

BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

Regents' Principles and Actions for the Preparation of School Counselors

Effective Fall 2004

In 1998, the Board of Regents approved the *Principles for the Preparation of Educators for the Schools*. The intent of the *Principles* is to improve schools by setting standards for the preparation of educators who can ensure the academic success of every child. In that same year, the Board approved Section I: *Principles for the Preparation of Teachers*. In 2001, the Board approved Section II: *Principles for the Preparation of Educational Leaders* (superintendents and school principals). What follows for consideration is Section III: *Principles for the Preparation of School Counselors*. All sections of the *Principles* feature three themes: Quality Assurance, Collaboration, and Responsiveness.

When teachers, administrators, and school counselors complete their university preparation programs and begin working in schools, their collective success will impact the extent of school improvement. Therefore, during their preparation programs, these future educators need to understand their unique and collective roles and responsibilities for implementing successful school improvement strategies. The success of school improvement strategies depends on clear definitions and understandings of the professional roles of each educator and the implementation of a collaborative plan to fulfill them.

School counselors are largely responsible for the social, emotional, and career development necessary for the academic success of all children and should serve in a leadership role to create conditions that support student and teacher success. Creating the conditions for academic success of every P-12 student is the shared responsibility of schools, families, and communities. Within the communities where their candidates are prepared, universities must work with the schools and communities to provide models of the effective provision of school and community services to all children and to prepare high quality school counselors.

The preparation of school counselors is the shared responsibility of universities and the schools. Universities will stand by the quality of graduates from their approved programs and continue to support school counselors in continued professional development.

Principle 1: The University System will guarantee that any school counselor it prepares is able to promote the academic success, career preparedness, and social/emotional development of all students.

The Guarantee

The University Ensures that Any Candidate Recommended for Certification as a School Counselor will be able to:

- Enhance the academic success and increase the social/emotional development, and career preparedness of all students.
- Advocate for school policies, programs, and services that are equitable and responsive to cultural differences among students.
- Advocate for rigorous academic preparation of all students to close the achievement gaps among demographic groups.
- Coordinate a school to career transition plan for each student.
- Provide leadership in the development, implementation, evaluation, and revision of a comprehensive school counseling plan that contributes to school renewal by promoting increased academic success, career preparedness, and social/emotional development for all students.
- Use student outcome data to facilitate student academic success.
- Provide individual and group counseling and classroom guidance that promote academic success, social/emotional development, and career preparedness for all students.
- Collaborate with other professionals in the development of staff training, family support, and appropriate community initiatives that address student needs.
- Assess student needs and make appropriate referrals to school and/or community resources.
- Demonstrate mastery and application of the content knowledge in each of the following eight core areas of counseling recommended by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP): (1) Professional Identity and Orientation; (2) Social and Cultural Diversity; (3) Human Growth and Development; (4) Career Development; (5) Helping Relationships; (6) Group Work; (7) Assessment and Evaluation; and (8) Research and Program Evaluation.

Actions

- The Board of Regents will hold institutions accountable for ensuring that all school counselors recommended for certification will meet the “guaranteed” performance outcomes and for providing additional training to any counselor who has completed an approved program within the previous four years who does not meet those expectations within the first two years of practice as a school counselor in Georgia schools. When necessary, the additional training will:
 - a) Be provided at no expense to the counselor or the school.
 - b) Consist of an individualized plan agreed upon between the school district and the university.

- c) Be provided by the university that recommended the counselor for certification. In cases of geographic inconvenience, training may be provided through distance technology or through arrangements mutually agreed to by a local institution.
- The Board of Regents will require all institutions that prepare school counselors to have their school counseling program accredited through (CACREP).
- The Board of Regents will hold institutions accountable for having at least an 80% annual pass rate on certification exam(s) for school counselor candidates from each reportable demographic group by 2006, and a 95% pass rate by 2010. Universities that prepare school counselors will submit annual progress reports to the System Office toward meeting the targeted pass rates on PRAXIS II.
- A sub-committee of the University System Educator Preparation Academic Advisory Committee (EPAAC) will meet with representatives of Professional Standards Commission (PSC) to seek mutually acceptable resolution of issues related to PRAXIS II examinations.
The issues include:
 - a) Development of a system of accurate reporting of institutional pass rates.
 - b) Resolution of issues about the validity of some of the tests.
 - c) Institutional access to data from the Educational Testing Service for use in program improvement.
- The University System Office will provide opportunities for sharing among institutions by featuring national and state models of best practice at annual meetings of the P-16 Network.

Principle 2: The school counselor preparation program must demonstrate that it has faculty resources of appropriate quality and sufficiency to satisfy the Regents' Principles and Actions for the Preparation of School Counselors.

