



**Norwalk Public Schools**  
**School Counseling Handbook**  

---

**and Social Services K-12**

**August 2022**

# **Norwalk Public Schools**

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### School Counseling Program Redesign Committee Members 2018-19

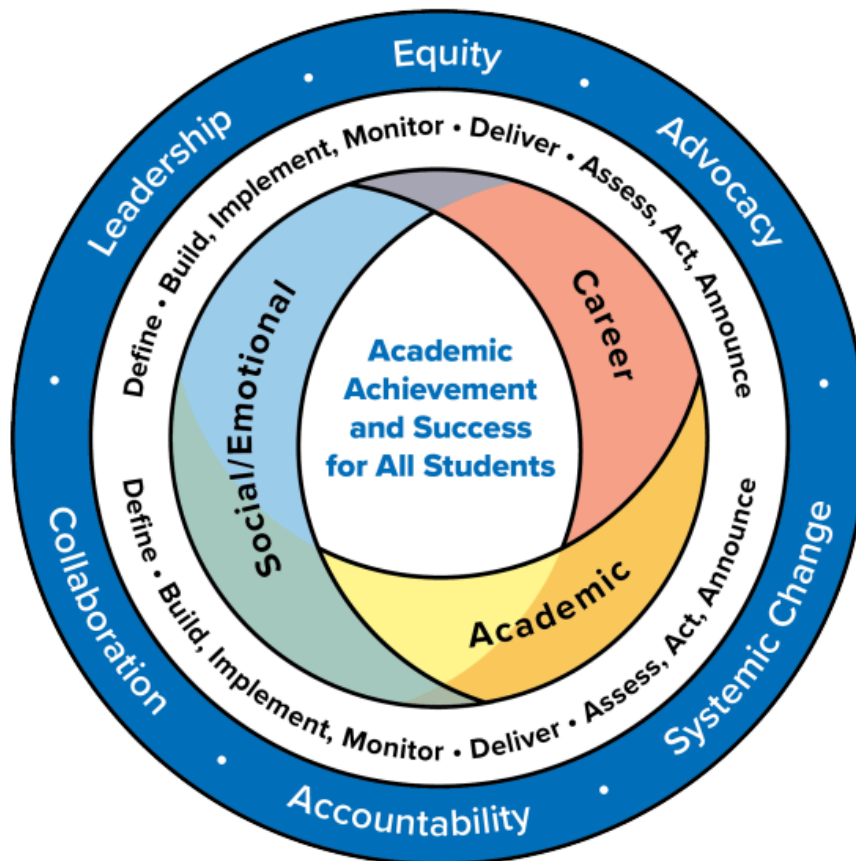
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## Introduction

The Norwalk Public Schools School Counseling Framework developed by the school counseling redesign committee and counseling staff, with the help of teachers, administrators, students, parents, and community members, is an integral part of the educational process and addresses the academic, career, and social-emotional needs of all students. The framework is modeled after the 2020 Connecticut Comprehensive School Counseling Framework, which is aligned to student standards: ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors (2014), The 12 Career Ready Practices (National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education), Collaboration for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)'s five core competencies (2017), and the Next Generation Accountability System (Connecticut State Department of Education, 2015). The Norwalk Public Schools framework is collaborative in nature. It emphasizes a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) approach to delivering services to students and families systematically and equitably.

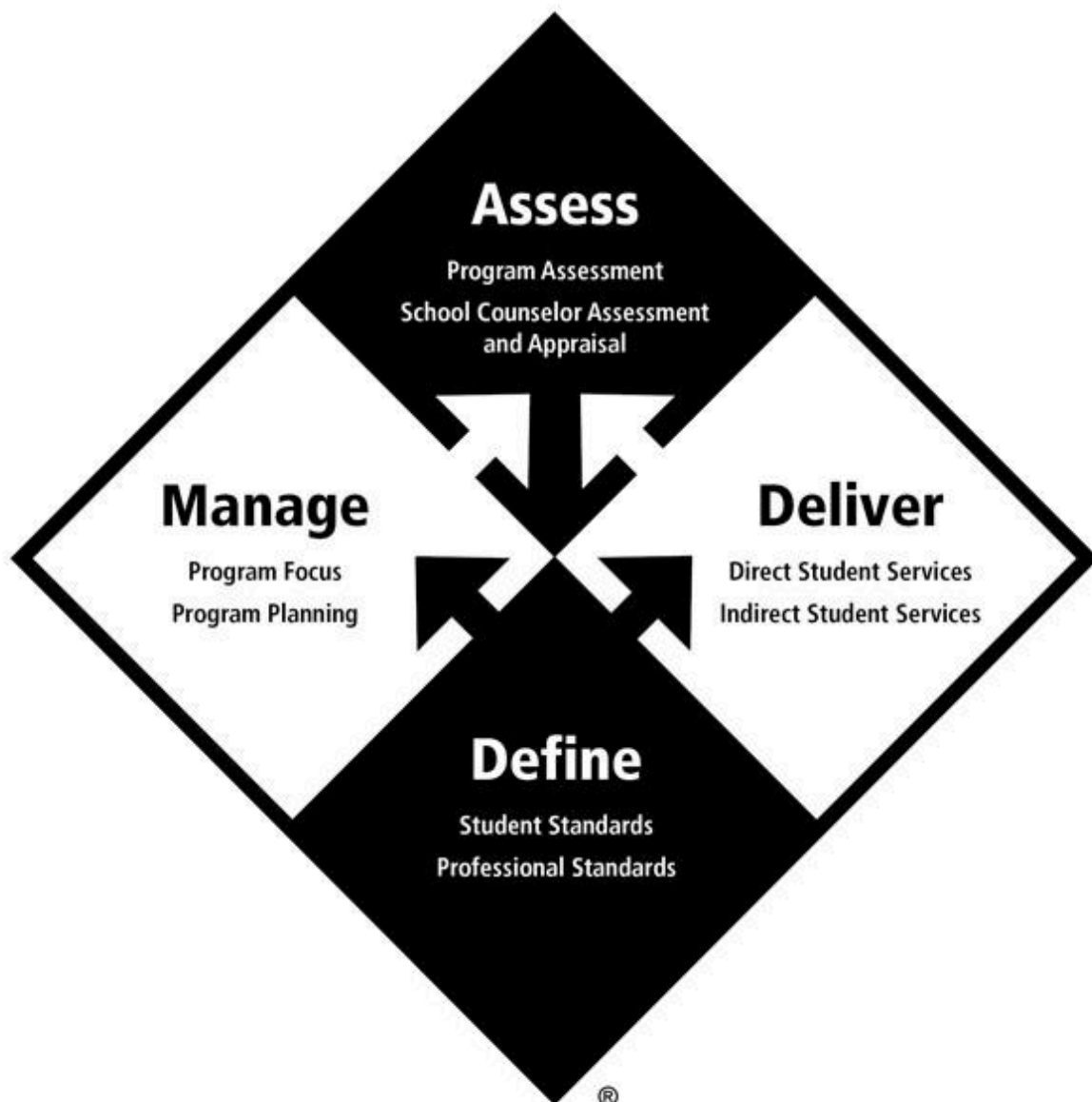
### School Counseling Framework Model

#### Connecticut Comprehensive School Counseling Framework



## Goal

The goal of the NPS School Counseling Program is to provide high-quality, K-12 comprehensive school counseling services which are designed to develop and enhance the academic, social-emotional, and college and career needs of all of our students. Our program is aligned with the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) model.



The ASCA National Model diamond graphic is a registered trademark of the American School Counselor Association and may not be reprinted or modified without permission.

# **Norwalk Public Schools**

## **School Counseling Framework Foundation**

### **Mission Statement**

The Norwalk School Counseling Program facilitates the academic, college/career, and social-emotional skills and growth of all students by creating a safe, caring, and engaging learning environment.

We use data, partner with members of the school and community, and create opportunities that foster cooperation, share responsibility, and promote/celebrate diversity so that students become successful lifelong learners developing competencies from a robust school counseling program curriculum, annual planning with every student, and group and individual counseling.

### **Vision Statement**

The Norwalk School Counseling Program collaborates with families, educators, and community partners to empower, inspire, and spark every student's interest, knowledge, skills, and confidence to reach their maximum potential in academic, career/college, and social-emotional domains.

School Counselors advocate, facilitate, coordinate, and implement a comprehensive school counseling program with multi-tiered support ensuring access, equity, and success so that every student is a responsible and productive citizen, lifelong learner, and problem-solver.

### **Belief Statements**

#### **The NPS School Counseling Program (SCP) Staff beliefs/values:**

- SCP Supports changing school improvement plans
- SCP aligns with the district's mission and goals
- Access to Challenging Curriculum for Every Student's Opportunity (AP, IB, Honors, Gifted/Talented)
- Every Student Feeling Affirmed, Encouraged, Respected, Safe, Seen, Validated, Respected, and Treated with Dignity.
- Every student has an Annually Updated Plan
- Every student's success
- Disaggregating Student Data for Equity Assessment
- Meeting the Academic and Social-Emotional Needs of Every Student
- Positive Asset/Strength Development of Every Student
- In promoting and publicizing SCP's mission/vision/beliefs/goals/results/outcomes to all stakeholders and sharing results/outcomes with all

- Collaboration with all stakeholders, especially other educators, staff, building leaders, students, families, and CBOs (Community Based Organizations) in a building-level SCP Advisory Council and throughout the year.
- SC Office in each building is a well-resourced, accessible, and visible location
- SCs do no discipline; that is referred to APs, Deans, and Principals; SCs do counseling only after the facts; SCs are consultants with restorative justice teams
- SCs work as part of a crisis team but are not first responders for all crises; school counselors counsel after the fact unless the situation has an emotional component and then they may do triage work; 1 SC or SSW or SPSy is on call per day at each building for emotional crisis consultation so that all SCP staff are not interrupted.
- SCs will assist in a district-wide crisis plan to focus on prevention strategies, not reactivity.
- SCs advocate for appropriately funded translation services for families and not pull staff who speak the languages from other roles in the building.
- SCs will assist building leaders with master schedules as equity consultants across all schools (which students need the greatest support and greatest challenges in academics) in fall and spring so that schedule changes are reduced to a bare minimum at the start of the semester
- SCs need administrative staff dedicated at every building to the SCP to get a faster turnaround when students/families need information and to increase responsiveness esp. At key transitions between building levels and at the start and end of semesters, the college process.
- Dedicated career/college administrative staff at both high schools to do the administrative work associated with effective college/career counseling
- Dedicated college/career center staff, technology, and resources in each high school are critical to making the centers effective
- SCP will develop a protocol to collaborate on the implementation and evaluation of CBO services/outcomes/efficiency in the ACCESS domains
- Lessening the administrative/crisis burden on school counselors allows more time for underserved student/family needs
- SCP implements MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support)/SRBI (Scientific Research-Based Interventions)

### **School Counseling Program Goals Academic/Social-Emotional (Achievement Gap)**

Implement/evaluate study skills/student success skills for all students annually:

1. Academic/Career/College/Social-Emotional (Opportunity Gap): Implement, update, and evaluate an annual Student Success Plan for every Student
2. Career (Opportunity Gap): Middle School Career Pathways Fair
3. College (Opportunity Gap): College Access/Affordability Lessons for Elem/Middle School Families and 9th-grade Families
4. The SCP will develop a school counseling curriculum map for every grade level, specific to the Connecticut School Counseling Association (CSCA) skills to be delivered annually.



