



2025-2026 ANNUAL CALENDAR FOR SCHOOL COUNSELORS IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Purpose: This calendar is geared to serve as an aid for school counselors in South Dakota as they create their own calendars specific to their school setting. This calendar template may be useful in the management and delivery of a comprehensive school counseling program. Users of this calendar template are encouraged to modify it to fit their unique school counseling program's needs. **NOTE: This template is in "View Only" mode, so either make a copy in your own Google Drive or download it to your computer to make modifications.**

Benefits of Creating Your School Counseling Program Annual Calendar:

- Helps with organizing and planning the delivery of specific activities as part of your comprehensive school counseling program
- Highlights the school counseling program's priorities, showing major activities involving school counselor(s), such as classroom instruction and events
- Ensures activities and services are available for all students

Benefits of Posting Your School Counseling Program Annual Calendar:

- Becomes a strong public relations tool to show school counseling program priorities
- Reminds stakeholders (students, parents, teachers and administrators) of the school counseling program's priorities
- Is a tangible tool to show your school counselor efforts
- Assists school counselors to be less likely to have non-counseling duties/activities put on their plate, as they can already show their time is scheduled for school counselor-specific activities

Recommended Steps When Creating & Publicizing an Annual School Counseling Program Calendar:

1. List all events that are already scheduled (professional development, standardized testing dates, graduation, prom, National School Counseling Week, etc.).
2. Add the activities and events that have flexible dates to schedule (awards night, classroom lessons, financial aid night, career event, etc.).
3. Use clear and consistent language, avoiding unexplained acronyms and jargon, for all activities and events.
4. Post the annual calendar on the school's web site and an area that is easily viewed, such as a bulletin board, and/or include in monthly communications, such as newsletters.

Note: As not every item listed will pertain to every school counselor, some items are color coded by category. See the *Color Key* on page two. The "Instruction" column contains **examples** of topics that may be covered. Dates, topics and times are subject to change. Additional opportunities for school counselors may occur that are not listed on this document.

2025-2026 SCHOOL COUNSELING ANNUAL CALENDAR

COLOR KEY

(Category)

Important!

Professional Development

Assessment/Testing

(Grade Range)

All grades (K-12)

Elementary School (K-5)

Middle School (6-8)

High School (9-12)

K-8 grades

Middle School & High School

Month	DELIVER Direct Student Service: Instruction	DELIVER Direct Student Service: Appraisal & Advisement	DELIVER Direct Student Service: Counseling	DELIVER Indirect Student Services: Referrals, Collaboration, Consultation	PROGRAM PLANNING & SUPPORT Define, Manage, Assess, Fair-Share Responsibilities
ONGOING SERVICES The South Dakota School Counselor Association (SDSCA) website has national educational & health awareness weekly/monthly themes that may be utilized as part of delivering school counseling services throughout the school year.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ New student transition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transition planning and academic advising upon enrollment ★ Assist students with academic planning ★ Review & update Personal Learning Plans* ★ Promote scholarship and enrichment opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Individual counseling ★ School crisis team (as needed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ IEP meetings ★ Teacher Assisting Teachers (TAT) meetings ★ Teacher/admin consultation ★ Parent meetings ★ Grade-level meetings ★ Advisory council meetings (twice per year) ★ Parent-teacher conferences ★ Make pertinent articles and research available to staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Establish school counseling annual, monthly & weekly calendars ★ Faculty meetings ★ Review grade & attendance reports ★ Collect data ★ Keep a time log to assess use of time

