

Morris Plains School District

# School Counseling Curriculum Guide

Academic, Career, Personal/Social



Adopted by the Morris Plains Board of Education January 14, 2017

School Counseling

Curriculum Guide

Grades PreK-8

Morris Plains School District  
Morris Plains, NJ

# Morris Plains School District

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## Mission Statement

The Morris Plains School District, an integral part of the Community of Caring, encourages and challenges our children, in a diverse and changing world, to embrace their unique value and to maximize their learning potential through the cooperation of staff, administration, parents and citizens of the community as our students strive to achieve the goals set forth in the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards.

## **Morris Plains School District School Counseling Program**

### **Philosophy**

The comprehensive school counseling program of the Morris Plains School District assists students in acquiring and using lifelong skills through the development of personal/social, academic, and career skills. Harassment, intimidation, and bullying education and prevention are an integral component of this curriculum. Counseling, consultation, crisis management, collaboration, coordination, case management, school counseling curriculum, and program evaluation are the primary delivery methods utilized in our school counseling program.

The school counseling program is integral to the educational endeavor. The program is proactive and preventative in its focus. It assists students in acquiring and using lifelong learning skills. School counseling programs are developed by design, focusing on needs, interests, and issues related to the various stages of student growth. The school counseling program reflects the progression of student development Pre-K/Kindergarten through Eighth grade. Competencies based on the standards from the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Career Education, New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Comprehensive Health and Physical Education, the American School Counselor Association National Standards, and New Jersey's Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Law are being implemented.

The primary goal of the school counseling program is to promote and enhance student learning through the three broad and interrelated areas of student development. There is a commitment to individual uniqueness and maximum development in three major areas: personal/social development, academic, and career.

School counseling programs employ strategies to:

- Improve personal and social development
- Encourage self-awareness
- Foster interpersonal communication skills
- Enhance the ability to make appropriate choices and decisions and accept the consequences of such decisions
- Foster the coping skills needed to effectively deal with change and resolve conflicts
- Enhance academics
- Develop awareness of individual and cultural differences
- Impart life success skills for all students
- Provide career awareness

The success of the school counseling program depends upon the cooperation and support of the entire faculty, staff, and student services personnel, and is embedded in all content areas. As student advocates, school counselors are committed to participate as members of the educational team. Counselors are recognized as indispensable partners of the instructional staff in the development of good citizens and leaders. The Morris Plains Schools work collaboratively

with community resources. It is important that these efforts are implemented in a manner which facilitates the educational process and the full use of school and other community resources on behalf of students and their families.

### **The Role of the Counselor**

Within the Morris Plains School District's comprehensive school counseling program, counselors will focus their skills, time and energy on direct service to students, staff, and families. The counseling program balances many components. It requires counselors to:

- Deliver individual and small group counseling and large group guidance;
- Deliver skill development in personal/social areas, academic, and career;
- Provide consultation and case management; and
- Coordinate, manage and evaluate the school counseling program.

As student advocates, school counselors participate as members of the educational team. They consult and collaborate with teachers, administrators, and families to assist students to be successful personally, academically, and vocationally. School counselors are indispensable partners with the instructional staff in the development of contributing members of society. They advocate on behalf of students and their families, ensuring that school programs facilitate access to the educational process, and offer the opportunity for school success.

School counselors coordinate a school-wide program for all students. They have specialized training and professional licensure to provide counseling services to all students. The school counseling program requires ownership and collaboration among the entire school staff. Counselors provide leadership to help teachers integrate the standards across the curriculum.

***The purpose of a counseling program  
in a school setting  
is to promote and enhance the learning process.***

### **School Counseling Program Components:**

- **Individual Counseling:** Counselor meets with students to discuss personal, emotional, social, and academic issues. Students may self-refer or be referred by a staff member. Counseling is solution-focused and outside referrals are made as needed.

