ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION-SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Definition:
Under the general supervision of the Director of Alternative Education or site administrator, provide behavioral and educational counseling to individuals and small groups of students.

Distinguishing Characteristics:
- Assist students in understanding and seeking solutions to social, emotional, or academic problems and issues; serve as a resource pertaining to student behavior management strategies.
- Assist students with the development of Individual Learning, Academic and Transition Plans.
- Assist students in transitioning to and from Alternative Education and District programs and provide career/post-secondary guidance and counseling.

Supervision Exercised and Received:
General direction is provided by the Director of Alternative Education or site administrator.

Examples of Duties and Responsibilities:
Duties and Responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Conduct structured, goal-oriented counseling sessions in a systematic response to the identified academic and social-emotional needs of students
- Construct individualized development programs for students, helping them visualize and establish their educational goals
- Provide direct guidance and counseling services which are relevant to the sequential development of students as related to educational, social and vocational objectives
- Perform assessment and consultation related to alcohol and drug dependency issues; perform group and individual counseling and refer students and parents to community resources; develop a treatment and discharge plan, including an aftercare program
- Provide crisis intervention, educationally related mental health services, guidance counseling and family consultation services
- Assume an active role in designing, implementing, monitoring, and adjusting educational/learning plans for students
- Communicate with parents regarding goals, objectives and strategies for success in the Alternative Education program
- Assist students in transitioning to and from Alternative Education and District programs
- Provide post-secondary guidance and counseling
- Assist students with junior college dual enrollment
- Design and deliver counseling and related curriculum
- Secure parents’ assistance in improving educational achievement of their child
- Attend and participate in IEP, interagency and other meetings - serve as administrative designee for the IEP team when needed
• Participate on Student Study Team; identify students who may need targeted or intensive services
• Coordinate student services with agencies such as probation, law enforcement, social services, districts and other organizations
• Provide support for teaching and other staff as needed
• Assist with problem solving and consultation regarding student behavioral and program issues
• Participate in student/teacher or parent/teacher conferences as requested
• Prepare and maintain accurate records and reports related to students, IEPs, intake, attendance and other records, as assigned
• Assist in the areas of tests and measurements of student performance and achievement
• Analyze situations accurately and adopt an effective course of action
• Operate a computer and other office equipment, as assigned
• Drive a vehicle to various sites to conduct work
• Participate in professional learning to enhance knowledge and skills
• Perform related duties as assigned

Employment Standards:

Knowledge of:
• Applicable sections of the Education Code and other applicable laws, rules and regulations related to assigned activities
• School and county discipline and attendance policies
• Counseling theory, ethics and associated legal confidentiality requirements
• Effective counseling techniques and procedures
• County Office Alternative Education Program policies and practices
• County and state juvenile justice system
• Behavior modification techniques and strategies
• Community referral resources
• ILP development and format
• Human development and learning theories
• Interpersonal skills using tact, patience and courtesy
• Oral and written communication skills
• Record-keeping techniques
• Operation of a computer and assigned software

Ability to:
• Provide individual and group counseling for students
• Coordinate various student services with appropriate agencies
• Plan and develop ILPs
• Gather, organize, analyze evaluate and interpret data
• Prepare and maintain a variety of records and reports, including confidential materials
• Read, interpret, apply and explain laws, rules, regulations, policies and procedures
• Analyze situations accurately and adopt an effective course of action
• Work independently with little direction
• Meet schedules and timelines
• Plan and organize work
• Work confidentially with discretion
• Establish and maintain cooperative and effective working relationships with others
• Operate a computer and other office equipment
• Adapt to periodic heavy work load
• Independently travel to various locations
• Maintain regular and reliable attendance

Computer Skills:
• Basic Word Processing skills, such as the ability to format, save files for cross-platform use and in different versions, work with toolbars, menus, and rulers, insert graphics, use borders, and print labels and envelopes.
• Basic Database skills, such as the ability to sort and retrieve records; create layouts, reports, create and print mailing labels; perform mail merge for form letters; add, edit, delete fields and records.
• Basic spreadsheet skills, including the ability to open, modify, save, and print a new or existing spreadsheet, and enter text and numbers.
• Basic email skills, including the ability to send and open a file attachment.
• Basic Internet usage including the ability to utilize its resources for instructional purposes, use a search engine, bookmark a site, download a file, copy text, edit bookmarks and observe copyright regulations.

Education and Experience:
Any combination of education and experience that would likely provide the knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:

Education:
• Bachelors Degree from an accredited college or university; Masters Degree with an emphasis in school counseling if applicable.

Experience:
• Three years teaching and/or counseling experience at the secondary level. Work with at-risk students is preferred;
• Bilingual (Spanish speaking and writing) desired.

Credentials:
• Possess a valid California Pupil Personnel Services Credential;
  -OR-
• Possess a valid Pupil Personnel Services Credential from a state other than California with preparation that is acceptable in order to receive a California credential and be willing to take and pass the California Basic Education Skills Test (CBEST) within one year;
-OR-

- Be currently enrolled in a university school counseling program and authorized for an internship to allow you to begin working as a counselor —AND— passing scores on the California Basic Education Skills Test (CBEST).

Physical Abilities:
The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job.

- Positions in this classification work indoors and sit for long periods of time.
- The position requires daily oral communication in person and on the telephone, and frequent written communication.
- Requires speaking and hearing ability sufficient to hear over phone and carry on routine conversations.
- The work involves operating a computer, calculator, copier, and other equipment, and involves repetitive arm and hand movement.
- Requires hand-eye-arm and finger dexterity to use a personal computer keyboard, ten-key, and other common office equipment.
- Entering data by touch requires the ability to hear computer alarms for errors.
- Forms and copies are color coded, requiring the ability to distinguish among colors.
- Requires visual acuity sufficient to recognize people, words, and numbers.
- May need to occasionally lift up to twenty (20) pounds and in excess of twenty (20) pounds with assistance.
- Visual acuity sufficient to read manuals, video display screens, and other related material and work at a computer screen frequently and throughout the day.

Work Environment:
The following conditions may be present:

- Walking on uneven ground when outdoors.
- Exposure to student illnesses, injuries, infections and bodily fluids.
- May be exposed to chemicals contained in cleaning products.
- May be required to maneuver into awkward positions.

Other Requirements:

- Must be fingerprinted and a satisfactory Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation records checks must be received by the Sonoma County Office of Education, prior to employment.
- Proof of TB test will be required upon employment.
- Proof of COVID-19 vaccinations are required upon employment.
- Must pass a pre-employment physical (if applicable).
- May be required to obtain first aid and CPR certificates within the first 6-12 months of employment.
- May be required to drive with or without students; some positions may require a current California driver license, proof of insurance, and possible participation in the DMV Pull Notice Program once employed.