

# Analysis of my professional development plan in counselling

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## **Personal Mission Statement**

My mission as a school counselor is to help students overcome barriers by setting and reaching goals and addressing the areas that need support. This includes support in emotional/social, career, and academic support. I will work with staff, administration, and the community to make progress into the future and inspire students while making them know that they are heard and valuable.

## **Vision, Identity and Role**

My vision, identity, and role as a school counselor comes from learning what my job is and the ways that I can be successful in it. My vision, identity, and role of a school counselor is to serve students by providing academic support for their future, career development, as well as emotional and social support. I will be able to reach the needs of the students by advocating and using support services to help them as necessary, while working simultaneously with administration and staff to make sure that there is a solid and build counseling program that is achieving goals and making progress.

## **Core Beliefs**

I believe core beliefs are what I want to bring to my role as a school counselor and are already a part of me now in the job that I do. I see them being instilled in who I am and now, and how I want to be in the future as I learn and adapt more as I grow. Core beliefs that are already instilled in who I am and the work I do are; that all students are worthy of support and services to be able to grow and enter adulthood ready and well, working alongside families, administrators, and the community is key to successfully

serving students and continual education, training, self-growth, and professional development is an important aspect in being able to continue to be a successful counselor.

My core beliefs already fit in with my actions each day I am at work. When I work with my students, I am constantly thinking back to my core beliefs as I serve them and their families. I use trainings and education to make decisions to help serve my students in the best way possible, and am always remembering that all students are deserving of every possibility and support. I will continue to grow these beliefs, and will make sure that they are appropriately integrated into my work as a school counselor.

## **Values**

As I think back to different situations in which acting on was difficult while facing uncomfortable situations, I think about how and what made it difficult in the moment and how values are important to me and the work that I do. I have developed my own values in the work that I do, and it will probably be growing throughout my time as a counselor. Values that are important to me now, and guide the work that I do are; advocating for the needs of students is the most important part of the work that I do. Kindness is its own language that truly is felt, and an important factor in the work of helping others. Active listening is incredibly important, more important than just hearing what a student is saying, and another value is that helping others find solutions to problem is very important to me, being able to be used as a resource and help.

An example of my values coming into play is that often in the work I do, it comes down to what the family wants and what the student wants. I have to think back to my values and beliefs and make sure that I am making the best decisions that support both those involved. I think about what I am comfortable with, and remember the mission values of the organization that I work for. It's a cycle that presents itself in different ways all the time, and I am constantly learning and adapting.

### **Using guidance curriculum**

Guidance curriculum that I currently use and will continue to grow on in my future, are small groups that help support students in and out of the classroom. This can be for students facing something that others are, and a space to grow and get support in the challenges being faced. School assemblies are a huge way for guidance curriculum to play a role in our school, as it's a chance for students to be together and become educated on something specific. Another way that guidance curriculum will play a role in my position of a school counselor will be having classroom lessons that support students on specific problems or things that need to be addressed, and provide these lessons as an avenue for possible individual counseling.

### **Individual Planning**

I believe my role as a school counselor will have important aspects to the position, one being individual planning. Individual planning, I envision as meeting the needs of the students and the things that I will do as a counselor to make sure I reach goals. Working in a school currently, I have had the chance to see what needs there might be and am working towards

grasping better understandings of how we as a school can make sure the needs of the students are met. When I am counselor, I hope to use different ways of individual planning, by asking myself the question; how do you meet the needs of students? Three ways that could be utilized in individual planning to reach needs of students would be scheduling, going beyond just a terms schedule, but discussing long term goals and what that means to a student, CIS profiling, and setting up opportunities for work experience. Taking time to understand the path a student wants to take from their freshman year to senior year is important, and holding them accountable and helping them reach their goals that they want to set for themselves is important as well. Ways of doing this is offering information for advanced classes or even setting SMART Goals that can be reached over the four years of high school. Another way that I would like to help students reach goals would be to sit down with them and help them build their CIS profile, and check in with them as they go through school. Setting goals to achieving and making progress on that is important, because as they grown and go into their senior year, it will be beneficial and make life incredibly easier as applications for college or scholarships. Another way to help student reach goals as a counselor would be to provide access and opportunities to work experiences throughout time in high school. Being able to offer an avenue of internships, work experience, and career exploration is an easy way to help students find their way and support their dreams. It exposes them at a young age to things they might be interested in, so that they can start deciding what path they want to take in their future career.

## **Responsive Services**

I have found that responsive services are only a small role of a school counselor, but an important one. This is something that I practice now in my job for grades 6-12, but I never saw it as responsive services. It's important to advocate for students, especially providing them the means that they need to be successful when they need it the most. Three ways that I plan to use responsive services as a school counselor would be to provide individual counseling to students, provide referrals to mental health agencies such as OPTIONS, and make sure there is an active and in place plan for crisis services. Providing individual counseling will be somethings that I do as needed as a school counselor, I do not plan for this to be my primary role. I will make sure I am able to provide the best generic individual counseling depending on the situation, but I will be able to tell when its beyond me the services I can provide. That's why, being able to make sure I know how to make referrals for mental health services is so important. I will do my best to advocate for the mental health needs of students by taking references seriously and being complexly open with students. I feel the same for crisis services, as I want to be able to provide students with people and services who are educated and focused in the that specific area. I will know my boundaries and refer out when its beyond what I can do as a school counselor.

