

Counselor's Role With Testing

The school counselor's role as it relates to assessment:

- Conduct an annual needs assessment involving students, parents, and staff.
- Plan program initiatives using the Comprehensive Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program Model.
- Plan for the delivery and evaluation comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling program initiatives.
- Prepare and submit required program accountability reports.
- Respond appropriately to requests for counseling services.
- Identify and use appropriate evaluation tools.
- Utilize evaluation results to reassess program goals and objectives.
- Interpret standardized tests to teachers, parents, and students.

In this era of accountability, school counselors are increasingly asked to provide information to parents, administrators, and legislators on the effectiveness of school counseling activities. Counseling outcome research is a potentially useful source of this information because it is designed to provide guidance on which techniques and activities produce positive changes for students. Because of this emphasis, it is critical that school counselors be informed about outcome research and know which activities are supported and which are not supported by research. Outcome research can assist school counselors in selecting counseling interventions and guidance activities that have been shown to be effective.

In the area of student appraisal and assessment, the school counselor uses strategies to assist in this area such as helping students plan their educational program, interpreting test data with teachers to make appropriate decisions about academic placement, and sharing occupational information with students.

The No Child Left Behind legislation has a far-reaching impact on the future of our students and on schools today. This legislation promotes success for **all** students. The foundation of this legislation is based on these four principles:

- Accountability
- Academic Achievement

- Increased Flexibility
- Increased options for students and parents

The impact of this legislation for all educators is critical and far reaching. We have to ask certain questions in order to:

- What does this mean for school counselors?
- What is the role of guidance and counseling in implementing aspects of this legislation?
- How can guidance be a partner?
- What program activities are being provided?
- What program activities services should be added or changed?
- In the role, as well as the job description of the school counselor changing?
- More importantly, how are students different because of what school counselors do as they implement their guidance and counseling program?
- What new opportunities does this provide?

The NCLB legislation references required testing in Grades 3-8. The school counselor is an integral part of making sure that the school is a supportive learning environment. In addition to continuing activities that ensure that students are “ready to learn”, the guidance and counseling program can institute activities school-wide that promote a “supportive learning environment” during the pre-testing months and weeks, and even year-round. Some of the activities that a school counselor would implement include stress reduction, including math phobia and test phobia reduction; study/testing skills; and self-confidence boosting activities.