Actions

The school counselor preparation program must have an identifiable full-time core faculty responsible for its leadership who:

- Are sufficient in number for their academic and professional responsibilities.
- Are qualified to prepare candidates to satisfy the *Regents' Principles for the Preparation of School Counselors*.
- Have relevant preparation and experience in their assigned area(s) of instruction.
- Are multi-culturally competent and committed to preparing school counselors who are responsive to cultural differences among P-12 students.

Principle 3: Institutions will collaborate with school systems and community partners to strengthen both counselor preparation and practice to improve schools and P-12 student academic success.

Actions

- Each institution will utilize the partner school model (or Board of Regents' approved alternative) to work with area school systems and their community partners on the following goals:
 1. To increase P-12 student academic success and high levels of learning.
 2. To mentor beginning school counselors during their first two years of practice.

3. To provide school counselor candidates with supervised field experiences of at least 700 clock hours, in which candidates demonstrate the outcomes of the Regents' Guarantee.
 4. To collaborate in the preparation and professional development of school counselors.
 5. To encourage practitioner research by providing appropriate training in research on school improvement.
 6. To produce quality school university partnership research aimed at the improvement of schools and counselor preparation programs.
- Each institution will invite area school systems to enter into negotiated agreements to work on these goals. Negotiated agreements for partner schools (or other approved alternative) will include commitments to:
 1. Collaborate toward achieving these goals, with the first goal receiving the highest priority.
 2. Create a school environment that enables counselor candidates to meet performance outcomes of the Regents' Guarantee.
 3. Provide school counselor education faculty time to work with partner schools on these goals.
 4. Provide school counselors with time to participate in the delivery of instruction in university preparation programs.
 5. Share responsibility for mentoring beginning counselors.
 6. Use data for program improvement.
 7. Promote collaboration and enhance communications among school personnel and human service workers in service to all school-aged children.
 8. Ensure that parents are informed about and have full access to publicly supported services provided to families with school-aged children.
 9. Establish family-friendly policies and practices that increase the potential for every child to be successful in school.
 10. Engage in collaborative research with school and community partners that improves our understanding of the institutional and organizational barriers to, and the identification of conditions that support, the full utilization of available school and community services for school-aged children and their families.
 11. Evaluate the impact of the partnership on program improvement of schools and universities.
 - Each institution will maintain a practitioner-based advisory committee to provide ongoing feedback as to the success of graduates in meeting the outcomes of the guarantee and to suggest strategies for continuous improvement.

Principle 4: The institution will ensure collaboration in the preparation of counselors, leaders, and teachers that is focused on the interrelated roles of all school personnel in improving student academic success.

Actions

- This collaboration will focus on:
 - a) An understanding of the unique roles of all educators in school improvement.
 - b) An understanding of the shared responsibilities of all educators for school improvement.
 - c) Joint research strategies to improve schools.
 - d) Integrated field experiences and/or internships.
- Each institution will ensure that all education personnel have the knowledge and skills necessary to plan and implement a collaborative school improvement plan and to understand their professional roles in that plan.

Principle 5: All educator programs, including school counselor programs, will be the shared responsibility of a collaborative governance unit that includes education, other academic areas as appropriate, and school and community partners.

Actions

- The collaborative governance unit will be responsible for successful implementation of the *Regents' Principles and Actions for the Preparation of School Counselors*.
- The collaborative governance unit will be responsible for generating, revising, and amending policies in compliance with the *Regents' Principles*.
- The collaborative governance unit shall include a representative(s) from the school counseling program.

Principle 6: Institutions will proactively respond to the needs of school districts for increased numbers of high quality, school counselor candidates who reflect the racial/ethnic diversity represented in the school-age population of the institution's service area.

Actions

- Institutions will work with their school partners to identify the demand for counselors in high need schools.
- Institutions will set recruitment policies that ensure the academic qualifications of students going into school counselor preparation programs are at least comparable to graduate student qualifications for the institution as a whole.
- Institutions will increase the number of high quality applicants from each demographic group represented in the school-age population of their service areas.
- Institutions will ensure the number of school counselor graduates reflect the racial/ethnic diversity represented in the school-age population of their service areas.

Principle 7: Institutions will recognize and reward counselor educators for their work in improving P-12 schools.

Actions

- Each institution's president, academic vice president, deans and department chairs will place faculty participation in school counselor preparation and in P-12 school improvement efforts high on the list of institutional priorities.
- Institutions will give visible support and recognition to this work, as demonstrated through decisions in areas such as promotion and tenure, salary increases, workload, professional development, and allocation of resources.
- Institutions will encourage and expand collaboration among university faculty and school and community partners in counselor preparation and in research and service that can be translated into best practices for school improvement.