

CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT COMMUNICATIONS

The main purpose of confidentiality is to offer students a relationship in which they will be able to deal with what concerns them without fear of disclosure. Therefore, it will be the professional responsibility of school counselors to respect fully the right of privacy of those with whom they enter counseling relationships.

Confidentiality must not be abridged by the counselor except:

1. where there is a clear and present danger to the client or to other person;
2. to consult with other professionally competent person when this is in the interests of the client; or
3. when the client verbally or in writing waives this privilege.

Records of the counseling relationship including interview notes, test data, correspondence, tape recordings and other documents are to be considered professional information for use in counseling, and they are not part of the public or official records of the institution in which the counselor is employed. Revelation to others of counseling materials should occur only upon the express consent of the student.

Counselors must not discuss confidential matters over the telephone. Counselors should insist that a request for information be made in writing on official stationery.

The school counselor must be provided with adequate physical facilities that guarantee the confidentiality of the counseling relationship.

When a counselor is in doubt about what information to release in a judicial proceeding, the counselor should arrange through the Executive Director of Student Achievement Services a conference with the school attorney to explain the dilemma and receive advice on how to proceed.

Adopted December 5, 2001