FAQ

How Can a School Counselor Help My Child?

We're here to help all students—not just those who are struggling.

Here are some of the many ways we support students:

- **Emotional and Social Development**
  - Teaching students how to **manage big emotions** like frustration, sadness, and anxiety.
  - Helping students develop **friendship and communication skills**.
  - Supporting students experiencing **bullying or peer pressure**.
- **Academic Support**
  - Teaching **study skills and time management** strategies.
  - Helping students who struggle with **test anxiety**.
  - Encouraging a **growth mindset** so students don't give up when learning is hard.
- **Crisis Intervention**
  - Supporting students who have experienced **trauma or loss**.
  - Helping students in **mental health crises** and connecting families with resources.
  - Providing immediate support if a student is experiencing **self-harm thoughts or suicidal ideation**.

How Do School Counselors Work with Parents?

As a parent, you are **your child's greatest advocate**—but you don't have to do it alone.

School counselors **partner with parents** to:

- Provide **updates on social and emotional concerns** affecting school performance.
- Offer **strategies for managing behavior at home**.
- Help navigate **difficult conversations** with teachers or administration.
- Connect families with **outside counseling services** when needed.

If you ever have concerns about your child's emotional well-being, behavior, or academic success, **reach out to us**. We are here to help!

What Kind of Lessons Do School Counselors Teach?

We provide **classroom lessons** that teach **all students** critical life skills, such as:

Career Exploration – Career Exploration, high school course planning.
Personal Safety – Understanding boundaries, stranger danger, and how to report unsafe situations.

We provide **small group lessons** that teach **select students** critical life skills, such as:

Social Skills – How to make friends, handle peer pressure, and communicate effectively.
Emotional Regulation – How to manage big emotions like anger, frustration, and sadness.
Conflict Resolution – How to work through disagreements in a healthy way.
Coping Strategies – Teaching mindfulness, deep breathing, and problem-solving skills.

These lessons **empower students** with tools they can use for the rest of their lives.

What Can Parents Do to Support Their Child at School?

If you suspect your child is struggling—whether emotionally, socially, or academically—**don't wait**. Here's how you can **advocate for them** and utilize the school counselor's services effectively:

- **Contact the School Counselor Directly**
  - If your child is struggling, schedule a **private meeting** with the counselor.
  - Be specific about your concerns (behavior, emotions, friendships, grades, etc.).
- **Keep Communication Open with Teachers**
  - Teachers see your child **daily** and can provide insight into changes in mood, behavior, or academics.
  - If there's a concern, work together with the teacher and counselor to **create a support plan.**
- **Know the School's Mental Health Resources**
  - Ask about the school's **anti-bullying policies** and mental health support options.
  - If your child needs **ongoing therapy**, ask for a **referral list** of community therapists.
- **Teach Your Child to Self-Advocate**
  - Encourage them to **speak up** when they need help.
  - Let them know the **school counselor is a safe person** they can talk to.

Are school counselors involved in discipline?

- Counselors do not handle discipline or assign behavioral consequences.
- Our role is supportive, not punitive.
- Students meet with us in a safe, confidential space to discuss challenges without the fear of getting in trouble.

Is what my child tells the counselor kept secret?

- Conversations with school counselors are confidential, which helps build trust.
- However,we are legally and ethically required to break confidentiality if your student is a danger to themselves or others, or in cases of abuse. In these rare situations, we will involve parents, guardians, and administration to ensure the child's safety.

Will my child be in trouble if he/she visits the school counselor?

- School Counselors are not disciplinarians! Our role is different from an administrative role and does not include issuing referrals or any other discipline consequence. Our primary role is to assist in removing barriers that may keep your student from being successful in the academic environment.

Will my child miss academic time when they see the school counselor?

- While we make every effort to protect academic time, it may occur that your student briefly misses academic time to meet with us.
- We do our very best to prevent the counseling session from being a burden on the student academically.

Can the school counselor provide therapy?

- While we have specific training in regards to mental health issues, we are not intended to function as therapists.
- Our role is to assist students with academic issues that may interfere with their academic success.
- We are equipped to serve as liaisons with outside agencies and can consult with families about the steps to take to link to outside therapeutic services.

If my child sees the school counselor, will I be contacted?

- At times you may initiate the referral process and may speak to us before counseling sessions take place with your student.
- You are not called every time we meet with your child. And, should you be called in to meet with us in a collaborative effort to help your student, please also realize that confidentiality is the hallmark of our work.
- When students enter into a counseling relationship, we will educate the student about the purposes, goals, techniques and rules of procedure under which they may receive counseling.

- As counseling with a student progresses, it may become beneficial or necessary for us to consult and collaborate with you. It's our responsibility to reach an agreement with your student about what information to share with you; unless, of course, there is a clear and imminent danger to the student or others.
- While respecting the rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians for their children, we work to establish a mutual relationship with you to maximize your student's development.
- In addition, we respect your students' values and beliefs without imposing our own personal values on the situation.

If the counselor sees my child, is this on the student's permanent record?

- No information shared with the counselor is included in the permanent record. Again, information is only shared with others when there is a clear and present danger to your student or other persons.