5. Change all documentation, signage, policies, paperwork, job descriptions, websites, and titles/offices to School Counselor, School Counseling Office, Director of School Counseling, etc.

## Connecticut Student Standards

Academic Development	Career Development	Social-Emotional Development
<p>Student Standard A1 Demonstrate skills for effective learning and achieving school success</p> <p>Student Standard A2 Demonstrate ability to plan a challenging program of studies to prepare for a variety of options after graduation.</p> <p>Student Standard A3 Demonstrate an understanding of the habits of mind of an engaged student in relation to all aspects of their lives.</p> <p>Student Standard A4 Demonstrate the ability to integrate technology to enhance learning and to solve problems.</p> <p>Student Standard A5 Demonstrate the ability to use creativity and outside experiences to enrich the learning process</p> <p>Student Standard A6 Demonstrate the ability to set goals based on reflective evaluation of current performance.</p>	<p>Student Standard C1 Identify personal values, personality, abilities, and interests in relation to career options and the world of work.</p> <p>Student Standard C2 Demonstrate the skills and abilities to research, identify career options, and make the necessary steps to obtain employment.</p> <p>Student Standard C3 Demonstrate effective workplace habits and the ability to transfer employability skills to future career success and from job-to-job across the lifespan.</p> <p>Student Standard C4 Demonstrate an understanding of work/life balance and how it impacts quality of life, personal and financial well-being, and lifestyle choices.</p> <p>Student Standard C5 Identify a plan to make a successful transition from school to postsecondary education and/or the world of work.</p> <p>Student Standard C6 Demonstrate an understanding of technology in the workplace.</p>	<p>Student Standard S/E 1 Demonstrate an understanding of how individual actions can impact relationships, environments, and influence other people.</p> <p>Student Standard S/E 2 Demonstrate cultural awareness when collaborating with others and taking steps to be inclusive.</p> <p>Student Standard S/E 3 Demonstrate the ability to make decisions, think divergently, and take steps to achieve desired outcomes. Able to overcome challenges and obstacles and develop positive coping strategies and build resilience.</p> <p>Student Standard S/E 4 Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between practicing self-care, healthy sense of self, and personal well-being.</p> <p>Student Standard S/E 5 Demonstrate understanding and practice of personal safety skills.</p> <p><i>Student Standard S/E 6</i> Demonstrate an understanding of the risks and responsible use of technology.</p>

## Connecticut School Counselor Professional Standards

School counselors in Connecticut are held to a set of professional standards that are aligned with the ASCA [Ethical Standards](#) for School Counselors and the [ASCA Professional Standards and Competencies for School Counselors](#). The Connecticut School Counselor Professional Standards (CSCPS) define knowledge, skills, and habits of mind that school counselors should demonstrate to be effective in their role. School Counselors are evaluated using the Student and Educator Support Specialists (SESS) rubric and the [School Counselor Evidence Guide](#) for best practices, which measures proficiency on the performance of the professional standards. Additionally, the professional standards inform the recruitment and selection process ([See Appendix E](#)), and the standards can support the design and implementation of professional development plans and self-evaluation.

<b>Connecticut School Counselor Professional Standards</b> <b>The school counselor is expected to:</b>			
<b>Standard 1</b> Articulate and demonstrate an understanding of individual counseling theories, group counseling, and classroom lessons ensuring equitable student access to resources that promote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• academic achievement</li> <li>• social-emotional development</li> <li>• college/career readiness</li> </ul>	<b>Standard 2</b> Act as a student advocate, leader, collaborator, and systems change agent to create an environment promoting and supporting student success to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure all students are achieving at the highest levels</li> <li>• include families, teachers, administrators, community leaders, and other stakeholders</li> <li>• identify obstacles faced by student populations and ensure equity and access for all students</li> <li>• ensure cultural sensitivity and responsiveness</li> <li>• foster a safe and supportive school climate</li> </ul>	<b>Standard 3</b> Plan, design, and deliver a comprehensive, developmental school counseling program to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• address the social, environmental, and developmental needs of all students while supporting the school and district core values and beliefs</li> <li>• support learning and close the achievement gap</li> <li>• incorporate social and emotional learning and employability skills, including current technology</li> </ul>	<b>Standard 4</b> Implement the Individual Student Planning and Responsive Services Components in collaboration with all stakeholders to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• address students' identified needs and concerns individually and/or in small-group counseling</li> <li>• create individual Student Success Plans</li> <li>• promote college/career readiness for students, individually and in groups</li> </ul>

## Connecticut School Counselor Professional Standards (continued)

<b>Connecticut School Counselor Professional Standards</b> <b>The school counselor is expected to:</b>			
<b>Standard 5</b> Collect, examine, and communicate school, student, and program data to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• annually evaluate school counseling program results and ensure equity in access and delivery</li> <li>• establish goals and services that work to close the student gaps</li> <li>• monitor individual student progress to ensure that students are taking appropriate, yet rigorous, courses</li> <li>• measure results and disseminate outcome information</li> </ul>	<b>Standard 6</b> Manage and use time effectively to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop a master calendar for program implementation</li> <li>• ensure timely communication of service delivery for students, families, administrators, and teachers</li> <li>• maximize the use of counselors' time</li> </ul>	<b>Standard 7</b> Collaborate with school advisory committees, families, school staff, community members and other stakeholders to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify the needs and concerns of students and provide or recommend professional learning for school staff and families</li> <li>• gain support for school counseling goals and support the goals of others</li> <li>• obtain input from school administrators and staff in developing the counseling framework</li> </ul>	<b>Standard 8</b> Fulfill responsibilities for his/her professional growth and the growth of the school counseling profession, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participating in professional organizations</li> <li>• engaging in continuous professional learning and development</li> <li>• following the profession's ethical and legal guidelines</li> </ul>

# Comprehensive Service Delivery Framework

## **Direct Student Services**

Direct student services are provided by our school counselors while working directly with students. This face to face time includes individual student planning, delivering the school counseling curriculum, and responsive services. These services are data driven and meant to help promote healthy development, a positive attitude toward work and learning and help students achieve success in school as well as effectively identify post-secondary choices. Direct services can be proactive and reactive.

**Individual Student Planning:** Session results in the development of a Student Success Plan for each student that is focused on career/education/social-emotional goals and postsecondary options. The plan is revised and modified annually throughout the student's school career beginning in middle school and continuing throughout high school.

## **School Counseling Curriculum:**

*Classroom Lessons:* School counselors, in collaboration with teachers, deliver a learning activity or unit in the classroom. The curriculum provides developmental and sequential lessons and activities in classroom and/or group settings, which address student development in academic, career and social-emotional domains. Lessons are approximately 45 minutes in length.

*Small Groups:* Counselors conduct groups outside the classroom to respond to students' identified interests or needs. School counselors plan and lead structured activities that are designed to increase the skills and knowledge of student participants. Small group membership will be determined by data analysis of grades, as well as student feedback after lessons are delivered, and from collaboration with staff and the community. Groups may also be formed as a need arises.

*School-wide Events and Activities:* Designed to reinforce the concepts being taught in the classroom by school counselors. Collaborations within and outside the school community are used to address specific information relevant to students and families. Examples: academic presentations, guest speakers, career fair, financial aid night, middle/high school transitioning.

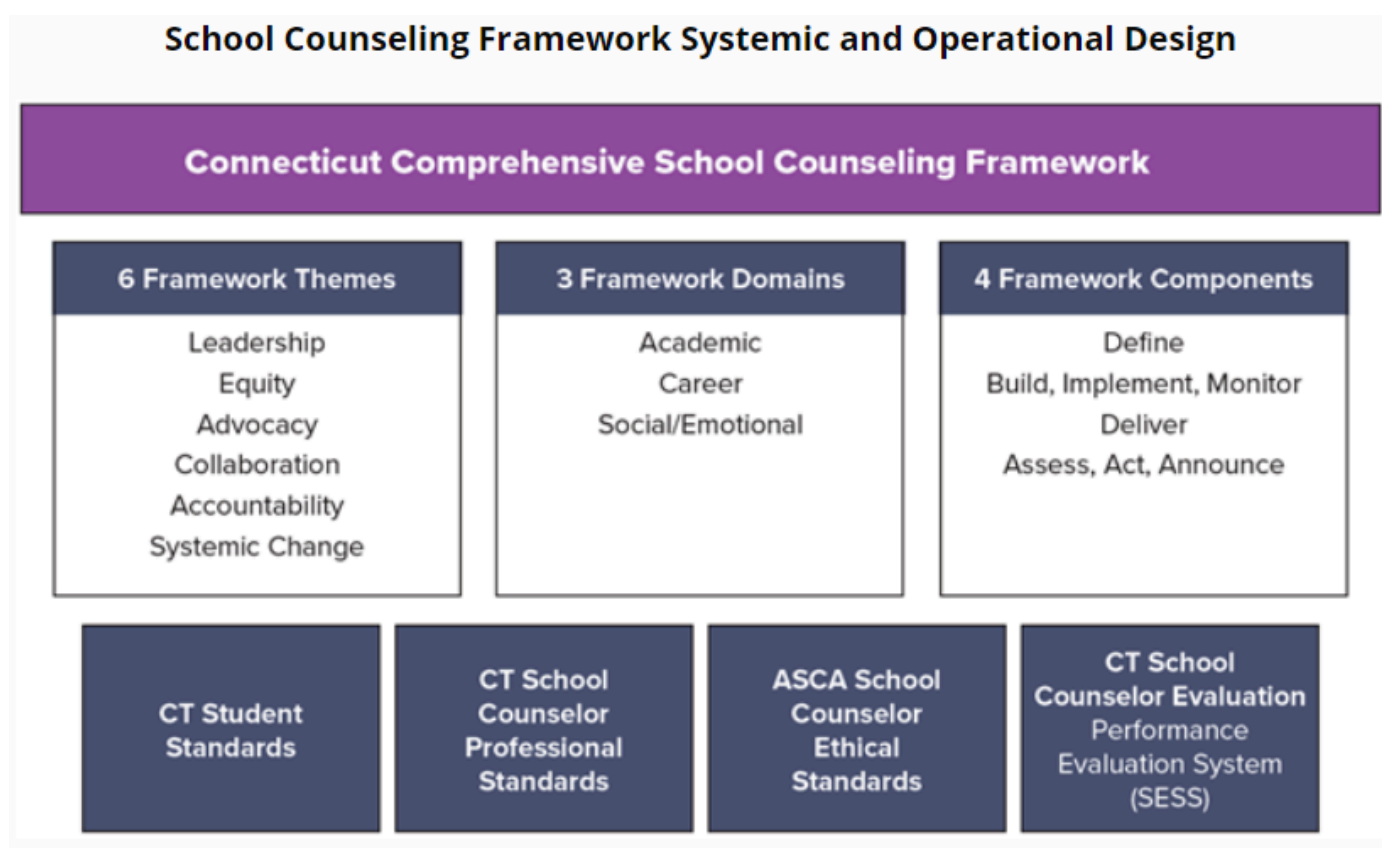
**Responsive Services:** School counselors are trained and prepared to react to a crisis or immediate need experienced by a student or school community. School counselors provide supportive individual and group counseling, referral, collaboration, and consultation to help students and families overcome academic, personal-family, and socio-emotional barriers to healthy development. (CT Comprehensive K-12 School Counseling Framework Guide, November 2020)



