

Christ the Teacher Catholic Schools

ROLE DESCRIPTION

	400 – PERSONNEL & EMPLOYEE	CODE:	AP 480.17
SECTION:	RELATIONS		
POSITION:	SCHOOL COUNSELLOR		

1. **Immediate Supervisor:** Principal

2. **Primary Function**

School counsellors provide unique services to children, youth and their families to help students attain maximum benefits from their school programs. School counsellors are part of the educational team. They work with teachers, administrators, parish priests, psychologists, outside agencies, and parents to integrate information from all these sources with the student's overall social, emotional, spiritual, behavioural, and adaptive functioning at school.

The School Counsellor collaborates with the school team to create developmentally appropriate support plans to assist students in their social, emotional, and behavioural development. When necessary, individual and/or group counselling services are provided to reduce barriers in accessing curriculum.

3. **Minimum Qualifications**

- 3.1 Bachelor of Social Work (B.S.W.).
- 3.2 Prior experience in school counselling is preferred.
- 3.3 Comprehensive knowledge of counselling strategies and skills for working with children and youth and their families in the school setting.
- 3.4 Such alternatives to the above qualifications as the Board may find appropriate and acceptable.

4. **Knowledge, Skills and Abilities**

- 4.1 Must possess and utilize excellent team building skills.
- 4.2 Must willingly accept delegated responsibility.
- 4.3 Excellent communication skills - both oral and written.
- 4.4 Must be able to work under occasional stress.
- 4.5 May need to be available after work hours during emergencies.
- 4.6 Must provide own transportation to travel to schools and to attend in and out of Division meetings/conferences.

5. Performance Responsibilities

- 5.1 The school counsellor first responsibility is to act as advocate on behalf of students and their families.

- 5.2 Informed Student - The school counsellor shall inform students of the purposes, goals, techniques, and specific policies under which counselling services may be provided at, or before, the time when the counselling relationship is entered. Such information includes concerns about confidentiality, legal restraints on counsellors, and the possible necessity for consulting with other professionals and the student's parent/guardian.

- 5.3 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is the obligation not to disclose willingly, except in urgent circumstances, information obtained during counselling sessions, case team meetings, or school records. This refers both to verbal and written information.

Confidentiality is crucial to establishing and maintaining a strong counsellor-student relationship. Therefore, the school counsellor shall attempt to obtain the consent of the student before divulging information received during counselling. The school principal must be aware of all serious situations. Consistent with legislation, the school counsellors are to disclose counselling information where necessary, consistent with the limits of confidentiality, which include:

- 5.3.1 Child Protection - The school counsellor who has reason to believe that a child is or might be in need of protection shall forthwith report the information to the appropriate authorities in accordance with legal obligations pursuant to child protection legislation.
- 5.3.2 Potential Harm - If the behaviour of the student threatens potential harm of self or others, the school counsellor shall take appropriate action to protect the student and/or others.
- 5.3.3 Legal Action - The school counsellor may be required by the courts to release all counselling records and relevant information.
- 5.3.4 Consultation & Collaboration - The school counsellor may consult and collaborate with other professionals for purposes of more effectively helping the student. The school counsellor shall share only such information that will serve the best interests of the student.

- 5.4 Written Confidentiality

- 5.4.1 A student support file shall be established for all students who receive individual counselling in the school. This file shall remain in a secure location in the school and is the property of the school/Division.
- 5.4.2 These records shall not be made available to other persons or agencies without the consent of the Director or designate and the informed consent of the parent.
- 5.4.3 The maintenance and disposal of and access to counsellor records shall be in accordance with Administrative Procedure 320 Student Records.
- 5.4.4 The school counsellor shall maintain objective, current, and chronological records for all students that counselling services are provided. Records are to include date of session, theme of counselling session, and objective

remarks regarding student participation, goals, and outcomes. The storage and maintenance of these records shall comply with the Local Authority of the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (LAFOIP).

- 5.4.5 The existence of the student counselling file shall be documented annually in the student's cumulative records folder. The following guidelines apply to counsellor record keeping:
- 5.5 The school counsellor participates as a member of the school-based team, as required and the division student support services team, as required.
 - 5.6 The school counsellor facilitates instruction to students in peer helping, conflict resolution, and social skills.
 - 5.7 Provides counselling, where appropriate, on an individual or small group basis to students presenting with behavioural, personal, or social problems that may impede success at school.
 - 5.8 Assists school personnel in developing appropriate support programming for students with behavioural disorders.
 - 5.9 Prior to students receiving ongoing service, the Principal shall be informed of the circumstances for student referrals.
 - 5.10 Collaborates with parents/guardians regarding the focus and goals of the counselling or behavioural programming provided for their child.
 - 5.11 The school counsellor will share information, as necessary, with school staff to enable the staff to assist students in fully benefiting from their educational programs.
 - 5.12 Performs casework service with parents as an integral part of the task of helping students, to increase the parent's understanding, their constructive participation in resolving their child's problems, and their knowledge and use of appropriate resources available.
 - 5.13 Collaborates with school personnel on issues of wellness and social skills development and engage in preventative programming (anti-bullying, sexual abuse, social skills, etc.).
 - 5.14 Engages in liaison activities with other agencies to assist families in accessing community-based services, as required.
 - 5.15 Assists with the referral of students to, and serves as liaison with, such outside agencies as Social Services, Mental Health, Young Offenders Programs, and the like, as appropriate.
 - 5.16 Makes home visits for the purpose of gathering helpful information on a student's background.
 - 5.17 Serves as a liaison between home and school to assist parents in self-advocacy and engagement in their child's academic or behavioural programming.
 - 5.18 Where appropriate, assists in the development of a student's Inclusion & Intervention Plan (IIP).
 - 5.19 Provides crisis intervention services when needed.
 - 5.20 Provides workshops and in-services in areas of expertise to school personnel when requested.

- 5.21 The high school counsellor liaises with associate elementary schools to facilitate successful student transition to secondary setting.
- 5.22 Adheres to a code of ethics and standards of professional practice in the delivery of school counselling services, observing relevant laws and policies that govern ethical practice.
- 5.23 Perform additional duties as may be assigned.

6. Terms of Employment

- 6.1 Academic year.

7. Confidentiality

- 7.1 At no time should a School Counsellor discuss, in public, information pertaining to employees, students or the operation of the division. A School Counsellor is expected to respect the confidential nature of their position by avoiding discussion about any topics that are not formally communicated to the public by the administration of the school or the school division. Breaching confidentiality is a serious violation of acceptable conduct and *The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

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