- **Group Counseling:** Students are recommended for lunch groups based on individual needs. Some topics of groups might be: lunch bunch, topics of boys and girls in K-8 setting, social skills, friendship, conflict-resolution, positive decision-making, coping skills, etc.
- **Classroom Lessons:** Lessons are conducted in conjunction with theme weeks and based on current trends or needs of students. Lessons are psychoeducational in nature.
- **Community Relations:** Counselors develop positive relationships with the school community, outside counseling and support agencies, community stakeholders, and organizations, to determine appropriate services and deliver them to students. Some agencies are, but not limited to: Mobile Response, Crisis Centers, Freehold Municipal Alliance, private speakers, and counseling agencies.
- **Communication:** Counselors ensure productive and efficient communication with home, teachers, and staff to make sure needs are being addressed and so all stakeholders are up to date.
- **Intervention & Referral Services:** Counselors coordinate a team of professionals to discuss student's academic, social-emotional, and behavioral issues that impede them from learning in their current academic environment. As a team, strategies are created to assist the teachers and students to succeed.
- **504 Plans Coordination:** Counselors work with parents, administrators, and teachers to review and revise 504 plans to address student needs.
- **Anti-Bullying Specialist:** Counselors serve as the Anti-Bullying Specialist and chairperson of the School Safety Team. They coordinate HIB investigations.
- **School Testing Coordinator:** Counselors facilitate the testing processes for their respective schools, such as benchmarks, NJ ASK, and PARCC. Counselors develop testing groups based on individual student needs, create schedules and assignments, and prepare staff with materials for testing.
- **Crisis Response:** Counselors serve as members of the Crisis Management Team and assess the level of risk to students as needed. They perform Suicide Risk assessments and respond as necessary to individual situations.
- **Referrals:** Counselors make determinations for referrals to outside agencies as needed. (Ex. DCP, mobile response, mental health agencies)
- **Parent Involvement:** Counselors develop programs, such as presentations, workshops, and more to involve parents in the educational environment. Counselors meet with parents as needed to assist with identifying student needs.
- **Academic Achievement:** Counselors work with teachers and administration to track students' grades and progress, while continuously working with students to improve their skills and set goals for achievement.
- **Celebrations:** Counselors facilitate programs that highlight student achievement, such as character education, marking period, student of the month, school incentives, and other award programs.
- **Career Awareness:** Counselors develop programs to introduce new careers to students, such as Career Café and lessons to help students learn their interests and passions towards potential careers.

- **Programs and Activities:** Theme week activities, such as the Week of Respect, School Violence Awareness Week, Red Ribbon Week, and character education initiatives take place throughout the year, and focus on building a positive environment for all stakeholders.
- **School Climate:** Counselors assist in the facilitation of a positive school climate for staff, students, parents, and administration through the development of committees and participation in activities in the school.
- **Advisory:** Work with building administrators to develop and oversee the implementation of an Advisory Program. This includes supporting teachers in developing lessons, helping create an effective schedule, and offering continued training for teachers.

## **Responsibilities of School Counselor**

### **Teaching-**

Twice per marking period in each classroom (see topics below)  
Red Ribbon Week classroom lessons 3-8

### **Red Ribbon Week/Week of Respect**

Coordinate all school based events with Borough School Student Council  
Organize events with Morris Plains Municipal Alliance Committee volunteer  
Book Red Ribbon Week speakers  
Order Red Ribbon Week materials for students  
Organize donation drives  
Teach in-class lessons on drug/alcohol prevention  
Facilitate opening Red Ribbon Week assembly with mayor

### **High School Transition-**

Plan speakers from Morristown H.S.  
Set up conference schedules  
Obtain teacher recommendations  
Work with students on applications  
Write recommendations  
Send transcripts  
Speak to private high school admissions staff  
Review course catalog with students  
Discuss elective options  
Encourage students to get involved in an activity  
Plan high school orientation program field trip to MHS  
Organize Honor Roll Breakfast (MHS principal and Honor Society students speak to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students)

### **2nd grade Transition-**

Teach classroom lessons to help students prepare for transition  
Organize Bagel Breakfast (meet teachers/tour of building)  
Facilitate writing letters to 2<sup>nd</sup> grader from current 3<sup>rd</sup> graders  
Facilitate writing letters to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teachers from 2<sup>nd</sup> graders  
Facilitate grade 7 students writing stories or poems for the new students  
Implement Big and Little Buddies program (3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders work on social skills, play games, and participate in tolerance/peer pressure lessons and activities)  
Run New Student Orientation