## CT School Counseling Framework

**Student Standards and Competencies** The CCSCF student competencies are used in creating school counseling lessons as part of the comprehensive developmental school counseling curriculum. These are meant to be used as a “menu” of skills students should acquire throughout their K–12 education. Some of the competencies listed also meet other subject area standards and may be used when creating co-teaching lessons with other subject areas (e.g., computer/technology teachers, language arts teachers, etc.).

**(Link in Pages 25-39 will not copy and paste)**



### Six Themes

*Leadership* — School counselors align their department's vision and mission to the districts. The counselors use leadership skills to build, implement, monitor, and evaluate the school counseling framework. This collaborative process provides direction, guidance, and support, systemically reaching across internal and external boundaries.

**Advocacy** — School counselors, ensure that students have the opportunity for success. They advocate for students to be treated fairly and have access to the resources necessary to meet their needs. Additionally, school counselors advocate for the school counseling framework and the roles and responsibilities of the school counselor.

**Equity** — Equitable policies, programs, and practices are to ensure equity in educational performance, results, and outcomes by removing barriers that impede progress and providing the appropriate resources to support students. A measure of fairness and opportunity in education, equity is embedded in the CCSCF, specifically in the school counselor's ethical standards.

**Collaboration** — Building healthy and ethical internal and external relationships to support students and create a safe school environment that promotes the vision and mission of the CCSCF, student success, and advocacy. All involved parties work together to successfully design systems that are intentional and reflective in nature, and to develop a culture of learning and understanding.

**Systemic Change** — is affecting an entire system, and transformational change affecting more than an individual or series of individuals focused upon the dynamics of the environment, not the environment (ASCA, 2019).

**Accountability** — School counselors implement data-driven comprehensive school counseling programs and strategies to monitor student achievement, continually evaluate and improve their school counseling program, and demonstrate the impact their program is having on students (ASCA, 2012).

### Three Domains

School counselors address topics in three broad domains: academic, career, and social-emotional development. These domains promote mindsets and behaviors that enhance students' learning process and create a college and career readiness culture for all students. The Connecticut Student Standards may cross multiple domains.

**Academic Development** goals provide the foundation for acquiring skills, habits of mind, and knowledge that contribute to effective learning in school, employing strategies to achieve success in school, and understanding the relationship of academics to the world of work and life at home and in the community.

**Career Development** goals provide the foundation for acquiring skills, habits of mind, and knowledge that enable students to make a successful transition from school to the world of work and as careers change across the lifespan. Career development goals and competencies ensure that students participate in a comprehensive plan of career awareness, exploration, and preparation activities ([Appendix C](#)).

**Social-Emotional Development** goals provide the foundation for social-emotional growth as

students progress through school and into adulthood. Social-emotional development contributes to academic and career success by helping students understand and respect themselves and others, acquire effective interpersonal skills, understand safety and survival skills, and develop into contributing members of society.



## Direct vs. Indirect Services

Direct services are preventative and responsive and are defined by interaction with students. Preventative services include the implementation of the school counseling curriculum, where all students engage in skill development to help them be successful across all three domains. Responsive services react to a crisis or immediate need experienced by a student or school community. Indirect services are predominantly responsive and focus on activities and services on behalf of students.

## Direct Student Services

Direct student services are provided by the school counselor when working directly with students. This face-to-face time includes teaching the school counseling curriculum, individual student planning, and responsive services. These services are data-driven and meant to help promote healthy development and a positive attitude toward work and learning, help students achieve success in school, and effectively identify postsecondary choices.

<b>Direct Services (with the student)</b>	<b>Indirect Services (on behalf of the student)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Counseling Curriculum</li> <li>• Individual Student Planning (appraisal and advisement)</li> <li>• Responsive Services (counseling)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation and Collaboration</li> <li>• Advocacy for students</li> <li>• Referrals</li> <li>• Program Coordination</li> </ul>

Direct Student Service	Grade Level	Frequency/ Duration	Data Monitoring
Individual Student Planning	6 - 8	1 x per school year	Tracking participation, Goal-setting
	9-12	2 x per school year	Tracking participation, Goal-setting
Classrooms Lessons	6 - 8	3 - 5 x per year	Pre-/post-assessment
	9-12	2 x per year	Pre-/post-assessment
Small Groups (Based on identified student needs/interests)	6 - 12	Groups typically meet for 4-6 weeks	Feedback survey, Anecdotal feedback
School-wide Events and Activities	9 - 12	2 x per year per school	Feedback survey

## Individual Planning Meetings

Individual Planning (IP) meetings are held annually between a student and their assigned counselor beginning in grade six and throughout high school graduation. The meetings are designed to help students monitor and direct their learning, personal development, and plan for the future through their Student Success Plans. IPs are documented in a Google Doc by Counselor & Student. Student data is used to inform these meetings and includes but is not limited to the following: standardized test scores, academic records, Student Success Plans, Naviance, in-house assessments, and student surveys. *In addition to the annual Individual Planning Meeting, students can meet with their school counselor as needed.*

### Grade 6 Student and Counselor will:

- Self-introduce and discuss how to access school counseling services
- Review student's 6th Grade school survey results
- Review academic performance to date
- Explore the relationship between academic performance and work
- Set SMART Goals

### Grade 7 Student and Counselor will:

- Review 7th Grade survey results
- Review academic performance to date
- Review assessment results and how to maximize academic success
- Review and update personal goals

### Grade 8 Student and Counselor will:

- Review 8th Grade survey results (including high school options)
- Review academic performance to date
- Review course selection and extracurricular activities that match the student's career interests
- Self-introduce and discuss how to access school counseling services
- Discuss course selection for Freshman Year/High School Transition

### Grade 9 Student and Counselor will:

- Review assessment results and how to maximize academic success
- Identify at least 2 possible extra-curricular activities
- Review academic performance to date
- Explore relationship between academic performance and work
- Identify at least 3 possible extra-curricular activities that match the student's interest
- Discuss course selection for sophomore year

### Grade 10 Student and Counselor will:

- Review academic performance to date
- Review transcript and discuss concept of 10th Grade being an academically pivotal year
- Discuss tentative educational/career goals
- Review career development resources (assessments, community service, resume, Student Success Plan)
- Discuss course selection for junior year

#### Grade 11 Student and Counselor will:

- Review academic performance to date including transcript
- Review graduation requirements
- Review tentative educational/career goals
- Discuss selection of courses for senior year
- Discuss standardized testing (how to register and interpretation of any standardized test score)
- Discuss college and career readiness resources and develop concrete plan for post-secondary goals
- Families are invited to participate in session

#### Grade 12 Student and Counselor will:

- Review academic performance to date including transcript
- Review progress toward graduation requirements and courses required for graduation
- Discuss the importance and impact of having a strong academic finish
- Update post-secondary plan and outline steps for completion
- Discuss and create a plan for financial aid application and scholarships (if applicable)
- Discuss standardized testing (how to register and interpret any standardized testing scores)
- Families are invited to participate in session

### **Responsive Services**

Responsive services allow the school counselor to address the immediate needs of students and includes counseling services as well as indirect services through collaboration and consultation. Students often face a number of challenges and barriers such as academic problems, personal family and relationships, or other social-emotional issues that result in the need for individual and group counseling as well as other prevention and remediation services. School counselors work with students to overcome the barriers they may have to their learning and otherwise healthy development.

### **Individual and Group Counseling**

Through the use of the needs assessment, and student, staff, and family referrals, school counselors can provide individual and group counseling to students in need. Tier 2 and 3 services are part of the MTSS offered by school counselors and aim to provide specific skills to students. Small group counseling should be included as part of the responsive services provided, K–12, and allows for school counselors to provide counseling to students in groups of 4-8 around a common theme. For example, school counselors may create a peer group to help students with executive functioning skills and friendship skills or a group on managing grief. Group work may look slightly different depending on the grade level but ultimately provide students with new skills and support in a group setting.

### **Crisis Management Services**

As part of the comprehensive framework, school counselors can provide preventative services on an ongoing basis, such as group and individual counseling. School counselors serve as part of the crisis response team within a building, providing students and staff with the necessary resources and support during a crisis. This may include counseling due to the death of a student or staff member, conflict resolution, or peer mediation.

## **504 and Special Education Support**

School counselors work with and support all students, including students with individualized education programs (IEPs) and 504 plans. They are often a part of multidisciplinary teams that collaborate on providing advocacy, services, and support for students with specialized needs. School counselors may provide “assistance in developing academic, transition, and postsecondary plans for students with IEPs and 504 plans” (ASCA, 2016 — position statement “The School Counselor and Students with Disabilities”).

## **School Counselors in Secondary Transition**

School counselors play a vital role in transition planning for all students, including those with disabilities, as they are trained in career exploration, postsecondary education options, and college preparation. Transition planning is the responsibility of all members of the planning and placement team (PPT). School counselors, if providing transition services to a student, should inform the PPT about the amount of time and the service delivery format required to meet the transition IEP goals and objectives identified on the IEP, based on the individual needs of the student. The [CT CORE Transition Skills](#) identifies sixteen skill areas associated with a successful transition from secondary education to adult life for students with disabilities and were designed to assist in the development of IEP transition goals and objectives and the provision of transition services.

