# ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION-SCHOOL COUNSELOR

**Definition:**
Under the general supervision of the Director of Alternative Education or site administrator, provide behavioral and educational counseling to individuals and small groups of students.

**Distinguishing Characteristics:**

- Assist students in understanding and seeking solutions to social, emotional, or academic problems and issues; serve as a resource pertaining to student behavior management strategies.
- Assist students with the development of Individual Learning, Academic and Transition Plans.
- Assist students in transitioning to and from Alternative Education and District programs and provide career/post-secondary guidance and counseling.

**Supervision Exercised and Received:**
General direction is provided by the Director of Alternative Education or site administrator.

**Examples of Duties and Responsibilities:**
*Duties and Responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, the following:*

- Conduct structured, goal-oriented counseling sessions in a systematic response to the identified academic and social-emotional needs of students
- Construct individualized development programs for students, helping them visualize and establish their educational goals
- Provide direct guidance and counseling services which are relevant to the sequential development of students as related to educational, social and vocational objectives
- Perform assessment and consultation related to alcohol and drug dependency issues; perform group and individual counseling and refer students and parents to community resources; develop a treatment and discharge plan, including an aftercare program
- Provide crisis intervention, educationally related mental health services, guidance counseling and family consultation services
- Assume an active role in designing, implementing, monitoring, and adjusting educational/learning plans for students
- Communicate with parents regarding goals, objectives and strategies for success in the Alternative Education program
- Assist students in transitioning to and from Alternative Education and District programs
- Provide post-secondary guidance and counseling
- Assist students with junior college dual enrollment
- Design and deliver counseling and related curriculum
- Secure parents' assistance in improving educational achievement of their child
- Attend and participate in IEP, interagency and other meetings - serve as administrative designee for the IEP team when needed

- Participate on Student Study Team; identify students who may need targeted or intensive services
- Coordinate student services with agencies such as probation, law enforcement, social services, districts and other organizations
- Provide support for teaching and other staff as needed
- Assist with problem solving and consultation regarding student behavioral and program issues
- Participate in student/teacher or parent/teacher conferences as requested
- Prepare and maintain accurate records and reports related to students, IEPs, intake, attendance and other records, as assigned
- Assist in the areas of tests and measurements of student performance and achievement
- Analyze situations accurately and adopt an effective course of action
- Operate a computer and other office equipment, as assigned
- Drive a vehicle to various sites to conduct work
- Participate in professional learning to enhance knowledge and skills
- Perform related duties as assigned

**Employment Standards:**

***Knowledge of:***

- Applicable sections of the Education Code and other applicable laws, rules and regulations related to assigned activities
- School and county discipline and attendance policies
- Counseling theory, ethics and associated legal confidentiality requirements
- Effective counseling techniques and procedures
- County Office Alternative Education Program policies and practices
- County and state juvenile justice system
- Behavior modification techniques and strategies
- Community referral resources
- ILP development and format
- Human development and learning theories
- Interpersonal skills using tact, patience and courtesy
- Oral and written communication skills
- Record-keeping techniques
- Operation of a computer and assigned software

***Ability to:***

- Provide individual and group counseling for students
- Coordinate various student services with appropriate agencies
- Plan and develop ILPs
- Gather, organize, analyze evaluate and interpret data

- Prepare and maintain a variety of records and reports, including confidential materials
- Read, interpret, apply and explain laws, rules, regulations, policies and procedures
- Analyze situations accurately and adopt an effective course of action
- Work independently with little direction
- Meet schedules and timelines
- Plan and organize work
- Work confidentially with discretion
- Establish and maintain cooperative and effective working relationships with others
- Operate a computer and other office equipment
- Adapt to periodic heavy work load
- Independently travel to various locations
- Maintain regular and reliable attendance

***Computer Skills:***

- Basic Word Processing skills, such as the ability to format, save files for cross-platform use and in different versions, work with toolbars, menus, and rulers, insert graphics, use borders, and print labels and envelopes.
- Basic Database skills, such as the ability to sort and retrieve records; create layouts, reports, create and print mailing labels; perform mail merge for form letters; add, edit, delete fields and records.
- Basic spreadsheet skills, including the ability to open, modify, save, and print a new or existing spreadsheet, and enter text and numbers.
- Basic email skills, including the ability to send and open a file attachment.
- Basic Internet usage including the ability to utilize its resources for instructional purposes, use a search engine, bookmark a site, download a file, copy text, edit bookmarks and observe copyright regulations.

**Education and Experience:**
*Any combination of education and experience that would likely provide the knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:*

**Education:**

- Bachelors Degree from an accredited college or university; Masters Degree with an emphasis in school counseling if applicable.

**Experience:**

- Three years teaching and/or counseling experience at the secondary level. Work with at-risk students is preferred;
- Bilingual (Spanish speaking and writing) desired.

**Credentials:**

- Possess a valid California Pupil Personnel Services Credential;
  **-OR-**
- Possess a valid Pupil Personnel Services Credential from a state other than California with preparation that is acceptable in order to receive a California credential and be willing to take and pass the California Basic Education Skills Test (CBEST) within one year;

**-OR-**

- Be currently enrolled in a university school counseling program and authorized for an internship to allow you to begin working as a counselor –AND—passing scores on the California Basic Education Skills Test (CBEST).

***Physical Abilities:***

*The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job.*

- Positions in this classification work indoors and sit for long periods of time.
- The position requires daily oral communication in person and on the telephone, and frequent written communication.
- Requires speaking and hearing ability sufficient to hear over phone and carry on routine conversations.
- The work involves operating a computer, calculator, copier, and other equipment, and involves repetitive arm and hand movement.
- Requires hand-eye-arm and finger dexterity to use a personal computer keyboard, ten-key, and other common office equipment.
- Entering data by touch requires the ability to hear computer alarms for errors.
- Forms and copies are color coded, requiring the ability to distinguish among colors.
- Requires visual acuity sufficient to recognize people, words, and numbers.
- May need to occasionally lift up to twenty (20) pounds and in excess of twenty (20) pounds with assistance.
- Visual acuity sufficient to read manuals, video display screens, and other related material and work at a computer screen frequently and throughout the day.

***Work environment:***

*The following conditions may be present:*

- Walking on uneven ground when outdoors.
- Exposure to student illnesses, injuries, infections and bodily fluids.
- May be exposed to chemicals contained in cleaning products.
- May be required to maneuver into awkward positions.

***Other Requirements:***

- Must be fingerprinted and a satisfactory Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation records checks must be received by the Sonoma County Office of Education, prior to employment.
- Proof of TB test will be required upon employment.
- Must pass a pre-employment physical (if applicable).
- May be required to obtain first aid and CPR certificates within the first 6-12 months of employment.
- May be required to drive with or without students; some positions may require a current California driver license, proof of insurance, and possible participation in the DMV Pull Notice Program once employed.