### **Testing-**

Order all testing and in-service all teachers  
Kindergarten- Brigance screening  
Grade 1- PTCS test of cognitive ability (October)  
Grades 3-8 PARCC  
Grades 4&8 NJ ASK  
INVIEW testing (cognitive ability) grades 3 and 5  
Attend mandatory state workshops  
Discuss results with administration, teachers, and parents  
Teacher testing schedules

### **Groups-**

New Student Group- meets to discuss new student needs, pizza party (invite new friends/meet teachers, tour building)  
Fourth Grade Reading Buddies (Character Education/Social Skills)  
Small groups as needed (see below for more information)

### **Counseling-**

Counseling of general education students on regularly set schedule  
Counseling children with parental consent on an as needed  
Seeing students as needed for counseling individually and in groups  
Counseling classrooms or small groups as needed (i.e. 7<sup>th</sup> grade girls-peer issues, 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls-gossiping, 4<sup>th</sup> grade-treating others unkindly)

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade-**

Drug/alcohol prevention  
Plan/organize field trip to in October (team building activities)  
Address race relations/racially based issues

### **Speakers/Programs-**

Michael Fallon- student and faculty programs (Character Ed.)  
Partnership for a Drug Free NJ- parent and faculty programs  
"Morris Co. Prosecutor's office- Internet safety 7/8 grades  
Daytop presentation- drug treatment/awareness- 7/8 grades  
Odd Girl Out- work with Kim Romano and Deb Griek to help 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls treat each other with respect, we watch Odd Girl Out as a group and spend several class periods to discuss the dynamics that affect them.  
Depression and Suicide workshop (8<sup>th</sup> grade)

### **Additional responsibilities-**

Member of the Morris Plains Municipal Alliance (school rep.)  
Speaker at 3<sup>rd</sup> grade parent orientation  
Attend parent meetings  
Lead teacher in-services (school climate, suicide prevention)  
Make DYFS referrals  
Help families find appropriate treatment providers in the area  
Coordinate I&RS Committee  
Facilitate I&RS meetings (both schools)  
Write up action plan and monitor progress  
Coordinate 504 Plans  
Manage 504 cases  
Update plans yearly to reflect progress/needs  
Maintain Character Ed. Bulletin boards  
Homeless Coordinator  
Anti-Bullying Specialist (MW and Borough)



Advisory Program (Borough)

<b><u>Guidance Curriculum</u></b>	<b><u>Responsive Services</u></b>	<b><u>Individual Student Planning</u></b>	<b><u>System Support</u></b>
<a href="#"><u>Recommended Time</u></a> <i>35-45% Elementary</i> <i>25-35% Middle</i>	<a href="#"><u>Recommended Time</u></a> <i>30-40% Elementary</i> <i>30-40% Middle</i>	<a href="#"><u>Recommended Time</u></a> <i>5-10% Elementary</i> <i>15-25% Middle</i>	<a href="#"><u>Recommended Time</u></a> <i>10-15% Elementary</i> <i>10-15% Middle</i>
Provides developmental, comprehensive guidance program content in a systematic way to all students, grades K-8	Addresses students' immediate concerns	Assists students and parents in development of academic and career plans	Includes program, staff, and school support activities and services
<b><u>Purpose:</u></b> Student awareness, skill development, and application of skills needed in everyday life	<b><u>Purpose:</u></b> Prevention and Intervention	<b><u>Purpose:</u></b> Individual student academic and occupational planning, decision making, goal setting, and preparing for academic transitions	<b><u>Purpose:</u></b> Program delivery and support
<b><u>Academic</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective learning in school and across the life-span</li> <li>• Academic preparation for post-secondary options</li> <li>• Relationship of academics, work, family and community</li> </ul>	<b><u>Academic</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any immediate academic concerns</li> <li>• School-related concerns including tardiness, absences and truancy, misbehavior, school avoidance, dropout, suspensions, etc.</li> </ul>	<b><u>Academic</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitation and/or interpretation of criterion and norm-referenced tests</li> <li>• Academic preparation essential for post-secondary options</li> <li>• Understanding academic strengths related to occupations</li> <li>• Use of diverse assessment results</li> </ul>	<b><u>Total Program</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional development</li> <li>• Advocacy and public relations for comprehensive school counseling programs</li> <li>• Program planning and development</li> <li>• Evaluation and assessment of comprehensive school counseling program, personnel and student results</li> <li>• Documentation of how comprehensive school counseling programs contribute to student achievement</li> </ul>
<b><u>Career</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate the world of work to make informed decisions</li> </ul>		<b><u>Career</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize career information resources in school and</li> </ul>	<b><u>Total Program</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School improvement planning</li> <li>• Integration of</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategies to achieve future career goals</li> <li>Relationship of personal qualities, education, training and work</li> </ul>		<p>community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore career clusters</li> <li>Interest and skill inventories</li> <li>Occupation searches</li> <li>Self-knowledge relating to career choices</li> </ul>	<p>guidance essential teachings across the school curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent involvement and education</li> <li>Consultation with staff and community</li> <li>Instructing on age-appropriate issues with staff and community</li> <li>Community outreach and involvement</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Personal/Social</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpersonal skills to respect self and others</li> <li>Decision-making, setting goals and taking action to achieve goals</li> <li>Understanding everyday safety and survival skills</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Personal/Social</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical, sexual or emotional abuse and issues</li> <li>Crises</li> <li>Grief, loss and death</li> <li>Substance abuse</li> <li>Family issues</li> <li>Coping with stress</li> <li>Relationship concerns</li> <li>Divorce</li> <li>Referral plan</li> <li>Contact and develop relationships with mental health resources in the area</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Personal/Social</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skills and competencies related to student and employee success</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Total Program</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional development</li> <li>Maintaining updated information regarding community resources for students and families</li> <li>Document issues and interventions as appropriate</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Counselor Role</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom Guidance curriculum implementation</li> <li>Consultation</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Counselor Role</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual counseling</li> <li>Small-group counseling</li> <li>Referral</li> <li>Consultation</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Counselor Role</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment</li> <li>Planning</li> <li>Placement</li> <li>Consultation</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Counselor Role</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and manage program</li> <li>Develop relationships and partnerships</li> <li>Consultation</li> </ul>