## **Self-Harm and Suicidal Ideation**

School counselors collaborate with other support service personnel to work with students who are reported as self-harming or who may have suicidal ideation. School districts typically have a protocol in place in regards to self-harm and suicidal ideation. If a school district does not have a protocol in place, school counselors should collaborate with administrators and other support services personnel to develop a protocol. Assessment tools such as the Columbia Suicide Severity-Rating Scale (CSS-RS) or other district-approved measurements ([NPS Risk Assessment and Intervention Guide](#)) may be used by the **school counselor, school psychologist or social worker** to make an initial assessment so that the support services personnel can refer the student and family/ guardian to the appropriate services. Upon the student’s return to school, counselors would be a part of the re-entry team to devise a suitable safety and service plan for the student.

## **Indirect Student Services**

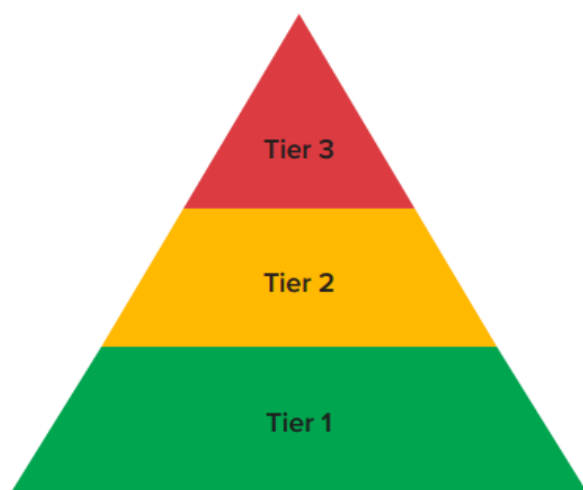
Our school counselors provide indirect Student Services on behalf of students. School counselors take a team approach when working on behalf of students. As part of this team approach, *consultation* with staff, administration, and families regarding the challenges and barriers students face is an integral part of our school counseling framework.

Through *collaboration* within the school and with outside agencies, school counselors develop programming as part of the comprehensive school counseling framework that fits the needs of students, parents, and community members. Collaboration also allows the school counseling department to connect with outside agencies to provide students and parents with several resources available to help with issues that are not otherwise within the scope of the school day. School counselors often become a point of contact for families within the school. By providing *referrals*, families can connect with needed services not only within the school system but outside the community. (CT Comprehensive K-12 School Counseling Framework Guide, November 2020)

## **Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)**

The Norwalk Comprehensive School Counseling Framework provides services and programming in an organized and systematic way using a three-tiered model. This culturally responsive model helps assure that all students get the support and skills they need to succeed academically, develop social-emotional health, and be career ready. Tier 1 provides support for all students through the delivery of school counseling curriculum and assessments. Tier 2 supports a specific group of students who need additional assistance on a skill or with an issue. Tier 3 provides more intensive assistance, which may involve one-to-one support from a school counselor or a referral to an outside agency. Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions are delivered on an as-needed basis and are determined using data and assessment.

### Connecticut's Model Aligned with MTSS



Adapted from: The ASCA National Model (2019)  
©Goodman-Scott, Betters-Bubon & Donohue (2019)  
@SchCouns4MTSS

#### **Tier 3: Equity-driven Direct and Indirect Services for FEW**

- Chronic, complex needs
- Consult and collaborate
- Fair, just, access and inclusion policies and practices
- Wrap-around support
- Internal and community referrals
- Crisis management
- Individual counseling

#### **Tier 2: Equity-driven Direct and Indirect Services for SOME**

- Individual/small group counseling based on data/need
- Fair, just, access and inclusion policies and practices
- Critical team member/leader multidisciplinary teams
- Appraisal and advisement
- Support SSP
- Targeted supports for college and career readiness for high needs students and transition planning
- Consult and collaborate with teachers/staff, families and community, business/industry providers

#### **Tier 1: Equity-driven Direct and Indirect Prevention and Early Intervention for ALL**

- School counseling classroom EBP curriculum and instruction (Academic, Career & SEL)
- Large group/school-wide activities and initiatives
- Fair, just, access and inclusion policies and practices for students and families
- Universal Assessments and the use of data
- Support Student Success Plans (SSP)
- Student appraisal and advisement
- Staff collaboration and supports
- Family, community, business/industry partnerships

### **The CCSCF Themes and Components Across Tiers**

#### **Define**

- Grounded in Student Standards, School Counselor Standards, Code of Ethics

#### **Build, Implement, Monitor**

- Building and implementing the CCSCF with fidelity and the use of data and action planning

#### **Deliver**

- Direct and indirect services consistently
- Equity and access for all students
- Evidence-based practices
- Focus on all domains

#### **Assess, Act, Announce**

- Framework assessment and evaluation
- Performance evaluation
- Reporting results
- Continuous improvement planning

## School Counseling Curriculum

Our school counseling curriculum was developed using a needs assessment conducted throughout our school community in Spring 2019. The student lessons are aligned to the 2020 Connecticut School Counseling Standards and are based on what students should be able to understand, know, and be able to do in the academic, career, and social-emotional domains. We will conduct a new needs assessment to align post-COVID needs with our curriculum better.

### Middle School Curriculum

<b>Grade 6</b> <b>Theme: Developing Good Habits</b>	<b>Grade 7</b> <b>Theme: Skill Building for Success</b>	<b>Grade 8</b> <b>Theme: Practicing Good Habits</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● School Counselor Introduction Lesson (Sept)</li> <li>● 3 Classroom Lessons                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Skills for School Success (Sept-Oct)</li> <li>- Understanding and Managing Emotions (Nov-Dec)</li> <li>- Career Cluster Lesson (Spring)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Small Groups as needed (Tier 2 intervention determined by needs)</li> <li>● 2 Individual Planning Meetings (Fall and spring)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2 Classroom Lessons                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Academic Success - Time Management (Fall)</li> <li>- Emotion Management (Mar)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● All students will receive the Second Step Curriculum in a Unified Arts rotation</li> <li>● Small Groups (Tier 2 intervention determined by needs)</li> <li>● 2 Individual Planning Meetings (Fall and spring)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2 Individual Planning Meetings (Dec-Jan)</li> <li>● 4 Classroom Lessons                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Academic Success and Introduction to High School (Early fall)</li> <li>- Stress (Nov-Jan)</li> <li>- Career Interest Inventory (Dec-Feb)</li> <li>- High School Course Selection (Between mid-winter and early spring)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Small Groups (Tier 2 intervention determined by needs)</li> </ul>

**Note:** All services listed are minimum expectations

### High School Curriculum

<b>Grade 9</b>	<b>Grade 10</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 3 Individual Planning Meetings (Fall/mid-winter/spring)</li> <li>● 1 Classroom Lesson                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Academic Resilience/Standardized Testing (Late fall)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Small Groups as needed (Tier 2 intervention determined by needs)</li> <li>● Student/Parent Event (Dec.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 3 Individual Planning Meetings (Fall/mid-winter/spring)</li> <li>● 1 Classroom Lesson                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mental Health (Mid-Year)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Small Groups as needed (Tier 2 intervention determined by needs)</li> <li>● Student/Parent Event (Dec.)</li> </ul>

Grade 11	Grade 12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 3 Individual Planning Meetings (Fall/mid-winter/spring)</li> <li>● 1 Classroom Lesson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Postsecondary Planning Workshops/Resume Writing (Spring)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Small Groups (Tier 2 intervention determined by needs)</li> <li>● Student/Parent Event (Dec.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 3 Individual Planning Meetings (Fall/mid-winter/spring)</li> <li>● 1 Classroom Lesson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Employability Skills (Fall)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Small Groups (Tier 2 intervention determined by needs)</li> <li>● Student/Parent Event (Oct.)</li> </ul>

**Note:** All services listed are minimum expectations



## **School Counselor Assignments**

Students are assigned to a school counselor when they enroll in the Norwalk Public Schools. Generally, the school counselor will follow the student throughout the time they remain enrolled in the school. Information about how students are assigned to a counselor is listed below. The breakdown of specific counselor assignments can be found on each school's website.

### **Elementary School**

All incoming elementary school students K-5 or K-8 will have access to a school counselor. The same counselor will remain with all students throughout their time at their respective elementary schools. Specific school counselor roles can be found on the School Counseling Department website.

### **Middle School**

A school counselor will be assigned to each incoming 6th-grade class. The same school counselor will stay with the students throughout their time at the Middle School. There is one school counselor assigned per grade level. Specific information can be found on the School Counseling Department website.

### **High School**

Students are assigned to a school counselor upon entry into High School. These assignments are based alphabetically on the student's last name. School counselors will work with students throughout their time at a Norwalk Public Schools High School. Specific school counselor assignments can be found on the School Counseling Department website.

## **District School Counseling and Social Services K-12**

### **Contact Information:**

**James Martinez, MS Ed., 6th Yr.**

*Education Administrator for School Counseling and Social Services K-12*

*Coordinator of Section 504 and Districtwide Crisis Team*

Department of Specialized Learning

125 East Avenue

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Norwalk, CT 06852-6001

203-854-4151 Office

203-842-4225 Fax

203-943-9725 Mobile

[martinezj@norwalkps.org](mailto:martinezj@norwalkps.org)

## Student Success Plans

A **Student Success Plan (SSP)** is an individualized student-driven portfolio that addresses a student's needs and interests through activities, focusing on post-secondary and life planning starting in grade 6 and progressing through grade 12. These electronic plans are developed, monitored, and maintained electronically, i.e., Google Docs. Effective SSPs take the collaboration of teachers, support staff, and administration to provide the curriculum, assessment, and exploration needed to help students develop the skills and habits of mind to be career ready at graduation. School Counselors in Norwalk Public Schools contribute to the delivery of SSPs through the implementation and services included in the Comprehensive School Counseling Framework.