Month	DELIVER Direct Student Service: Instruction	DELIVER Direct Student Service: Appraisal & Advisement	DELIVER Direct Student Service: Counseling	DELIVER Indirect Student Services: Referrals, Collaboration, Consultation	PROGRAM PLANNING & SUPPORT Define, Manage, Assess, Fair-Share Responsibilities
AUGUST <u>Color Key:</u> Important! Prof. Development Assessment/Testing All Grades (K-12) Elem. School (K-5) Middle School (6-8) High School (9-12) K-8 Grades MS/HS	★ Introduce role of school counselor ★ Develop/Update classroom visit schedule	★ Review Personal Learning Plans* ★ Review seniors' transcripts to make sure on track for graduation		★ Check Child Protection Services for updates ★ Renew/Join Professional State & National Organizations ★ Open House/Meet the School Counselor Day ★ Teacher Inservice training	★ Create and/or update counselor website ★ Plan Professional Development for the year ★ Create and/or update school counseling brochures ★ Complete Annual Administrator Conference with school administrator on the goals of the school counseling program

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SEPTEMBER Color Key: Important! Prof. Development Assessment/Testing All Grades (K-12) Elem. School (K-5) Middle School (6-8) High School (9-12) K-8 Grades MS/HS	★ Conflict Resolution ★ Academic Success ★ Growth Mindset		★ Conduct minute meetings	★ Plan FAFSA night ★ Help to coordinate community services (Feeding South Dakota, mentor program, etc.)	★ Develop & maintain a contact log ★ CCASD Fall Counselor Workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rapid City, 9/3 ○ Pierre, 9/4 ○ Sioux Falls, 9/8 ○ Watertown, 9/9 ○ Aberdeen, 9/10 ○ Virtual, 9/10 ○ Mitchell, 9/11 ★ Helpline Center Resources for Educators (Virtual, 9/17) ★ SDMyLife Completion Standards (Virtual, 9/25) ★ ACT Testing Dates (Sept. 6; Registration Deadline: Aug. 1)

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OCTOBER Color Key: Important! Prof. Development Assessment/Testing All Grades (K-12) Elem. School (K-5) Middle School (6-8) High School (9-12) K-8 Grades MS/HS	★ Bullying Prevention ★ Substance Use Prevention (Red Ribbon Week)	★ Attend College/Career Fairs	★ Begin student groups		★ Free College Application Period (Oct. 1-Nov. 30) ★ Annual Community Response to Child Abuse Conference (Sioux Falls, Oct. 2-3) ★ SDSCA Counselor Connections (Sioux Falls, Oct. 16-17) ★ Behavior Workshop (Sioux Falls, Oct. 21 - 22) ★ SDMyLife 101 and 201 (Rapid City, Oct. 28) ★ SDMyLife 101 and 201 (Sioux Falls, Oct. 29) ★ ACT Testing Date (Oct. 18; Registration Deadline: Sept. 12)

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NOVEMBER Color Key: Important! Prof. Development Assessment/Testing All Grades (K-12) Elem. School (K-5) Middle School (6-8) High School (9-12) K-8 Grades MS/HS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ School Appropriate Behaviors ★ Diversity ★ Career Awareness Month ★ Career Aptitude Assessment for 10th graders* ★ Career Interest Inventory for 8th graders* ★ Career Interest Inventory; plan for applicable events (Career Café, Career Day, Career Fair, etc.) 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Free College Application Period (Oct 1 - Nov 30) ★ Help coordinate holiday support for families from school/ community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Free College Application Period (Oct. 1-Nov. 30) ★ Career Connections Virtual Learning Series (Virtual, Nov. 5 & 12) ★ Indian Education Summit (Aberdeen, Nov. 14) ★ Share About School Counseling Using an Elevator Speech (Nov. 24, Virtual) ★ ASVAB for grades 11 & 12
DECEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Kindness and Compassion ★ Gratitude 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Review seniors' transcripts to make sure on track for graduation 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ ACT Testing Date (Dec. 13; Registration Deadline: Nov. 7)
JANUARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Peer Relationships ★ Decision Making ★ Career Café 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (Jan. 26 - March

