

Guidance Counselor vs. School Counselor

Historically, the term “guidance counselor” was used to refer to counselors working in the schools. This term has evolved to “school counselor” as the scope of duties has changed and evolved. Although some schools still used the outdated “guidance counselor” term, the American School Counselor Association encourages the use of “school counselor” to more accurately reflect the role.

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

- Reactive
- Services to some
- Impact measured via feelings and perceptions
- Ancillary role to school improvement process
- Work in isolation

SCHOOL COUNSELOR

- Proactive/data-driven
- Program for all
- Impact measured via achievement, attendance and behavior data
- Essential role in the school improvement process
- School counselors as school leaders
- Develop, manage and evaluate a comprehensive school counseling program

Excerpt from “*School Counseling Principles: Remembering the Past, Shaping the Future: A History of School Counseling*,” by Norman C. Gysbers, Ph.D.

“The terminology issue is still with us today. Is it guidance, counseling, guidance and counseling, or

counseling and guidance? The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) has come down firmly on the side of the term school counseling program although the literature still reflects the usage of various combinations of terms. The terminology issue also is reflected in personnel titles. Again, ASCA has come down firmly on the title school counselor, although the public still uses the title guidance counselor, and some school districts use the title guidance dean, going back to a title used earlier.

The terminology issue is interesting from a historical perspective too. Remember the first term was vocational guidance, and then many modifiers were placed in front of the word guidance. In the 1930s guidance became a service within pupil personnel services with five services: information, assessment, counseling, placement and follow-up. Then the counseling service assumed prominence, so the common labels used were guidance and counseling. Information and assessment continued to be a part of guidance and counseling, but placement and follow-up became less important and have now almost disappeared as active parts of school counseling. Following ASCA’s lead, counseling became the label of choice as in school counseling programs. Guidance is still present but is used to label one of the delivery components of the program, namely, the guidance curriculum.”

REFERENCES

- American School Counselor Association (2012). *The ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs*, Third Edition. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Gysbers, N. (2010). *Remembering the past, shaping the future: A history of school counseling*. Alexandria, VA: American School Counselor Association.
- Lambie, G. W., & Williamson, L. L. (2004). The challenge to change from guidance counseling to professional school counseling: A historical proposition. *Professional School Counseling*, 8(2), 124-131.

Appropriate and Inappropriate Activities for School Counselors

Appropriate Activities for School Counselors	Inappropriate Activities for School Counselors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ advisement and appraisal for academic planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ building the master schedule
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ orientation, coordination and academic advising for new students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ coordinating paperwork and data entry of all new students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ interpreting cognitive, aptitude and achievement tests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ coordinating cognitive, aptitude and achievement testing programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ providing counseling to students who are tardy or absent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ signing excuses for students who are tardy or absent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ providing counseling to students who have disciplinary problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ performing disciplinary actions or assigning discipline consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ providing short-term individual and small-group counseling services to students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ providing long-term counseling in schools to address psychological disorders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ consulting with teachers to schedule and present school counseling curriculum lessons based on developmental needs and needs identified through data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ covering classes when teachers are absent or to create teacher planning time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ interpreting student records 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ maintaining student records
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ analyzing grade-point averages in relationship to achievement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ computing grade-point averages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ consulting with teachers about building classroom connections, effective classroom management and the role of noncognitive factors in student success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ supervising classrooms or common areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ protecting student records and information per state and federal regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ keeping clerical records
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ consulting with the school principal to identify and resolve student issues, needs and problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ assisting with duties in the principal's office
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ advocating for students at individual education plan meetings, student study teams and school attendance review boards, as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ coordinating schoolwide individual education plans, student study teams, response to intervention plans, MTSS and school attendance review boards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ analyzing disaggregated schoolwide and school counseling program data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ serving as a data entry clerk