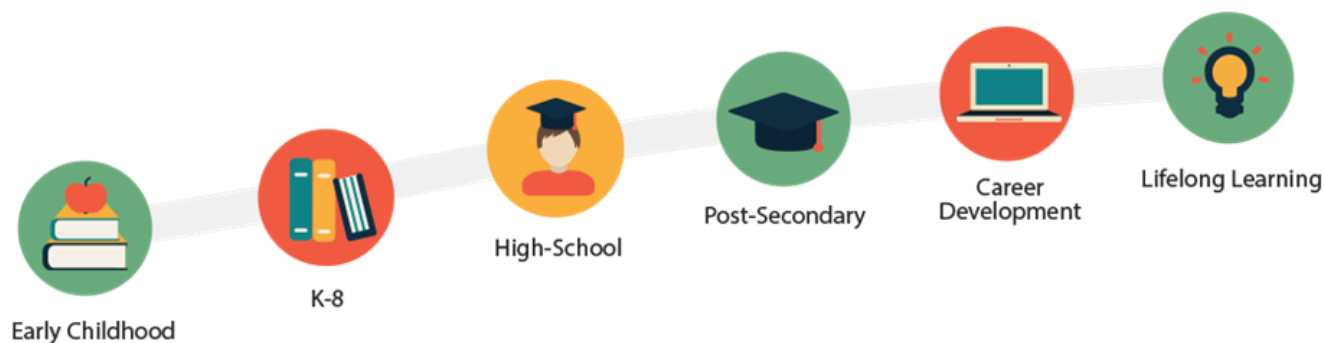
<b>Alignment Between Norwalk Public Schools Comprehensive School Counseling Program and Student Success Plan Components</b>				
<b>School</b>	<i>Grade level</i>	<i>Social-Emotional Well-being</i>	<i>Academic Well-being</i>	<i>Career Readiness</i>
<b>CMS NHMS RMS WRMS PRMS</b>	Grade 6	Classroom lessons on understanding & managing emotions	Classroom lessons on skills for school success	Classroom lessons on career clusters
	Grade 7	Classroom lessons on time management, emotion management, and <i>Second Step Curriculum</i>	Classroom lessons on time management for academic success	
	Grade 8	Classroom lesson on Stress Management	Classroom lessons on transition to high school and academic success skills	Career Interest Inventory assessment and classroom lesson
<b>BMHS CGS NHS P-TECH</b>	Grade 9		Classroom lessons on academic resilience and standardized testing	
	Grade 10	Classroom lessons on multiculturalism		Do What You Are personality assessment and classroom lesson
	Grade 11	Classroom lessons on mental health hygiene		Classroom lessons on resume writing and post-secondary planning
	Grade 12			Classroom lessons on employability skills
<b>Across Schools</b>	Grades 6-12	Individual Planning Meetings	Individual Planning Meetings	Individual Planning Meetings

## Workforce Development

### What is Workforce Development?

Workforce Development is a state-wide initiative in which individuals are educated and trained for current and future business and industry employment opportunities to help support the economic environment in Connecticut and beyond. In support, Governor Lamont has created the Governor's Workforce Council to drive Workforce Development in CT. According to Governor Lamont "Now, more than ever, our state's education and workforce systems must create opportunities that address issues of social and economic justice. The Workforce Council has set a goal that every Connecticut resident will benefit from equitable, life-long access to pathways for career advancement that fit their interests and capabilities while providing job opportunities that meet the needs of our employers. If we succeed at this goal, we will make the kind of progress addressing equity and fairness that will be felt for generations. Let us resolve that this will be a team accomplishment that happened under the guidance of my administration and the Workforce Council members".

The Governor's Workforce Council has been tasked with setting strategy and policy for the state's Pre-K through retirement workforce pipeline and to serve as the prime coordinator for businesses, educators, trainers, state agencies, state workforce boards, non-profits, and others. The primary goal of the Governor's Workforce Council is to ensure that Connecticut maintains the most accessible, equitable, aligned, and high-quality workforce pipeline in the country, ensuring our workforce remains agile through curricula and programming that is responsive to the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century economy. The Governor's Workforce Council will partner with K-12, post-secondary, employers, and regional workforce boards to coordinate workforce policy and programs and ensure the overall strategy is reflective of the needs of the different areas of the state.



### Workforce Development at Work in Norwalk Public Schools

Workforce Development in education lives and grows both inside and outside of the classroom. Inside the classroom, we bring in Workforce Development through purposeful programming, including project-based learning, career speaker series, and developmental guidance of the career domains, to name a few. Outside of the classroom, we connect our scholars to the world of experiences and coursework, we strive to provide career exposures and opportunities through internships and seek out enrichment opportunities that match our student's passions and interests. As educators in Workforce

Development, we always encourage students to build their skills, engage in career exploration, follow their passions and interests, engage in career pathways, and seek the coursework and technical skills needed for future workforce success.

**Workforce Development Quote by CT Governor Ned Lamont:** “Our economy works at its best when we have a diverse workforce that is prepared and supported in the career they choose.”

### **Workforce Development Enrichment Series**

Norwalk Public School is proud to share our newly developed Workforce Development Enrichment Series. This series has been created with our scholars and their families in mind and will provide diverse opportunities across almost all grade levels. These low-cost to no-cost opportunities span across all fields so that our scholars and their families can immerse themselves in real-world experiences around their own passions. These exciting and ever-changing opportunities can range from a class experience to earning credentials for the workforce. It is important to visit the Workforce Development Enrichment Series on the website often to learn about new and exciting opportunities at [https://www.norwalkps.org/576479\\_3](https://www.norwalkps.org/576479_3).

### **365 Year-Round Enrichment Series & Summer Enrichment Series**

Where NPS scholars and/or family members can explore all their interests and passions while learning at the same time!

### **Apprenticeship and Enrichment Series**

Where NPS scholars and/or family members can explore all their interests through apprenticeship and training opportunities once you have earned your GED or high school diploma.

### **Internship Enrichment Series**

Where NPS scholars and/or family members can explore all their interests through internship opportunities.

### **Job Enrichment Series**

### **Volunteerism Enrichment Series**

Where NPS scholars and/or family members can explore all their interests through volunteer Where NPS scholars and/or family members can explore all their interests through job opportunities once you have earned your high school diploma or GED.

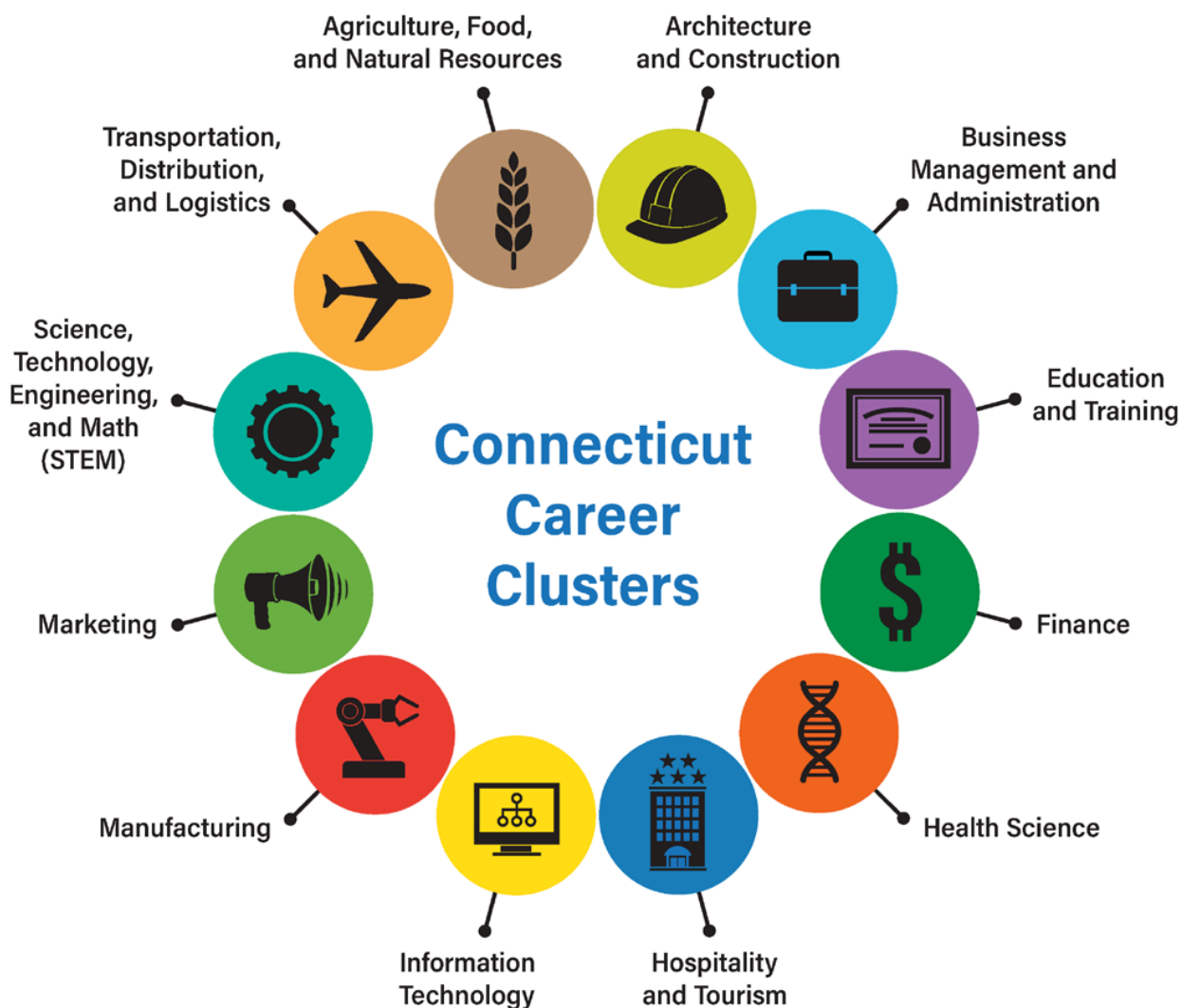
experiences in a variety of areas.

### **Career Clusters and Career Pathways**

There are 16 national career clusters that have been established by The US Department of Education. A career cluster is a group of occupations with similar features and necessary skill sets categorized with different career cluster headings. For example, in the Human Services Career Cluster, a Wellness Pathway would be most appropriate. 12 of the 16 career clusters (see below) have been adopted by the CT State Department of Education as they will lead our scholars into career pathways that will allow them to earn a living wage and prosper in their field of choice. Our Norwalk Public School Career Pathways have been formalized at each school in grades 6-12, in alignment with the CT state career clusters. How our scholars are introduced to the career clusters is through their Career Pathway options in grades 6-12. A career pathway is a series of courses that allow a student to earn a certificate in grades 8 and 12.

At each school in grades 6 - 8, each scholar can expect to select their career pathway in the fall and grades 9 - 12 in the spring. A student will be asked to select one career pathway in an area of their interest and passion. While scholars are able to change their career pathway, the school counselor will assist each scholar in making their career pathway selections. Scholars who review the career pathway options at their school and are still unsure of their choice are able to select the General Studies pathway. This will allow them more time and different class exposure to select their career pathway in the future.