ASCA National Model for School Counseling

### **School Counseling Program Areas of Focus:**

#### **Personal:**

- Developing positive character traits, such as: respect, responsibility, citizenship, kindness, perseverance, acceptance, and more
- Encouraging a positive self-esteem
- Developing appropriate coping skills to use in various situations

#### **Social:**

- Developing respect for themselves and others
- Helping students develop and enhance positive social skills
- Establishing healthy peer relationships

- Developing conflict resolution strategies
- Assisting in recognizing individual differences and accepting others
- Encouraging community involvement and relationships

#### **Academic:**

- Fostering practical organizational strategies, study skills, and work habits
- Facilitating positive communication and encouraging relationships between home and school
- Assisting staff with academic interventions as needed
- Developing working relationships with students to review academic strengths, areas needed of improvement, and setting goals to attain educational success

#### **Career:**

- Exposing students to various career choices and opportunities
- Increasing knowledge of career awareness, exploration, and planning
- Components of the School Counseling Program

#### **Daily Responsibilities:**

Individual counseling (September - June)

Group counseling (October - June)

Classroom lessons (September -June)

I&RS Meetings (Existing Cases: Sept-June; New Referrals: October- April)

HIB Investigations (September - June)

School Safety Team Meetings (as needed)

504 Meetings (as needed)

Advisory programs (September - June)

Career Presentations (one middle school Career Day after PARCC and NJ ASK testing)

Professional Development (September - June)

Providing outside resources for families and students (September - June)

School Climate Initiatives: Staff activities, student activities, etc. to enhance the climate (September - June)

Homeless Liaison protocol (12 months)

#### **Weekly Responsibilities:**

Counseling Groups (running 4-6 weeks at a time)

Recommended Groups: Divorce, Loss, Illness, New student, New family member, friendship groups (others as needed)-maximum of 6 weeks--permission slips

Lunch and recess Follow Up (once per week per building)

