

FAQ about School Counseling

This document was prepared by the school counselors of Boyertown Area School District, 2012

What is the focus of a school counselor?

The primary focus of the school counselor is to help students be ready to learn. We focus on the areas of academic development, personal/social development, and career awareness and exploration. We work with all students, either individually, in small groups or with whole classes.

When is it appropriate to contact my child's school counselor?

Contact your child's school counselor with questions or concerns regarding issues that may be affecting your child's academic progress. Such issues could include family changes, social difficulties or mental health problems.

How is a school counselor different from a therapist?

School counselors help students to be ready for learning by providing short-term assistance with particular issues that may be acting as road blocks to the child's education. Therapists treat mental health disorders in an on-going, usually regularly scheduled basis. If a child is upset or distressed in school, we will work with the child in order to help the child be ready to learn. For issues that go beyond the scope of school counseling, we can provide community resources to the parent.

Do school counselors make mental health diagnoses?

School counselors do not make mental health diagnoses. We do, however, use direct observation, input from parents, teachers and other staff, and information from the student to create a portrait of the student in the school environment. This information is used by the counselor in conjunction with the teachers to determine strategies to help the student to be more successful in the school setting.

Are counselors available to assist students with grief or trauma?

Absolutely. School counselors are concerned for students as individuals and for their preparedness to learn and be successful in the school setting. Grief and trauma present roadblocks to the brain's readiness to learn. We will work with students to process grief and will provide resources for families should the nature of the grief need further attention.

What is the counselor role in reducing/preventing bullying?

School counselors work with the school population through classroom lessons &/or assemblies to raise the awareness of the students regarding strategies to reduce bullying, identification of the roles played in a bullying situation, and appropriate responses. We also work with students in small groups or individually to help students recognize their roles in a particular situation and discover ways to relate to others more positively.

In what ways do counselors support student academic achievement?

School counselors work with academic teams of teachers to review the progress of students and identify strategies to help students to be successful in school. We meet with students to provide guidance regarding study skills, homework completion and organizational strategies. School counselors serve as advocates for students during team meetings.

How do school counselors address career readiness?

1/25/12

School counselors collaborate with teachers to address the PA Department of Education's Career, Education and Work standards. We help students recognize their strengths and interests and how those fit into the world of work. We assist students in choosing courses that will lead them on the path toward their career goals. In addition to this we assist students with making informed decisions regarding postsecondary plans based on career portfolio activities and their other relevant life experiences.

Will school counselors recommend mental health resources?

While not making recommendations, we will provide parents with a list of local mental health resources. The choice of practice or agency is strictly the decision of the parent(s). We can explain the process and provide permission forms for parents to access the services of the Student Assistance Program should there be concerns regarding mental health or drug and alcohol issues of the student.

Can school counselors provide financial help resources to parents?

School counselors can provide parents with community resources and contacts for assistance with such things as food, medical coverage, or clothing.