

INSTRUCTION

File: IJ

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAM

The Charlottesville City School Board affirms that parents are the student's first teachers and that the public schools should serve to strengthen family and parental support. No student is required to participate in any counseling program to which the student's parents object.

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- A. Academic Guidance (Academic Advising). Advice which assists students and their parents to acquire knowledge of the curricula choices available to students, to plan a program of studies, to arrange and interpret academic testing, and to seek post-secondary academic opportunities;
- B. Career Guidance (Career Advising). Advice which helps students to acquire information and plan action about work, jobs, apprenticeships, and post-secondary educational and career opportunities;
- C. Personal/Social Counseling. Counseling which assists students in developing an understanding of themselves, the rights and needs of others, how to resolve conflict and to define individual goals, reflecting their interests, abilities and aptitudes. Information and records of personal/social counseling will be kept confidential and separate from a student's educational records and not disclosed to third parties without prior parental consent or as otherwise provided by law. Parents may elect, by notifying their child's school in writing, to have their child not participate in personal/social counseling. Such counseling may be provided either (i) in groups in which generic issues of social development are addressed or (ii) through structured individual or small group multi-session counseling which focuses on the specific concerns of the participant(s).

The division promotes a comprehensive school-counseling program that is a shared and collaborative effort with other educators and parents that focuses on all aspects of student learning. Recognizing that there are multiple variables that affect a student's success throughout the school years, and that the school-counseling program is one important variable that affects all areas of growth, a well-planned school-counseling program will provide a collaborative effort and will function as an integral and essential part of the school structure and organization.

At least annually, parents are notified in writing about the academic and career guidance programs, and the personal/social counseling programs which are available to students within the school division. Parents are advised concerning the purpose, general description of the programs, how parents may review materials to be used in the programs, and procedures by which parents may limit the students' participation in the program.

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Information and records of personal/social counseling are kept confidential and separate and not disclosed to third parties without prior parental consent or as otherwise provided by law.

With respect to personal/social counseling, parents shall notify the school division in writing if the student is not to participate in the personal/social counseling program. (Opt-Out)

Counseling techniques which are beyond the scope of the professional certification or training of counselors, including hypnosis, or other psychotherapeutic techniques that are normally employed in medical or clinical settings and focus on mental illness or psychopathology are prohibited.

Employment Counseling and Placement Services

The School Board provides to secondary students employment counseling and placement services to furnish information relating to the employment opportunities available to students graduating from or leaving the schools in the school division. Such information includes all types of employment opportunities, including, but not limited to, apprenticeships, the military, career education schools and the teaching profession. In providing such services, the School Board consults and cooperates with the Virginia Employment Commission, the Department of Labor and Industry, local business and labor organizations and career schools.

If the School Board provides access to one or more of its high schools and contact with such high school's student body or other contact with its high school students during a school or school division-sponsored activity to persons or groups for occupational, professional or educational recruitment, it provides equal access on the same basis to official recruiting representatives of the military forces of the Commonwealth and the United States.

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