Activity Title:
The school counselor’s role in SAT, IEP and 504 Plan student support system processes

Standard 1: Program Planning, Design and Management: The professional school counselor plans, designs and manages a comprehensive, developmental school counseling program aligned with the West Virginia Model.

Function: 1A – PROGRAM PLANNING – The professional school counselor plans a comprehensive, developmental program that is balanced between delivery systems and the academic, career and personal/social domains.

Indicator: 1A2 – The professional school counselor uses various kinds of student data to guide the counseling program and to plan, differentiate and modify services to best meet the needs of students.

Standard 2: Program Delivery: The professional school counselor facilitates delivery of the WV Comprehensive Developmental School Counseling Program for all students.

Function: 2F – STUDENT SUPPORTS – The professional school counselor assists in developing comprehensive student supports within the school and community to support academic, career, and personal/social development of all students.

Indicator: 2F3 – The professional school counselor learns and communicates with other stakeholders to identify and anticipate obstacles to student success and to identify and provide programs, resources and supports that lessen/eliminate their impact and promote student success.

GOAL: The counselor will collaborate as a team member in student support systems, specifically the Student Assistance Team (SAT), Individual Education Program (IEP) Committee, Section 504 Plan Committees.

Rationale: The professional school counselor maintains a critical role in providing access to early and ongoing interventions for at-risk students. The counselor collaborates with other staff to insure that students receive interventions and resources to support needs. In large schools, consideration must be given regarding the amount of school counselor time available to individual students with special needs. This protocol outlines the counselor’s role in school teams and interprets the mandates and intentions of relevant federal and state policies that govern the involvement of the school counselor in the provision of prescribed assistance. The protocol outlines the critical role of the school counselor in these important student support systems.

Lead Protocol Developer: Mike Fike, Counselor – Mountainview Elementary, Monongalia County; Approved by State Protocol Committee – April 2011
Activity Statement: This protocol defines the guidelines for school counseling participation in legally-mandated public school procedures related to Student Assistance Team (SAT) membership and function, Individual Education Program (IEP) Committee participation and function, and Section 504 Committee participation and function. Decisions to participate in any student support system team must consider the school counselor’s availability to serve all students. Care must be taken to ensure that the school counselor’s work time will NOT be unduly compromised by mandates to serve only a small percentage of students in the school.

Materials: This protocol is based, to a large extent, on federal and state mandates and interpretations regarding the support of at-risk students. To assist the professional school counselor in defining participation in student support teams, supporting documentation is included in a separate attachment. References to that documentation are included in the Procedures section. The attachment contains these resources for the counselor’s reference:

Counselor Resources (CR)

CR1a - Excerpt from WVDE POLICY 2510: Assuring the Quality of Education: Regulations for Education Programs

CR1b - Excerpt from the WVDE Resource Manual for WV Laws and Policies

CR2 - Excerpt from WVDE Policy 2315: Comprehensive Developmental Guidance and Counseling

CR3 & 4 - Excerpts from WVDE POLICY 2419: REGULATIONS FOR THE EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES (2419)

CR5 - Excerpt from 4/97 USDE Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services Monitoring Report for West Virginia Schools

CR6 - Excerpt from Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973


CR8 - Excerpt from the West Virginia Comprehensive Developmental Guidance and Counseling Resource Manual, 2004

CR9 - Position Statements, American School Counselor Association

CR10 - Ethical Standards for School Counselors, American School Counselor Association

Procedures: (By category)

Student Assistance Team (SAT) Involvement

1. The school counselor makes every effort to participate in the school's Student Assistance Team (SAT) for students in the counselor's caseload.
2. Prior to attending a SAT meeting…
   a. The school counselor reviews the student's file and collaborates with other staff to gather background data on the student, including PK-12 grades, attendance, test scores, behavioral data (including previous behavior plans), placement information, enrollment history and any other pertinent permanent record file information.
   b. The school counselor gathers information about programs, services, and support resources that may be appropriate supports for identified student needs.

3. During the meeting…
   a. The counselor utilizes the data gathered and information provided by SAT team members to assist in identifying resources, services and programs and in developing interventions to support student success in school.
   b. The counselor follows confidentiality, FERPA and ethical guidelines when sharing student data.
   c. The counselor is aware of time limitations and assists the team in assigning appropriate school staff to assume a mentor role with each student who will support the counselor and principal in assuring that the planned interventions are provided to the student.