# Empowering Connecticut's Learners



## Workforce Development by Grade Levels

All Students K-12 will benefit from the new Workforce Development initiative within Norwalk Public Schools. As the program is built, all students will be exposed to year-round enrichment programming and opportunities. Specifically, scholars in grades K-2 will enjoy skill-building activities. At NPS, five members of the school counseling staff worked on a Curriculum Writing Committee in June of 2022. It is here that they developed Kindergarten lessons that speak specifically to Workforce Development in the Career Domain of the CT Comprehensive School Counseling Framework. These lessons will be embedded into each Kindergarten classroom with the School Counselor for the 2022-2023 school year. Scholars in Grades 3-5 will benefit from career exploration both inside and outside of the classroom with career exposures and experiences. Clubs and Activities at the elementary school level specifically in grades 3-5 will work to enrich scholars' curiosity and interest, as well as, tap into career exploration.

In middle school, scholars will be introduced to Career Pathways in which they will be able to select one that is most aligned with their passions and interests within their own school. This will give our scholars the opportunity while in middle school, to use their voice in selecting some of the class electives that they are most interested in pursuing. Further, scholars will be exposed to enrichment experiences and opportunities inside and outside of the classroom as well. After-school clubs and activities also provide a time for scholars to explore their personal interests.

Our high school scholars will continue to explore their career pathways while developing their passions and interests to the fullest with internal and external career pathway-related experiences. High school scholars will continue their career pathways studies and/or branch into newly introduced pathway choices at the high school. Scholars will be exposed to consistent opportunities in which they may elect to volunteer, enroll in year-round or summer enrichment, apply for an internship, or seek credentials and/or employment in a field of their choice, based on their passions and interests.

## **NPS Middle Schools**

### **Concord Magnet School**

#### **CT Career Clusters & School Career Pathways:**

##### ***Arts Audio/Video Technology Communications Career Cluster***

Art Pathway

Music Pathway

Performing Art Pathway

##### ***Government & Public Administration Career Cluster***

Global Citizenship Pathway

##### ***Human Services Career Cluster***

Wellness Pathway

\*General Studies Pathway (not included in a career cluster)

### **Nathan Hale Middle School**

#### **CT Career Clusters & School Career Pathways:**

##### ***Arts Audio/Video Technology Communications Career Cluster***

Art Pathway

Music Pathway

***Government & Public Administration Career Cluster***

Global Citizenship Pathway

***Human Services Career Cluster***

Wellness Pathway

\*General Studies Pathway (not included in a career cluster)

**Ponus Ridge STEAM Academy**

**CT Career Clusters & School Career Pathways:**

***Arts Audio/Video Technology Communications Career Cluster***

Art Pathway

Digital Media Pathway

Music Pathway

***Government & Public Administration Career Cluster***

Global Citizenship Pathway

***Human Services Career Cluster***

Wellness Pathway

\*General Studies Pathway (not included in a career cluster)

**Roton Middle School**

**CT Career Clusters & School Career Pathways:**

***Arts Audio/Video Technology Communications Career Cluster***

Art Pathway

Digital Media

Music Pathway

Performing Arts Pathway



***Government & Public Administration Career Cluster***

Global Citizenship Pathway

***Human Services Career Cluster***

Wellness Pathway

\*General Studies Pathway (not included in a career cluster)

**West Rocks Middle School**

**CT Career Clusters & School Career Pathways:**

***Agriculture/Food/Natural Resources***

Environmental Marine Science Pathway

***Arts Audio/Video Technology Communications Career Cluster***

Art Pathway

Digital Media Pathway

Music Pathway

***Government & Public Administration Career Cluster***

Global Citizenship Pathway

***Human Services Career Cluster***

Wellness Pathway

\*General Studies Pathway (not included in a career cluster)

**NPS High Schools**

**Brien McMahon High School**

**CT Career Clusters & School Career Pathways:**

***Arts Audio/Video Technology Communications Career Cluster***

Art Appreciation Pathway

Music Pathway

Visual Art Pathway

***Business Management & Administration Career Cluster***

Business Administration Pathway

***Finance Career Cluster***

Finance Pathway

***Government & Public Administration Career Cluster***

Global Engagement Pathway

International Studies Pathway

Politics Pathway

NAVAL Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (NJROTC) Pathway

***Health Sciences Career Cluster***

Healthcare Academy Pathway

***Human Services Career Cluster***

Wellness Pathway

***Information Technology Career Cluster***

Computer Science Pathway

PLTW - Computer Science Pathway

***Law/Public Safety/Corrections/Security Career Cluster***

Pre-Law Pathway

***Marketing Career Cluster***

Marketing Pathway

***Science/Technology/Engineering/Math Career Cluster***

Marine Science Academy

PLTW Biomedical Sciences Pathway

PLTW Engineering Pathway

\*Individualized Studies Pathway (not included in a career cluster)

## Center for Global Studies

### **CT Career Clusters & School Career Pathways:**

#### ***Arts Audio/Video Technology Communications Career Cluster***

Music Pathway

Visual Art Pathway

#### ***Finance Career Cluster***

Finance Pathway

#### ***Government & Public Administration Career Cluster***

Global Engagement Pathway

International Studies Pathway

Politics Pathway

NAVAL Junior Reserves Officer Training Corps (NJROTC) Pathway

#### ***Human Services Career Cluster***

Wellness Pathway

#### ***Information Technology Career Cluster***

Computer Science Pathway

\*Individualized Studies Pathway (not included in a career cluster)

## Norwalk High School

### **CT Career Clusters & School Career Pathways:**

#### ***Arts Audio/Video Technology Communications Career Cluster***

Art Pathway

Art History Pathway

Color Guard Pathway

Digital Media & Communications Academy

Music Pathway

Performing Arts Pathway

#### ***Business Management & Administration Career Cluster***

Entrepreneurship and Marketing Pathway

Information Technology Pathway

#### ***Finance Career Cluster***

Accounting and Finance Pathway

#### ***Government & Public Administration Career Cluster***

Global Engagement Pathway

Reserves Officer Training Corps (ROTC) Pathway

#### ***Human Sciences Career Cluster***

Therapeutic Services Pathway

#### ***Hospitality/Tourism Career Cluster***

Culinary Arts Pathway

#### ***Human Services Career Cluster***

Counseling and Mental Health Services Pathway

Wellness Pathway

***Information Technology Career Cluster***

Computer Science Pathway

***Law/Public Safety/Corrections/Security Career Cluster***

Social Justice Pathway

\*General Studies Pathway (not included in a career cluster)

**P-TECH Norwalk**

**CT Career Clusters & School Career Pathways:**

***Arts Audio/Video Technology Communications Career Cluster***

Graphic Design Pathway

Music Pathway

Performing Arts Pathway

***Business Management & Administration Career Cluster***

Entrepreneurship Pathway

***Government & Public Administration Career Cluster***

Global Engagement Pathway

Reserves Officer Training Corps (ROTC) Pathway

***Hospitality/Tourism Career Cluster***

Culinary Arts Pathway

***Information Technology Career Cluster***

Computer Science Pathway

### ***Law/Public Safety/Corrections/Security Career Cluster***

Social Justice Pathway

### ***Science/Technology/Engineering/Math Career Cluster***

Engineering Pathway

PLTW Biomedical Pathway

\*General Studies Pathway (not included in a career cluster)

## **NPS School Social Worker**

### **Mission**

The mission of school social workers is to promote and support healthy development in all children to attain their maximum potential and benefit from the education afforded them in Connecticut's schools. Using an ecological perspective, school social workers foster social-emotional competencies and academic achievement by assisting students, families, schools, and communities in identifying and addressing barriers to learning and helping students realize their full potential. Ecological theory in social work practice combines biological and psychosocial perspectives to explore the connection

between people and their environment.

Connecticut State Department of Education | Guidelines for the Practice of School Psychology pg 5

[Resources for School Social Workers](#)

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/School-Social-Work/SSW\\_Resources.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/School-Social-Work/SSW_Resources.pdf)

[Standards for School Social Work Practice](#)

[Practice Guidelines for Delivery of School Social Work Services](#)



## **NPS School Psychologists**

### **Mission**

School psychologists partner with families, teachers, school administrators, and other professionals to create safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments that strengthen connections between home, school, and the community.

### **Philosophy**

All children and youth have the right to be educated in a safe and nurturing school environment that

promotes positive educational and social-emotional development. School psychologists respect, engage, and challenge all students to become motivated, confident, and creative lifelong learners. School psychologists foster a climate that nurtures and values diversity, equity, and critical thinking. School psychologists collaborate with key stakeholders in families, schools, and communities to promote the healthy development of all children and youth. School psychologists have unique training that encompasses learning and cognition, as well as social and emotional development, providing an integrated perspective of service within the school context. School psychologists protect the rights of children and their families, respect individual differences, and recognize that diversity contributes to a strong and just society. School psychologists promote early interventions and data based decision-making to support children and families.

Connecticut State Department of Education | Guidelines for the Practice of School Psychology pg 5

### [Resources for School Psychologists](#)

### [Risk Assessment and Intervention Guide](#)



## November 7-11, 2022

During the week of **November 7-11, 2022** schools throughout the United States will celebrate National School Psychology Week (NSPW) to highlight the important work school psychologists and other educators do to help all students thrive.

## Crisis

### Intent and Definition of Crisis Management

**Intent** - Crisis Management is a central component of comprehensive School Safety. The most important consideration in both Crisis Management and Safe Schools efforts is the health, safety, and welfare of the students and staff. A comprehensive Safe Schools Plan places a strong emphasis on prevention using strategies that range from building design to discipline policies and programs which improve school climate.

**Definition** - Crisis Management is that part of a school division's approach to school safety,



**which focuses more narrowly on a time-limited, problem-focused intervention to identify, confront and resolve the crisis, restore equilibrium, and support appropriate adaptive responses.**

## **Crisis Management Planning**

### **A. Definitions**

1. “Crises” shall include but not be limited to situations involving the death of a student, staff member, or a member of a student’s immediate family by suicide, substance abuse, illness, or accident. The principals shall have the authority to determine what is a crisis incident and to convene the Crisis Management Team.
2. “Critical incidents” shall include situations involving threats of harm to students, personnel, or facilities. Critical incidents include but are not limited to natural disasters, fire, use of weapons/explosives, and the taking of hostages. Such incidents require an interagency response involving law enforcement and/or emergency services agencies.
3. The individual school “Crisis Management Plan” shall be a written plan with explicit intent to protect and sustain life, reduce emotional trauma, assist in emotional recovery from trauma, and minimize personal injury and/or damage to the facility.