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					20) ★ ACCESS 2.0 (English language proficiency) Assessment (Jan. 27 - Feb. 27)
FEBRUARY Color Key: Important! Prof. Development Assessment/Testing All Grades (K-12) Elem. School (K-5) Middle School (6-8) High School (9-12) K-8 Grades MS/HS	★ Understanding Feelings ★ Goal Setting ★ National School Counseling Week activities ★ Career Carnival or Fair	★ Academic Advising on Coursework for the next year		★ National School Counseling Week (Feb. 2-6) ★ Help plan course registration	★ ACT Testing Date (Feb. 14; Registration Deadline: Jan. 9) ★ SDCA Day on the Hill in Pierre (date TBA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Follow pertinent legislation; contact legislators
MARCH	★ Test-Taking Skills ★ Teamwork				★ SD ELA and Math Assessments (grades 3-8) (March 30 - May 8) ★ SD Science Assessment (grades 5, 8) (March 30 - May 8) ★ ACT as a State Assessment (grade 11 for English, Reading, Math, Science, Writing)

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Window 1: Feb. 24 - 27, March 2 - 6 ○ Window 2: March 10 - 13, March 16 - 20 ○ Window 3: March 24 - 27, March 30 - 31, April 1 - 3 ★ SD ELA and Math Alternative Assessments (grades 3-8, 11) (March 9 - April 24) ★ SD Science Alternative Assessment (grades 5, 8, 11) (March 30 - May 8)
APRIL Color Key: Important! Prof. Development Assessment/Testing All Grades (K-12) Elem. School (K-5) Middle School (6-8) High School (9-12) K-8 Grades MS/HS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Transition lessons ★ Career ★ Mental Health Awareness 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ PK/K Open House 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Prepare for graduation and awards events ★ SD Week of Work (April 6-10) ★ South Dakota Counseling Association (SDCA) Spring Conference at Rapid City (April 23-25)

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					★ <u>ACT Testing Date</u> (April 11; Registration Deadline: March 6)
MAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Review topics/lessons ★ End of Year closure lesson - Write letters to new teacher 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Awards Night ★ Scholarship Night ★ Finalize class registrations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ <u>Mental and Behavioral Health Workshop</u> (TBD, May 28) ★ Advanced Placement (AP) Testing for students who took AP courses grades 11 & 12 (first and second week of May) ★ Evaluate academic year - analyze data ★ Develop goals and objectives for the next year
JUNE Color Key: Important! Prof. Development Assessment/Testing All Grades (K-12) Elem. School (K-5) Middle School (6-8) High School (9-12)					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Check for any national school counseling conferences offered in July ★ <u>ACT Testing Date</u> (June 13; Registration Deadline: May 8)

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K-8 Grades MS/HS					
<i>JULY</i>					★ CTE Conference at Brookings (July 26-28) ★ ACT Testing Date (July 11; Registration Deadline: June 5)

*** These items meet the requirements of South Dakota Administrative Rules [24:43:11:01](#) and [24:43:11:08](#).** See snapshots of their requirements listed below. A free tool to meet these requirements is South Dakota MyLife (SDMyLife), in which South Dakota students grades 6-12 in South Dakota have free access to this career exploration tool. For more information, visit www.sdmylife.com.

[SD Administration Rule 24:43:11:01](#) (Number of required credits for graduation from high school - Personal Learning Plan required.): All students grades 9-12 must have a personal learning plan that documents a minimum of 22 units of credit.

[SD Administration Rule 24:43:11:08](#) (Testing requirements.): A career interest assessment shall be administered by the end of 8th grade; A career aptitude assessment shall be administered by the end of the fall semester of 10th grade.

Sources:

- American School Counselor Association (2019). *The ASCA National Model®: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.
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- Duncan, K. (2023). *South Dakota comprehensive school counseling program model* (5th ed.). South Dakota Department of Education.
- Hatch, T. (2014). *The use of data in school counseling: Hatching results for students, programs, and the profession*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Rus, E. (2016). *Fred Assam annual calendar*.
- Seeklander, A. & Hansen, L. (n.d.). *Counseling department - master calendar*.

This document was made in part, as a tool to assist school counselors, by the South Dakota Department of Education, Division of College, Career, and Student Success, and the South Dakota School Counselor Association.