## **System Supports**

System supports are important, even though they indirectly effect students. This is an opportunity for counselors, where students benefit. One thing that I believe is huge in support services, is that counselors are able to continue

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professional development. They are able to continue learning and gaining skills to help serve students in the best way possible. Another way that system supports can benefit in the school system, is by creating an advisory council for the school. The advisory council can be a part of planning the schools counseling program, where several individuals with different experiences and walks of life have input to make sure that the counseling program supports the needs of the students. I believe that another important piece of system supports is by tracking and keeping data of different aspects of the school counseling program. Data can be used to evaluate programs and success. Data collection can go hand in hand with an advisory council. They would be able to evaluate successes and weaknesses while advocating for change where it's necessary based on results.

## **Student Advocacy**

Student advocacy seems to be an important part of my future role, as students often entrust a school counselor with many things. I believe that advocating for the needs of the student are crucial in the work that we do. Students will often tell us or show us in ways that they need support or help. If I as a counselor listen carefully enough to students, they will tell us directly or indirectly what they need most. Sometimes students don't know what they need, and again it's up to us to find ways to support them. Ways that I can help students and advocate for their needs is helping identify students that need IEP's and 504 plans as well as be involved in the process, providing opportunities for students who might be new to the school to get involved by creating a special welcome program to help the transition, and providing specific support groups to students. Identifying and reaching the

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needs of student who would benefit from and IEP or 504. This allows for student to be supported and be successful at the same time. This is huge in making sure students are able to reach their goals and achieve in school. A way I have been able to implement the need for students in my school already, is by setting up a welcome program for students who come into our school mid-year. This allows for them to work with a student and meet several staff, learn about programs, clubs, and other aspects of the school. Each entity has to sign the paper, almost like a passport for each place the new student visits. This allows for the student to be educated in what the school has to offer but likely gains a friend(s). In my future, I hope to create support groups that focus on the specific needs of the students. Examples could include, bullying, family deaths, or whatever the students feel that they would benefit by having a support group for.

### Addressing the Developmental Domains

Working as a counselor, I expect to use the four domains in my work.

Learning to learn, live, work, and contribute. I believe that learning to learn means students are able to learn in an environment that suits them best.

This means being able to take advanced classes, have rigor in their schooling, and learn new skills that will benefit them in the future learning.

Learning to work means that students are able to learn and gain skills to be successful in the future career and the work that they do post education.

This is being able to set a path and follow it into the future career and work that they want. Learning to live means a variety of things as they grow in life, as well as being able to build and keep connections to others and grow



though them as life moves on. Learning to contribute is where students are able to prepare themselves for ' life'. They are gaining skills in their everyday life that will benefit them in the challenges and situations that they face in their life, and the skills they gain will help them be a successful member of their community.

### Ways to continue growing as a professional

One of my values as a school counselor, is that I keep reaching out for more knowledge and professional development. I believe this is the number one way to keep growing as a professional. I plan to do this by going to conferences and seeking outside for support and growth through educating myself. I will also make it a priority to look for trainings and specific education regarding my role as a counselor, as it is a way to network and meet other counselors. I will be able to learn from them, as they will hopefully be able to learn from me. I will also work with my district and administration to be educated and get feedback in the needs and vision that they have, and work to understand the ways that I can help in that. There are many things that I can do to continue my professional growth but the three mentioned above are the most important to me in my future as a school counselor.

### Goals

Goals that I have for myself as a counselor vary, but are all important in what I feel will be my success. There are four specific goals that I have for my role of a counselor, all will have their own impact in the work that I do. I will work

with school staff and administration to identify the needs of students, that way the school and I can continue to advocate. I will work hard to support students in their goals, desires, and dreams for their future, by educating students in the endeavors, educating them in the options for their future, this will include traditional and nontraditional pathways. Another goal of mine will be to learn every name of the students that I serve in the school I work, this will hopefully build trust with students show that they are valued. The last goal that I have will be to commit to advocating for myself, and taking on the roles as school counselor has. This will be saying no when it is appropriate and standing firm in what I know I need to be doing, so I can be providing the best services possible to students. Expectations In my first years as a school counselor, the expectations I have for myself are middle sized. My hope is that I will stand confident in my role, but understand that I am not perfect and that it will take several years of experience and growth to be where I see myself. I will expect of myself that I reach out for help when I need it. It's okay to ask for help, and that is important because I need to know I am not perfect. I need support from others to be successful at the school I work for, a job that takes more than just myself. I expect in my first year that I will feel a bit lost at times, but that it is okay to not have answers to everything. I will work harder than I ever have in any job, and will know that even in the stress, emotions, and unknown of my first year as a counselor; I will do a good job as long as I stand tall in my confidence and education.