### **B. Crisis Management Team**

An Individual School Crisis Management Team shall be established at each school to meet the demands of crisis incidents.

1. Membership: The crisis team shall consist of an immediately accessible core group who have the knowledge and skills to act in any emergency and shall include the principal, assistant principal, one or more school counselors, nurse/clinic attendant, school psychologist, school social worker, one or more selected teachers, and a person to record events/minutes of meetings. Additionally, the Police Department (school resource officer, D.A.R.E. officer, or other person designated by the Police Chief), Mental Health Services, Fire Department, and County Emergency Rescue Services shall be asked to consult with the school team. A roster of team members will be posted in each school administration office.
2. Purposes: The Crisis Team shall implement and adapt appropriate action from the Crisis Management Plan to address the specific events of the crisis. Roles and responsibilities of team members and consultants will be established in the school’s written Crisis Management Plan.

We know traumatic events can cause significant anxiety and stress within the school community. The following information provides guidance on supporting appropriate action from the Crisis Management Plan to address the specific events of the crisis. Roles and responsibilities of team members and consultants, students, (and staff):

- Take care of yourself first before trying to help others

- Make sure you are regulated.
- Don't take on more than you can handle.
- Refer students to onsite trained crisis staff who are available to support students when needed.
- Reassure students with information about the steps that are being taken to make sure the school community (students/staff) are safe:
  - More police presence
  - Ongoing security
  - Additional ongoing support available
- Stressful events often trigger memories from past events
- Normal reactions to stressful events:
  - Difficulty sleeping
  - Changes in eating
  - Increased irritability
  - Difficulty concentrating
  - Low frustration tolerance
  - Sadness, tearfulness
  - Sensitivity to noise, sounds, touch, etc. that might remind individual(s) of the stressful/traumatic event

### **NPS Crisis Building Procedures:**

When there is a crisis in a building:

1. The **principal** contacts the Assistant Superintendent of Schools, who then notifies the Superintendent.
2. The **Assistant Superintendent of Schools** contacts the District Crisis Team Coordinator/Education Administrator for School Counselors and Social Services, who will mobilize the District Crisis Team (DCT) to the school in crisis. First, the DCT Coordinator will provide the principal and the Assistant Superintendent of Schools with a list of the members of the DCT that will include cell numbers/office numbers/and email addresses.
3. After the principal informs the central office, the **principal** will **immediately** notify the building mental health team (school psychologist, school social worker, school counselor, school nurse) in the building (phone call/meeting).
4. The DCT members will be informed of the death by the DCT Coordinator. **The mental health staff at the school in crisis will be notified by their principal.**
5. When the **DCT Coordinator** verifies that the school-based mental health staff has been notified of the death/crisis by their principal, an identified member of the DCT will reach out to the

school-based mental health team to set up a meeting with the administrators, school-based team, and the DCT to plan next steps.

6. Once a meeting time is established, the identified **DCT member** will email administrators, and school-based mental health, and the DCT will send a meeting invite and/or virtual meeting link.
7. At the meeting, the DCT will help the school coordinate how to support the staff and students in addition to any outside resources such as the Den for Grieving Kids, Mid-Fairfield Child Guidance, The Norwalk Health Center, and any other services that may be necessary to support the school. The DCT Coordinator or DCT designee will outreach to set up times for the services to support the school.
8. At the end of the day, a building administrator, the school-based mental health team, and the DCT will **debrief** to determine what additional support the school will need on a daily basis.
9. **Debrief** after the crisis is over with the whole District Crisis Team to share, “Roses, Buds, Thorns.”

### Elements of Trauma-Informed Environments

- **SAFETY** precedes learning
  - Safety is the #1 priority. Until our safety needs are met, we are unable to learn and function
- **FEAR** overrides the ability to think clearly
  - When we feel fear, a sense of threat, or experience trauma, our brain goes into a fight-flight-freeze mode, leaving us unavailable to think clearly and make decisions as we are focused on survival
- **BEHAVIORS** communicate feelings
  - Behaviors are ways to communicate what others have trouble verbalizing
- **ENVIRONMENT & ACTIVITIES** can calm
  - Trauma-informed environments and self-regulation activities help provide a sense of safety, and calm
- **RELATIONSHIPS** can heal
  - Healing takes place in healthy, positive relationships with another supportive adult
- **NON-VERBALS** are powerful
  - Non-verbal communication is powerful – pay attention to these cues from others
- **TEAMWORK** and shared responsibility are vital
  - Teamwork and support are important to help you and your student heal from trauma

## Three R's: Regulate, Relate & Reason

### Regulate:

- First, understand and manage your own feelings and reactions
- Try to recognize that an individual's behavior is communicating feelings or a loss of control
- Validate the student's emotions then guide them towards calm:
  - Try to limit questions and focus on acknowledging that the child is experiencing an emotion
- After validating, guide the student to use practiced strategies/exercises that the individual themselves finds to be calming and grounding. Some options are:
  - Deep breathing
  - 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 (5 things they can see; 4 things they can hear; 3 things they can touch; 2 things they can smell; 1 thing they can taste)
  - Using a stress ball
  - Writing/drawing
  - Taking space or encouraging a movement break (if appropriate and safe)

### Relate:

- Think about your tone of voice and voice volume, body language, and facial expressions:
  - **55%** of communication is received through *facial expression and body language*, **38%** is through the *tone of voice and volume*, and only **7%** is through the *words spoken*
- Think of what communication modes will support your relationship with the student at this moment:
  - *Being* with the student (just being close in proximity to them)
  - *Talking* with the student
  - *Doing* something with the student (e.g., asking them to assist you with a task or offer to spend time with them)
- In a calm moment, introduce these ideas:
  - *Mention that you've noticed changes in behaviors* - Say, "Since the event, you have been getting into a lot of fights about things that usually aren't a big deal. Can you tell me how you've felt since it happened?"
  - *Fighting doesn't help* - Say, "Do you think that us being upset with each other/behaving in these ways will help make us feel better?"
  - *I'm here to help you* - Say, "Even when you are struggling with your feelings about x, y, z, I want to be able to help you. If you're going to talk about your feelings, I'm willing to listen."

**Reason:**

After you have related and the student is better able to use their logic, it is time to reason:

- Ask them for their perspective of the situation and explain what was going on for them. If needed, you can clarify any information the student may have misperceived.
- Focus on future strategies:
  - Review strategies used in the past
  - Consider the need for modified/new strategies while letting the student lead when thinking about alternatives (this support helps autonomous decision-making and independent functioning)

## **Job Descriptions**

### **Norwalk Public Schools - School Counselor (NPS approved 2020)**

**Position Description:**

The K-12 school counselor provides academic; career; college access, affordability and admission; and social-emotional competencies to every student annually by helping design, implement and evaluate a comprehensive evidence-based school counseling program in each district school. The school counselor

provides an annual plan and advising for every student, classroom school counseling lessons in collaboration with other educators for all students, group and individual counseling for some students. The school counselor also provides additional school-wide activities that promote student success helping close achievement, opportunity, and attainment gaps increase student career/college success and improve mental health/well-being. The school counselor is an advocate, leader, and change-agent partnering with colleagues inside the schools, in the community, and with family members for optimal student success. The school counselor is primarily supervised by the Supervisor of School Counseling and administratively supervised by the building principal.

### **Services to Students:**

- Plans, delivers, and evaluates school counseling interventions to help close achievement, opportunity, and attainment gaps.
- Delivers academic success skills including organization, time management, study skills to all students annually.
- Delivers career development skills including assessments, career clusters, use of Occupational Outlook Handbook (embedded in Naviance), creating resumes/cover letters, job shadowing/searching techniques.
- Delivers college access/affordability/admission skills to all students with extra attention to first-generation students, students with disabilities, and students needing affordability resources.
- Delivers social-emotional skills to all students including anti-violence/ anti-bullying, stress management, cultural diversity skills, and ways to boost energy/ mood to all students.
- Ensures every student has an annually updated *ACCESS & Accomplishments* Plan.
- Ensures ethical practice by using an ethical decision-making model and sharing most recent updates of the ACA, ASCA & NACAC codes of ethics with all stakeholders.
- Coordinates orientation for new and transfer students and families.
- Applies developmental, learning, counseling, and education theories.
- Uses Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success standards (ASCA) in the school counseling program.
- Demonstrates an understanding of the impact of cultural, social, and environmental influences on student success and opportunities.
- Designs and implements counseling and instruction aligned to Mindsets and Behaviors in Classroom, Group, and Individual Settings.
- Provides appraisal and advisement to students in Classroom, Group, and Individual Settings.
- Provides short-term counseling in Group and Individual Settings.

### **Collaboration with School and Professional Staff:**

- Collaborates with teachers, school social workers, and school psychologists for optimal student success.

- Collaborates with multiple school systems and peers for systemic change: as Equity Consultants on the Master Schedule, Supporting all students' Engagement in Extracurriculars, Access to Challenging Coursework for all students, Academic Support Services.
- Consults with teachers on creative, culturally responsive interventions to support struggling students including noncognitive factors affecting student success.
- Advocates for students in PPT/504 meetings, student study teams, and in restorative justice settings.
- Makes referrals to appropriate school resources.
- Consults with educators for student achievement and success.

#### **Liaison and Collaboration with Outside Resources:**

- Maintains professional memberships in state and national school and college counseling organizations (ASCA/CSCA, ACA, NACAC/NEACAC).
- Collaborates with family members and community agencies/businesses in a school/family/community partnership for student achievement/success.
- Makes referrals to appropriate community resources.

#### **Planning and Administration:**

- Demonstrates leadership and advocacy as a systems change agent for equity by developing and implementing a comprehensive school counseling program.
- Establishes and maintains School Counseling Program Advisory Council.
- Assists with annual Equity Audit of school programs/policies/practices.
- Assesses the School Counseling Program annually and shares results with all stakeholders using *ASCA Program Assessment* and the *ACCESS Questionnaire*.
- Uses disaggregated data to plan School Counseling Program interventions.
- Uses technology effectively in the school counseling program.
- Annually updates school counselor/administrator agreement.
- Analyzes school disaggregated data to inform school counseling program best practices.
- Demonstrates understanding of educational systems, legal issues, policies, research, and trends in education.
- Applies legal and ethical principles to the school counseling profession.
- Applies school counseling professional standards and competencies.
- Creates school counseling program beliefs, vision, and mission statements aligned with school and district.
- Identifies gaps in achievement, attendance, discipline, opportunity, and resources.
- Develops annual student outcome goals based on data.
- Develops and implements action plans aligned with student outcome goals and data.
- Assesses and reports program results to the school community.
- Uses time appropriately according to national recommendations and student/school data.
- Establishes annual agreement with building leaders about the SC program.

