



School Counseling Practicum and Internship Requirements Gwinnett County Public Schools

Thank you for your interest in completing a school counseling practicum or internship in Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS). GCPS is committed to providing superior training and support to all persons who work or train within our World Class System of Schools.

To ensure that students develop a professional school counselor identity and master the knowledge and skills to practice effectively, GCPS has set forth the following as **minimum** requirements for completing a practicum or internship within our system. **Please note** that GCPS' minimum requirements in no way shall supersede your college or university standards should your program requirements be more rigorous in nature. GCPS will only accept candidates who are seeking a Masters or Specialist degree in School Counseling and attending CACREP programs with which GCPS has established a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).*

PRACTICUM

- Practicum candidate must complete supervised practicum experiences that total a minimum of **100 clock hours**.
- The counseling practicum will include at least **40 clock hours** of direct service with students that supports the needs of the local school and contributes to the development of the candidates counseling skills.
- Candidates must submit proof of a criminal background check prior to beginning the practicum. GCPS will offer this service if the candidates college/university does not conduct such a safeguard.
- Candidate must agree to sign the **GCPS Confidentiality Agreement**.
- Candidate will possess **professional liability insurance** and will provide evidence of such a policy if requested.**
- Candidate agrees to provide documentation of practicum requirements for your school counseling program prior to commencement of the practicum.
- Candidates agree to follow all policies and procedures of Gwinnett County Public Schools.
- Please note: Candidates who are employed by Gwinnett County Public Schools may **not** complete their practicum or internship at their school of employment or during contract hours.

The Office of Counseling, College and Career Services will ensure the following regarding placement schools:

- Placement with an on-site counseling supervisor possessing a minimum of three (3) years of experience at that level.
- On-site counseling supervisors will provide a minimum of one (1) hour of direct supervision per week.
- On-site supervisor will complete all documentation as required by the college or university.
- Support for the on-site supervisor as needed.

Please note: Successful completion of a practicum in Gwinnett County Public Schools in no way guarantees internship placement in our system.

** Professional liability insurance may be included with student membership in professional organizations or by the college/university. It is the student's responsibility to ascertain if such coverage is provided.

INTERNSHIP

- Candidates will complete a **minimum of 600 clock hours**, only after verification of successful completion of the practicum.*
- Of the 600 hours, at least **240 clock hours** will be in direct services, including experience leading groups. ***
- Candidates agree to attend training prior to commencement of their internship.
- Candidates must be willing to submit a criminal background check. GCPS will offer this service if their college/university does not conduct such a safeguard.
- Candidates must agree to sign the **GCPS Confidentiality Agreement, GCPS Acknowledgement Form, Person of Interest Information Form (POI)**.
- Candidates will possess **professional liability insurance** and will provide evidence of such a policy if requested.*****
- Candidate agrees to provide documentation of internship requirements for your school counseling program prior to commencement of the internship.
- Candidate agrees to follow all policies and procedures of Gwinnett County Public Schools.
- Please note: Candidates who are employed by Gwinnett County Public Schools may **not** complete their internship at their school of employment or during contract hours.

The Office of Counseling, College and Career Services will ensure the following at placement schools:

- Placement with an on-site counseling supervisor possessing a minimum of three (3) years of experience at that level.
- On-site counseling supervisors will provide a minimum of one (1) hour of direct supervision per week.
- On-site supervisor will complete all documentation as required by the college or university.
- Support for the on-site supervisor and/or intern as needed.

* The start dates for practicum and internship candidates is August - January. We do not place practicum or internship candidates beginning the practicum or internship during the spring or summer quarters.

**These minimum requirements shall not supersede the standards set forth by any college or university should they require additional hours and/or training hours in designated categories.

*** Students who have not taken a Group Counseling course, including participation in a group experience, will be required to co-lead a counseling group(s), and demonstrate an understanding of, and ability to manage, group dynamics prior to facilitating a group on their own.

***** Professional liability insurance may be included with student membership in professional organizations or by the college/university. It is the student's responsibility to ascertain if such coverage is provided.