4. The counselor follows up with any activities she/he agreed to during the meeting which may include:
   a. Connecting the student and parent with resources, services and programs within the school or in the community
   b. Inclusion in group counseling sessions
   c. Behavior plan development and management
   d. Crisis counseling or referral to a school-based mental health or community-based counselor

Rationale: see resource 1a – Policy 2510 Excerpt, resource 1b – Resource Manual Excerpt, resource 2 – Policy 2315 Excerpt

Individual Education Plan (IEP) Involvement

1. The school counselor participates as an invited member on the Eligibility Committee (EC) and/or the Individual Education Program (IEP) Committee for students in his/her caseload. The invitation could be contingent on one or more of the following:
   a. Prior school counseling services were provided to the student
   b. The school counselor has developed a chronological knowledge of the student for an extended time during the student's school career
   c. The school counselor served on the referring SAT
   d. The school counselor provided evaluative services for the Multidisciplinary Team
   e. The team requests assistance with the student’s academic plan
   f. Parent or school staff request
   g. Possible inclusion of school counseling as a related service within the IEP
   h. Prior school counseling was provided as a related service (Annual IEP Reviews)

2. The school counselor reviews the student’s file and gathers background data on the student, including PK-12 grades, attendance, test scores, and career plans.

3. The school counselor utilizes available data to assist the team in making recommendations to assist with academic, career and behavioral needs of the student.

4. The counselor follows up with any activities she/he agreed to during the meeting which may include:
   a. Finalizing the student’s academic and career plan and making schedule adjustments to accommodate student needs
   b. Connecting the student with resources, services and programs within the school or in the community
   c. Inclusion in group counseling sessions
   d. Behavior plan development and management
   e. Crisis counseling or referral to a school-based mental health or community-based counselor

5. If school counseling is recommended by the included in the IEP as a related service, the school counselor will…

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Lead Protocol Developer: Mike Fike, Counselor – Mountainview Elementary, Monongalia County; Approved by State Protocol Committee – April 2011
a. Follow WVDE Policy 2419 (REGULATIONS FOR THE EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES) in the planning and delivery of program services

b. Consider the theoretical and therapeutic limitations identified in The West Virginia Comprehensive Developmental Guidance and Counseling Resource Manual (COUNSELING THEORY AND THERAPY IN WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOLS) before agreeing to deliver the related service within the school setting

c. Adhere to the ethical standards regarding the practice and delivery of counseling services within the counselor’s individual professional training and competence

d. Assist administration and IEP team to understand and respect time limitations and the inappropriateness of the counselor providing ongoing ‘therapy’ for a few students, which will limit services and program for all students within the counselor’s caseload


504 Plan Involvement
The school counselor is encouraged to participate as an invited member in the process of determining whether or not a student qualifies for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504 Plan). Rationale: See resource 6 – Section 504.

a. The school counselor reviews the student’s file and gathers background data on the student, including PK-12 grades, attendance, test scores, and career plans.

b. The school counselor utilizes available data to assist the team in making recommendations to assist with academic, career and behavioral needs of the student.

c. The counselor follows up with any activities she/he agreed to during the meeting which may include:
   i. Finalizing the student’s academic and career plan and making schedule adjustments to accommodate student needs
   ii. Connecting the student with resources, services and programs within the school or in the community
   iii. Inclusion in group counseling sessions
   iv. Behavior plan development and management
   v. Crisis counseling or referral to a school-based mental health or community-based counselor

d. If school counseling is recommended by the included in the 504 Plan as a related service, the school counselor will...
   i. Follow WVDE Policy 2419 (REGULATIONS FOR THE EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES) in the planning and delivery of program services
   ii. Consider the theoretical and therapeutic limitations identified in The West Virginia Comprehensive Developmental Guidance and Counseling Resource Manual (COUNSELING THEORY AND THERAPY IN WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOLS) before agreeing to deliver the related service within the school setting
   iii. Adheres to the ethical standards regarding the practice and delivery of counseling services within the counselor’s individual professional training and competence
   iv. Assists administration and 504 team to understand and respect time limitations and the inappropriateness of the counselor providing ongoing ‘therapy’ for a few students, which will limit services and program for all students within the counselor’s caseload


Limitations of the School Counselor Role in Student Support Teams
While it is appropriate for the school counselor to serve on school-based student support teams (SAT, Eligibility/IEP Committees, 504 Plan Teams), it is not appropriate for the school counselor to serve as facilitator, supervisor or coordinator of the team(s). Rationale: see resource 9 – ASCA Position Statement.

Evaluation:
Documented counselor time logs measuring the amount of counselor time devoted to the areas of *program delivery, responsive services, and leadership and advocacy* that result from participation in the identified student support team structures within the school site.

- Individual student records recording services and programs provided to students
- Individual student records recording face-to-face meetings with students and parents