students with only one counselor.

Fifty-four percent (54%) of administrators and counselors reported their school counseling program includes career development/ exploration activities for their students. 30% reported that their school counseling program does not include planning career activities; while 6% reported that it is unknown whether or not their school counseling program included career development activities for students in grades K-6.

Survey Data

Elementary School Counselors Report Responses		
Total Number of Responses	719	100%
Administrators	318	44%
Counselors	401	56%

Elementary School Counselors Report questions (719 responses)						
Question	Yes		No		Unknown	
Does your school counselor aid students in academic development through the interpretation of test scores, improved pupil self-concept, and/or early identification of attention problems that are deterrents to learning and development?	579	80.5%	119	16.6%	21	2.9%
Does your school counselor serve as a consultant to assist teachers with the relative use of test scores to improve the learning environment, use of out-of-state school resources and agencies, and/or development of a home-school liaison?	390	54.2%	271	37.7%	58	8.1%
Does your school counselor offer services related to the identification and placement of students with handicapping conditions?	444	61.8%	224	31.2%	51	7.1%
Does your school counselor serve as a liaison between the school and	615	85.5%	77	10.7%	27	3.8%

**Elementary School Counselors Report questions
(719 responses)**

Question	Yes		No		Unknown	
parents to serve as a resource in understanding growth and development problems, and assist in understanding how some non-school factors affect the learning and achievement of students?						
Does your school counselor serve as a resource in decreasing discipline and other at-risk behavioral problems through an understanding of peer relations, teacher-pupil relations, social awareness, drug awareness, and others?	629	87.5%	71	9.9%	19	2.6%
Does your school counselor aid in improving school attendance and retention by implementing an early identification and prevention program through guidance and counseling services?	525	73.0%	155	21.6%	39	5.4%
Does your school counselor serve as a resource to parents in decreasing the incidence of juvenile delinquency by early intervention through guidance and counseling services?	562	78.2%	113	15.7%	44	6.1%
Does your school counselor consult with teachers in implementing a career development program that, at the elementary school level, includes self-awareness, job awareness, and prevocational orientation?	460	54.0%	216	30.0%	43	6.0%
Does your school counselor provide an available source for students needing	638	88.7%	61	8.5%	20	2.8%

**Elementary School Counselors Report questions
(719 responses)**

Question	Yes		No		Unknown	
someone to listen to their problems and concerns?						

Recommendations

Guidance should be provided to systems on how to provide the components of R.S. 17:3005 in schools that do not have funding allocated for a full-time school counselor on campus.

Direction should also be provided to systems and administrators on how counselors participating in non-counseling-related tasks prohibit them from providing counseling services to students in need.

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