



House Budget and Research Office

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SCHOOL COUNSELING AND ROLE OF SCHOOL COUNSELORS FINAL REPORT

House Resolution 765, passed during the 2015 Legislative Session, created the House Study Committee on School Counseling and the Role of School Counselors. The intent of the legislation was to study the benefits to students of an effective school counseling program. The Study Committee was comprised of six members appointed by Speaker David Ralston: Representative Joyce Chandler, Representative Valerie Clark, Representative Tom Dickson, Representative Lee Hawkins, Representative Dan Gasaway, and Representative Randy Nix. Representative Joyce Chandler was appointed Chairman and presided over the School Counseling and Role of School Counselors Study Committee during its four meetings at the Georgia State Capitol. After careful consideration, the committee offers the following recommendations.

School systems should fully utilize the skills of all school counselors in their ever-increasing role with the many opportunities and challenges of Move On When Ready (MOWR), the growing number of career pathways choices, the mental health needs of students, the increasing reliance of parents on the expertise of school counselors, the need for school counselors to facilitate a coordinated school-based support system for all students and the expanding role of school counselors working with teachers to improve student outcomes. Recognizing the pivotal role school counselors play in initiatives like MOWR and other career direction/workforce initiatives as well as their many other responsibilities, the workload of the counselor must be achievable.

As so many future employment opportunities will require training/education after high school such as technical colleges, universities, and/or certification programs of various industries, counselors and school and district administrators need the knowledge and skills regarding all postsecondary opportunities in an effort to assure that all students receive the necessary experiences. It is important that students and/or their parents also are aware not only of the availability of postsecondary opportunities, but also know how to take advantage of them.


Because school counselors play such a pivotal role in addressing student success in school, the following recommendations are offered to strengthen school counselor preparation and development and to create a work environment in which school counselors can be successful in addressing the needs of all students:

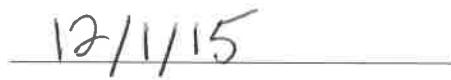
Recommendations:

1. It is recommended that the Professional Standards Commission establish requirements for counselor training related to college and career readiness and equitable opportunities for students to receive

appropriate services from counselors. Such training should be incorporated into pre-service preparation programs as well as in professional learning opportunities for in-service educators.

2. It is recommended that DOE add the following item regarding school counseling to the CCRPI indicator report under the "Exceeding the Bar" section: School counselors spend 80% of their time in direct services to students and parents.
3. It is recommended that preparation programs for school and district leaders include specific content on the role of the school counselor as well as teacher and leader roles in addressing college and career readiness and equity issues. This recommendation can be accomplished by requiring this content in Tier I leader preparation programs that begin in the summer of 2016 and in Tier II leader preparation programs that begin in the summer of 2017.
4. It is recommended that school and school district leaders currently holding leadership positions complete training during their next certificate renewal cycle on the role of the school counselor as well as teacher and leader roles in addressing college and career readiness.
5. It is recommended that the Department of Education create a school counselor evaluation that would be used statewide and that a timeline be put in place to allow for development (including validation and reliability studies), piloting, training for counselors and their evaluators, and a start date when the instrument will become effective.
6. It is recommended that DOE develop a comprehensive school counseling program that would be adopted state-wide. Consideration should be given to the program defined by the American School Counselor Association.
7. It is recommended that school counselors/schools place additional emphasis on career aptitude testing such as the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) and the instrument on Ga411. Counselors and administrators are encouraged to find other well-researched aptitude tests to provide to students.
8. It is recommended that as a best practice, counselors participate in business and industry externships for a minimum of three days per year. Counselors will need to work with local CTAE Directors to determine the best work site placement each year. Georgia should provide additional resources to assist counselors with career development as well as professional development opportunities in the area of career and economic development.
9. It is recommended that RESAs study whether a model which would fund a career specialist in each RESA to provide additional assistance to schools in career development would be an efficient use of funds.
10. It is recommended that the Department of Education Equity Plan and the data that supports this plan be used to identify equity gaps and that the results of this analysis be used to inform school and school district planning and decisions regarding the role of school counselors as well as professional learning for school counselors.


Joyce Chandler, Chair


Date