

Counselor Evaluation Tool

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Do I have to use this tool?

No, but this is an option which focuses on school counseling-specific indicators, that was developed by a team comprised of administrators, school counselors, school counselor educators, and youth-focused community organizations. This tool can be tailored to the specifics of your school or corporation, but covers the entirety of the American School Counselor Association National Model and the Indiana School Counseling Standards.

2. What do I need to do to prepare for this evaluation?

Ideally, this tool can be a source for collaborative goal-setting between school counselors and administrators prior to the evaluation process. At the beginning of the year, it can be used for goal-setting and dialogue about the needs and challenges of the school counseling program. Also, through this conversation, ideas can be generated in advance about evidence that can be collected to document school counseling activities (e.g. GPA changes, discipline/behavior referrals, pre/post tests or assessments, number of students directly served through individual and group counseling, number of referrals, scholarship dollars received by students, anecdotal evidence from students, teachers, parents, administration, ISTEP+ scores, etc.) used throughout the year. Then, at the conclusion of the year, school counselors can use this process to self-reflect on their effectiveness, areas of specific strength, and areas for growth for the upcoming year.

3. What are some types of professional development?

Professional development may include (but is not limited to) reading professional journals, attending professional conferences, workshops, and/or webinars, networking with others, listserv participation, and supervising graduate student field experiences. The primary significance of professional development is the activity's relevance to your growth as a school counseling professional.

4. What if some indicators are not applicable to every counselor in the building?

The school counselor does not have to deliver all services in order to be highly effective. The school counselor may be coordinating, collaborating, or otherwise providing program management, but not personally implementing each indicator--in fact, school counselors often collaborate with multiple individuals in the school. Although all indicators are vital parts of a comprehensive school counseling program, some school counseling services may be delivered by one or two members of a school counseling team or other designated school personnel. By collaborating with these individuals, you will meet the indicator. Each of these indicators should be present in some way in each building.

5. What does “all students” mean?

According to the American School Counselor Association, school counselors are responsible for implementing programming that serves every student in their building. For the purposes of this evaluation tool, “all students” is defined as those students assigned to you. Therefore, if there are multiple school counselors within one building, students in the building and tasks related to management of the school counseling program may be divided amongst multiple counselors. Each school counselor should be evaluated based upon their particular caseload of students and their implementation of a comprehensive school counseling program.

6. Why is there only one evaluation tool for PK – 12, rather than evaluations tailored to specific levels?

The state of Indiana currently provides one evaluation tool for teachers, administrators, and school counselors. Each indicator is based on national and state standards that are relevant to every school level. The evidence provided to support each indicator, however, may be quite different from level to level. The provision of one evaluation tool also helps provide consistency for school counselors who might be serving multiple levels.

7. What if the wording is unclear to me?

The wording used in this document is drawn from the latest literature and standards of the school counseling profession. Please discuss individual interpretations with your building administrator and school counseling colleagues.

8. How can a school counselor or administrator address a lack of resources for the counseling program that is hindering a highly effective or effective rating?

Initially, this should be part of an early and ongoing conversation between the school counselor and her/his administrator. For example, if the school counselor to student ratio is significantly higher than the 250:1 recommended ratio, or there are significant time or financial limitations, that could be part of a problem-solving and priority-setting conversation at the beginning of the school year. For the evaluation process itself, it is acceptable to attach additional information explaining how the program can benefit from recommended changes or additional resources and identifying ways of procuring those resources.

9. Where is attendance, meeting deadlines, or punctuality addressed?

This is indirectly addressed in the indicators throughout the evaluation tool. It can also be addressed under growth areas or strengths. Failure to meet attendance, deadlines, or punctuality standards may be addressed throughout the year, rather than as part of the formal evaluation process.