- Establishes/convenes SCP Advisory Council district-wide and in all schools.
- Uses a SC appraisal process (ASCA SC Appraisal/101 Solutions-CAFE Model).
- Maintains weekly and annual calendars of SC use of time and school counseling program/school-wide events for all stakeholders.

### **Required Qualifications:**

- Eligible for School Counselor certification in CT.
- Master's degree in Counselor Education/School Counseling.
- Knowledge of evidence-based research and best practices in designing, implementing, and evaluating a school counseling program and interventions including school counseling curriculum lessons, group and individual counseling, and planning/advising for all students.
- Effective skills in working with all school stakeholders and community partners.
- Ability to identify students with disabilities and refer them for appropriate services and accommodations.
- Ability to affirm and work effectively with students and other stakeholders of multiple cultural and linguistic identities.
- Demonstrated professional identity/memberships in state and national school and college counseling professional organizations.
- Knowledge of ACA, ASCA, and NACAC professional codes of ethics for school and college counselors.
- Experience in implementing and evaluating a school counseling program model such as the ASCA National Model.
- Experience in advising/planning for all students, developmental school counseling curriculum lessons, group counseling, and individual counseling.

### **Preferred Qualifications:**

- Fluent in Spanish.
- Experience and understanding of bilingual students' unique academic and social-emotional strengths and challenges.
- Experience in urban, diverse environments.
- K-12 teaching, advising, and/or coaching experience.
- Technology skills include use of spreadsheets, social media, websites, apps, and other ways that build and enhance the school counseling program effectiveness with all stakeholders.
- Experience using the ASCA Model, Code of Ethics, Professional Competencies, & Mindsets & Behaviors.
- Experience in career and college access, affordability, and admission counseling.



# **Norwalk Public Schools - PK-12+ School Social Worker, (Draft 12/2021 pending approval)**

## **Position Description:**

The PK-12+ school social worker provides academic and social-emotional skills to students using evidence-based practice in each district school. School social workers:

- Bring unique knowledge, skills, and resource mobilization to the school system and the school counseling and social services team as mental health professionals who assist with culturally responsive mental health concerns, behavioral concerns, positive behavioral support, academic, and classroom support, consultation with teachers, parents/guardian, and administrators, case management, bio-psychosocial assessment, evaluation, and provide individual and group counseling interventions in school and families
- Enhance the district's ability to meet its academic mission, especially where home, school, and diverse community (ability, economic, ethnic/racial, linguistic) collaboration is key to achieving student success. The PK-12+ school social worker is an advocate, leader, and change-agent partnering with colleagues inside the schools, in the community, and with family members for optimal student success. The PK-12+ school social worker is primarily supervised by the Supervisor of School Counseling and Social Services and administratively supervised by the building principal.

## **Major Duties And Responsibilities:**

### **Group and Individual Counseling, Classroom Lessons, Professional Development**

- Develop students' academic and social-emotional skills
- Develop school staff professional development programs
- Assist teachers with classroom management skills.
- Develop student activities and committees to enhance the school climate.

### **Family Contacts**

- Interview families to assess issues affecting student educational adjustment.
- Work with parent/guardian groups to support student school adjustment.
- Alleviate family stress to support student school and community success.
- Parent/guardian interviews for developmental histories

### **School/Community Liaison**

- Serve as a primary link between the school and community/family services.
- Help schools receive support from social and mental health agencies.

- Advocate and evaluate new/improved community/school services for students by collaborating with community groups.
- Help school, family, and community systems respond in culturally and linguistically effective ways to meet student needs.

### **Consultation, Program Coordination, Leadership, and Advocacy**

- Consultation with educators, building leaders, parents and guardians, community organizations, and external mental health clinicians
- Program Development: Developing, planning, and implementing (with other school staff) educational programs for students with exceptional and traditional needs.
- Coordinate administrative functions including annual reviews, reports, daily and monthly billing, scheduling, create and monitor IEPs, create and monitor behavioral intervention plans, support functional behavioral assessments as needed or in collaboration with school psychologists
- Collaboration with school counselors, school psychologists, special educators, and related services administrators.
- Crisis team facilitation and membership
- School committees
- Department and faculty meetings and professional development
- Develop outreach and intervention programs for children with neurodiversity, disabilities, and/or gifts/talents through Planning and Placement Team (PPT) Meetings.
- Develop and implement Individualized Education Programs in collaboration with teachers and other staff working with the students.
- 504 plan and accommodations implementation and monitoring
- Provide educators with information about healthy family functioning.
- Develop preventive programs for all children and adolescents to support mental health and academic success.

### **Required Qualifications**

- CT School Social Worker Certification.
- Master's Degree in Social Work (MSW).
- Knowledge of culturally responsive school social work methods and procedures.
- Experience in developing and implementing behavior management plans, IEPs, 504 plans, and accommodations.
- Ability to work as a team member
- Advocacy and leadership skills with parents/guardians, local agencies, school personnel, and administration
- Skills in functional behavioral assessment.

### **Preferred Qualifications**

- Experience working with children, adolescents, and families, completing developmental histories, counseling students individually and in groups, and crisis management.
- Bilingual preferred.
- Days: Monday - Friday; hours vary by building and grade level.

## **Norwalk Public Schools - School Psychologist (NPS approved 2021)**

### **Position Description:**

School Psychologists develop strategies and interventions to assist students in succeeding. They measure and interpret the intellectual, adaptive, academic, social and emotional development of children; interpreting results of psychological studies; interpreting and applying state and federal codes.

### **Essential Functions**

The following identifies the primary and essential functions of the position and is not intended to be an exhaustive listing of all duties.

- Administers standardized and/or supplemental assessments for the purpose of measuring the intellectual, adaptive, academic, social and emotional development of children and/or determining eligibility for services in compliance with regulatory requirements
- Assesses students' functional capabilities and home and/or classroom environment for the purpose of determining student's functional level and developing recommendations and/or placement
- Assists other staff for the purpose of developing and applying student monitoring systems and designing academic and behavioral interventions.
- Assists all specialists (e.g. autism consultants, behavior specialists, occupational and physical therapist, speech language pathologists, etc.) for the purpose of creating and delivering student supports
- Compiles information from a variety of sources (e.g. administrators, teachers, nurse, parents, mental health agencies, other professionals, etc.) for the purpose of producing a comprehensive screening/ evaluation report in compliance with established guidelines.
- Has strong understanding in Response to Intervention for the purpose of interpreting the data to intervene, offering interventions and eventually determining eligibility
- Counseling to assist students in developing positive social skills. Psychological testing as per PPT recommendations.
- Utilize appropriate crisis intervention techniques.
- Create opportunities for students to learn/practice new skills/behaviors related to IEP goals.
- Utilize appropriate clinical skills/techniques during individual/group counseling sessions.
- Receives administrative and technical supervision from the Director of Pupil Personnel Services and general supervision from the building principal.

- Performs related duties as required.

### **Knowledge/Skills**

- Experience working with young children
- Public school experience with students displaying social/emotional/behavioral needs
- Experience in behavior management (development and program implementation)
- Collaborative working style
- Ability to communicate ideas and directives clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing
- Effective, active listening skills
- Ability to work effectively with others
- Organizational and problem solving skills

### **Required Qualifications**

- Connecticut School Psychologist certification.
- At least 2 years of public school experience working with students with autism and other behavior challenges.
- Preferred; DBT training
- Experience with the PPT process.
- Experience with writing IEP goals/objectives.
- Working collaboratively with colleagues.

### **Preferred Qualifications**

- Experience with all levels of school-aged students with behavioral challenges
- Spanish fluency is an asset.

## **National School Counseling Week**

National School Counseling Week 2023 (#NSCW23) is Feb.6-10, 2023, to focus public attention on the unique contribution of school counselors within U.S. school systems. National School Counseling Week, sponsored by ASCA, highlights the tremendous impact school counselors can have in helping students achieve school success and plan for a career. National School Counseling Week is always celebrated the first full week in February.



## Resources

**Key: S = Students | F = Families**

### Resources for Academic Success

[Ed.ted.com](https://ed.ted.com) (S)

TED Lessons on organization & time management

[Ed.gov](https://ed.gov) (F)

## Homework Help

[Khanacademy.org](https://www.khanacademy.org) (S, F)

To get personalized help with what you're studying or to learn something completely new.

## Resources for College and Career Exploration

[Naviance Log-In \(via Clever\)](#) (S, F)

College, career, and life readiness tool (inventories, school search, scholarships, resume template)

[12 Career Ready Practices](#) (S, F)

Framework for the developmental experiences necessary to becoming career ready

[College Board: For Parents](#) (F)

Find out how you can help your child prepare for college, explore majors and careers, pay for college, and more

## Resources for Social-Emotional Learning

[K-12 Social and Emotional Learning Across Connecticut: A Statewide Landscape Scan \(2021\)](#)

[Edutopia.org](#) (F)

Transition Resources for Parents, Teachers, and Administrators: Help students make the transition into elementary, middle, high school, and beyond

[Casel.org](#) (F)

Resources for both educators and parents, and for educators to share with parents, about ways that families can promote social-emotional learning.

[211ct.org](#) (S, F)

2-1-1 is a free, confidential information and referral service that connects people to essential health and human services 24 hours a day, seven days a week, online and over the phone.

[Norwalk Public Library](#) (S, F)

A list of widely used resources by the Norwalk Public Schools for students and families.

[Norwalk Youth Services Bureau](#) Through coordination with local, regional, and state services, Norwalk Youth Services Bureau will guide youth and their families to needed services.

[Juvenile Review Board \(JRB\)](#) The Juvenile Review Board (JRB) consists of community-based representatives from the Police, Court, Department of Children and Families, Department of Youth Services, and mental health professionals who use

meaningful alternatives to the Criminal Justice System through strategic and community-based interventions.

## **Legal**

[FERPA and Record-Keeping](#)

[CT CORE Transition Skills](#)

## **School Safety and Security**

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/School-Safety-and-Security/School-Safety-and-Security/Documents>

## **NPS Community Partnerships**

- [Community Services Department - City of Norwalk](#)
- [Mid-Fairfield Child Guidance Center](#)
- [Family and Children's Agency](#)
- [Kids-in-Crisis](#)
- [Triangle Community Center - LGBTQ support](#)
- [Norwalk Health Center](#)
- [Positive Directions - The Center for Prevention and Counseling](#)