

PHS SCHOOL COUNSELOR FAQ

What is a School Counselor?

According to The American School Counselor Association (ASCA), “School counselors are highly educated, professionally certified individuals who help students succeed in school and plan their career. An integral part of the total education system, school counselors help students form healthy goals, mindsets and behaviors. With the aid of a school counselor, students learn to develop effective collaboration and cooperation skills, to practice perseverance, to develop time management and study skills, and to learn self-motivation and self-direction habits.”



Which students does each counselor serve?

Each counselor at Princeton High School serves students across all four grade levels (9th - 12th). Counselors' caseloads are broken down alphabetically for each grade level. Please refer to our [“Meet Our Counselors”](#) page to view each counselor's breakdown and to learn some fun facts about them!



How many students are on each PHS counselor's caseload?

Each counselor at Princeton High School has approximately 220 to 230 students.

Do school counselors issue discipline to students?

School counselors do not administer disciplinary consequences to students in any capacity. In general, they are there to provide social-emotional and academic support and counseling to students throughout the school year. Counseling or check-ins with school counselors may be implemented as one of several interventions to support a student to whom a disciplinary action has already been administered. Counseling for students whose behaviors necessitate school-administered discipline can help identify potential relationships between their behavior and their overall mental and/or physical health, their experience of difficult life events, etc.

What is the difference between a School Counselor and a Guidance Counselor?

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) provides a helpful overview of the differences between a School Counselor and a Guidance Counselor: [Guidance Counselor vs. School Counselor](#)

ASCA also provides a useful outline of the history of the School Counseling profession and its gradual transition from a focus on vocational guidance to a comprehensive school counseling model:

[EMBRACE THE PAST, WELCOME THE FUTURE: A BRIEF HISTORY OF SCHOOL COUNSELING](#)

What are the qualifications required to work as a school counselor in the State of New Jersey?

All school counselors in the State of New Jersey must earn a Master's Degree in Counseling and a School Counseling Certification from the New Jersey Department of Education.

How can I contact and/or meet with my counselor?

School counselors welcome communication from parents and guardians, as the best, most comprehensive support of students requires collaboration between counselors and families. Collaboration with teachers, administrators, and other school staff who support students is equally instrumental to knowing and supporting the whole child. Students, families, and school personnel can communicate with school counselors through the following means:

—Students: Email, walk-ins, meetings by appointment, and Canvas

–Parents/Guardians: Email, phone calls, and meetings by appointment

–School Staff: Email, walk-ins, and meetings by appointment



What are the roles and responsibilities of a school counselor at PHS?

At Princeton High School, school counselors have many essential roles and responsibilities, including, but not limited to:

- Meeting with students individually to support them academically, socially, and emotionally (by drop-in or appointment)
- Mandatory reporting (e.g. instances of abuse and neglect)
- Conducting risk assessments and providing interventions for students in crisis situations
- Creating and running counseling groups to support the needs and interests of various student populations
- Scheduling and hosting conferences with students, families, teachers, and administrators to determine interventions to support students in their learning
- Identifying academic, financial and mental health resources for students and families and providing referrals accordingly
- Helping students access available educational supports (Ideas Center tutoring, etc.) both within and outside of the school community
- Using various forms of data to identify individual student needs and advocating for corresponding resources, both within the school and throughout the community
- Providing referrals for long-term, higher-level mental health support, as needed
- Supporting students in their development of time management, executive functioning and organizational skills
- Participating in professional development opportunities to enhance our programming
- Coordinating and supporting school events for students
- Scheduling
 - Resolving schedule conflicts
 - Addressing student schedule change requests
 - Meeting with each student on our current caseloads individually for annual course selection
 - Meeting with each rising 9th grade student from all three middle schools individually for course selection and transition planning
- Giving schoolwide presentations on the course selection process, Program of Studies and graduation requirements
- Writing letters of recommendation for each 12th grade student on their caseload in support of their college applications, as well as for students applying for summer enrichment programming and internship opportunities
- Managing and submitting supplemental materials for current students' college applications (letters of rec., transcripts., etc.), as well as for graduated students completing transfer applications to colleges
- Advising students on college and career planning through individual meetings and classroom lessons; advising students on various postsecondary pathways outside of 4-year colleges
- Proctoring and supporting various multi-day standardized tests, including the NJSLA, NJGPA, PSAT, and AP exams
- Creating and coordinating 504 plans for students with specific, diagnosed learning challenges and needs
- Collaborating with the Child Study Team in the interest of supporting the academic needs, goals, and scheduling considerations of students receiving special education and related services
- Tracking students' satisfaction of graduation requirements annually
- Participating in annual graduation rehearsals and ceremonies
- Liaising with out-of district placements and supporting out-of-district students in their academic planning
- Completing registrations and transcript reviews for newly enrolled students and assisting them and their families in their acclimation to PHS
- Serving on various committees addressing school culture, I&RS, climate, safety, social emotional learning, etc.
- Connecting students to various scholarships, awards and enrichment programs
- Creating and implementing classroom lessons
- Coordinating and enacting transition planning and programming for rising 9th graders (course selection, orientation, etc.)
- Coordinating with outside educational opportunities and programs, i.e. MCTS, Princeton University, Rubino Academy, Fund 101, etc.
- Providing students with restorative interventions to scaffold their conflict resolution skills
- For more information on High School Counselors' roles and responsibilities, please refer to ["The Essential Role of High School Counselors,"](#) courtesy of the American School Counselor Association.