

THE MICHIGAN COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAM

Comprehensive school guidance and counseling programs are integral to the mission of the school. They are collaborative efforts benefiting students, parents, teachers, administrators and the overall community. Comprehensive programs ask “How are students different as a result of their participation in the school counseling program”?

By implementing a program based on the *Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program* (MCGCP), school districts can:

- Ensure every student has equitable access to the school counseling program.
- Identify and deliver the knowledge and skills all students should acquire.
- Ensure that the school counseling program is comprehensive in design and is delivered systematically to all students.

The Michigan School Counselor Association first developed the MCGCP in 1991 and revised the program in 1997. The program was endorsed by the Michigan State Board of Education (1991). The Michigan Department of Career Development (1997) recognized it as the method of delivering career development activities to Michigan students. The program has been distributed throughout Michigan and has been widely accepted as the recommended method of delivery for comprehensive guidance and counseling programs. This revision aligns the program with current national directives and language.

The *Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program* (MCGCP) has been revised to incorporate the *National Standards for School Counseling Programs (1997)* developed by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). The *Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (MCGCP)* aligns with *The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs 2003*. The national standards have replaced the former benchmarks and competencies of the Michigan program.

Section I: FOUNDATION

A school counseling program should be built on a strong foundation. Based on the school's goals for student achievement, what every student should know and should be able to do, the foundation determines how every student will benefit from school guidance and counseling.

Philosophy – The philosophy is a set of principles guiding the program development, implementation and evaluation.

Mission – A mission statement describes the programs purpose and goals.

Standards and Benchmarks – All school counseling programs should help students develop competencies in academic, career and personal/social development. The MCGCP has adopted the ASCA National Standards to define the knowledge, attitudes, or skills students should obtain or demonstrate as a result of participating in the school counseling program:

Academic Development

Standard A: Students will acquire the attitudes, knowledge and skills that contribute to effective learning in school and across the life span.

Standard B: Students will complete school with the academic preparation essential to choose from a wide range of substantial post-secondary options, including college.

STANDARD C: Students will understand the relationship of academics to the world of work and to life at home and in the community.

Career Development

Standard A: Students will acquire the skills to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self and to make informed career decisions.

Standard B: Students will employ strategies to achieve future career goals with success and satisfaction.

Standard C: Students will understand the relationship between personal qualities, education, training and the world of work.

Personal/Social Development

Standard A: Students will acquire the knowledge, attitudes and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others.

Standard B: Students will make decisions, set goals and take necessary action to achieve goals.

Standard C: Students will understand safety and survival skills

Section II

Delivery System

The *Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (MCGCP)* is delivered to students through the four main components:

Guidance Curriculum
Individual Student Planning
Responsive Services
Systems Support

All activities included in a school counseling program fit into one of the four components of the delivery system.

- The Guidance Curriculum component provides a vehicle to systematically deliver knowledge and skills to every student.
- The Individual Student Planning component provides school counselors the opportunity to work closely with all students and their parents/guardians to plan, monitor, and understand the academic growth and development of the student.
- The Responsive Services component responds to students direct, immediate concerns and includes, but is not limited to, individual and small group counseling, crisis counseling, referrals, and consultation with parents or guardians, teachers, or other professional specialists.
- The Systems Support component enables the school counseling program to be effective through a variety of support activities including professional development, consultation, collaboration and teaming, and program management and operations. In addition, the Systems Support component provides appropriate support to other educational programs in the school (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000).

Section III Management System

The management system of the *Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (MCGCP)* describes the processes school districts need to fully implement and manage a school counseling program. The four phases provided in this section are: (1) organization, (2) current program assessment, (3) program design, and (4) implementing and managing the program.

PHASE I. Organization

- A. Pre-conditions for the Implementation of a Comprehensive School Counseling Program
- B. Select and Convene the Program Development Team and the Advisory Council
- C. Develop Mission Statement
- D. Obtain formal approval**

PHASE II. Current Program Assessment

- A. Conduct Program Audit
- B. Conduct School Counselor Time and Activity Analysis**

PHASE III. Program Design

- A. Conduct Needs Assessment
- B. Design Program

PHASE IV. Implementing and Managing the Program

- A. Present the program to Board of Education for official adoption**
- B. Complete Management Agreements**
- C. Develop Calendars**
- C. Promote Program**
- D. Utilize Data**
- F. Utilize Technology

Section IV

Accountability System

Accountability and evaluation of the school guidance and counseling program are necessary to improve student academic achievement. School counselors must determine how students are different as a result of their participation in the program. For accountability purposes, counselors are challenged to demonstrate the effectiveness of their programs in measurable terms. They must collect and use data to support and link their programs to students' academic success.

Part I: School Guidance and Counseling Program Audit

The Program Audit is designed for use in the development of a comprehensive guidance and counseling program as well as on an annual basis once the program is in place. Initially, the program audit may be used as a tool to measure the status of a school or district guidance and counseling program in terms of meeting the standards set forth by the *Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (MCGCP)* and *The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs (2003)*, on which this audit is based and adapted.

Part II: SCHOOL COUNSELOR PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

School Counselor Performance Standards align with the *Michigan Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (MCGCP)* and *The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs (2003)* from which these standards are adapted. Performance standards consist of basic standards of practice that are expected of professional school counselors.

Part III. Results Reports

Results reports assist in answering the question posed by Johnson and Johnson (2001), "How are students different as a result of the program?"

Results reports ensure programs are carried out, analyzed for effectiveness, and changed to provide needed improvement. Student results data are collected for activities outlined in action plans. The goal is to demonstrate positive change in student behavior and student learning. Sharing these results with stakeholders serves to assist in advocating for students and the program.