Research lessons for teachers to help support Advisory and Habits of Mind topics

#### **Monthly Responsibilities:**

##### ***Classroom Instruction***

2 lessons per marking period at each grade level

<b><u>Marking Period 1: Personal/Social Development--<i>Learning To Live</i></u></b>	
<a href="#">Expressing Feelings (5 lessons to support Personal/Social Development)</a> <a href="#">Resolving Conflict (6 lessons to support conflict resolution)</a> <a href="#">Personal and Social Development Lessons on a variety of relevant topics/</a>	
<u>K-4 Lessons may include (October must focus on Bullying):</u> Self Knowledge Harassment / Bullying Personal Responsibility Social / Friendship Skills Problem Solving	<u>5-8 Lesson may include (October must focus on Bullying):</u> Self Knowledge Harassment / Bullying Personal Responsibility Conflict Management Social Skills
<b><u>Marking Period 2: Academic Development--<i>Learning to Learn</i></u></b>	
<a href="#">Academic Development Lessons on a variety of relevant topics</a>	
<u>K-4 Lessons May Include:</u> Self Advocacy Following Directions Decision Making Test Taking Skills Organizational Skills Goal Setting Effective Communication	<u>5-8 Lessons may include:</u> Self Advocacy Following Directions Decision Making Test Taking Skills Organizational Skills Goal Setting Effective Communication Study Skills Strengths & Interests Personal Education Plan Academic Relevance
<b><u>Marking Period 3: Career Development--<i>Learning to Work</i></u></b>	
<a href="#">Career Development Lessons on a variety of relevant topics</a>	
<u>K-4 Lessons may include:</u> Strengths and Interests Working Together School / Work Habits Career Awareness /Exposure	<u>5-8 Lessons may include:</u> Interest Inventory Career Exploration Academics to Work Technology Work Values
<b><u>Marking Period 4: Community Development--<i>Learning to Contribute</i></u></b>	

[Building Community \(4 lessons to support classroom community development\)](#)  
[Celebrating Diversity \(4 lessons on developing awareness of diversity issues\)](#)  
[Bank of lesson plans on tolerance and diversity](#)

K-4 Lessons may include:

Community Awareness  
Leadership Skills  
Community Service  
Teamwork  
Citizenship  
Respect Diversity

5-8 Lessons may include:

Volunteer Service  
Leadership Skills  
Community Service  
Teamwork  
Citizenship  
Respect Diversity

## ***Program Responsibilities***

September	<p><u>Transition Activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities and programs geared towards transitioning students to the next grade level</li> <li>• Orientation for parents and/or students</li> </ul> <p><u>Information Giving:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing staff members with information on DCP, HIB, I&amp;RS, 504 plans, trends</li> <li>• Handing out materials as needed</li> </ul> <p><u>Small Groups:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing staff with information about small group support</li> </ul> <p><u>High School Planning:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation for students on high school learning centers, academies, and specialized programs</li> </ul> <p><u>Advisory (3rd - 8th):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train staff</li> <li>• Launch program</li> </ul>
October	<p><u>Week of Respect:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities focusing on anti-bullying policies</li> <li>• School and district-wide activities to promote respect</li> <li>• Assemblies, presentations, activities</li> </ul> <p><u>School Violence Awareness Week:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities focusing on violence prevention</li> </ul> <p><u>Red Ribbon Week:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities focusing on promoting healthy decision-making</li> <li>• Discussions on current trends and impact of drugs on your life</li> </ul> <p><u>High School Planning:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School application process and choosing of programs</li> </ul> <p><u>Small Groups:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin small group counseling</li> </ul>

November	<u>High School Planning:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School application process</li> </ul> <u>Advisory:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate program and make changes as needed</li> </ul>
December	
January	
February	
March	<u>Career Awareness (7th &amp; 8th):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working papers</li> <li>• Interviewing</li> <li>• Resume building,</li> </ul>
April	<u>PARCC Coordination of Testing:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversight of testing process during testing period</li> </ul> <u>Advisory:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate program and recommend changes as needed for 2017-18 school year</li> </ul>
May	<u>PARCC Coordination of Testing:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversight of testing process during testing period</li> </ul> <u>Career Awareness (7th &amp; 8th)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Career Day</li> </ul>
June	<u>Transitions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities to assist in the smooth transition from elementary to middle and middle to high school</li> <li>• Cross-articulation between elementary and middle school teachers/counselors</li> <li>• Graduation planning</li> </ul>

**Resources:**

Peace Foundation (I Care Cat)

Operation Respect

Sunburst Programs

Bully Awareness Programs

Work with lunch/recess staff for language with the kids--consistency (follow up on classroom lessons)