



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 8, 2018

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Venessa A. Keesler, Ph.D., Deputy Superintendent 
Division of Educator, Student, and School Supports (DESSS)

SUBJECT: Certification Requirements for School Counselors

Michigan Compiled Law (MCL) 388.1763 states that "the board of a district or intermediate district shall not permit...a noncertificated educator to teach in an elementary or secondary school or in an adult basic education or high school completion program." In addition, MCL 380.1233 provides specific requirements for individuals who serve in a counseling role in a school district or intermediate school district.

Only educators who hold one of the following:

- a School Counselor (NT) [endorsement](#),
- a [Temporary School Counselor Authorization](#) (TSCA),
- a [Preliminary Employment Authorization to Work as a School Counselor](#) (PEASC), or
- a [School Counselor License](#) (SCL)

are qualified to carry out specific roles as school counselors. However, many schools use a variety of titles for these uniquely prepared staff members, and sometimes employ others under these titles who do not have one of these four credentials.

In accordance with MCL 388.1763 and 380.1233, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) requires schools to staff and assign educators with one of these four credentials when employing staff as school counselors. Any persons without the appropriate qualifications who perform any duties related to administering a school counseling program must be supported by someone with one of these four credentials.

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The MDE will deem an educator working at a district or school level to be “administering a school counseling program” if the person’s position description or job duties are based on any or all of the five elements below. Accordingly, educators found to be working in this capacity without one of the four credentials or not with the support of another educator with one of the four credentials may be liable for a deduction of state aid funds under the law.

1. **Academic Development**

Through monitoring of academic performance, active collaboration of staff, and consultation with students and their parents, school counselors advise students on credits required to successfully complete the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC), using their research into potential supports or interventions to maximize student success. School counselors deliver core curriculum lessons aligned with the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Mindsets and Behaviors in order to equip students with test taking, time management, and/or organization tools to be successful. Finally, school counselors advise students on academic opportunities for dual enrollment and early/middle college.

2. **Career Development**

Starting in the seventh-grade year, school counselors assist students in developing a post-secondary, Educational Development Plan (EDP) based on individual, small-group, and classroom consultations. In alignment with the ASCA standards, school counselors provide guidance and resources for career exploration, using career assessments and core curriculum lessons to identify training and educational opportunities which can lead to skills for certifications and career pursuits. School counselors also facilitate college fairs or visits, exploration of careers in the military, financial aid workshops to assist students and parents considering higher education, and experiences in career and technical education.

3. **Social and Emotional Development**

School counselors provide responsive services including individual, group and crisis response counseling. For students experiencing difficult life circumstances, school counselors make referrals to community resources to assist students with healthy coping strategies for successful school and life transitions. School counselors deliver core curriculum lessons aligned to the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors equipping students with interpersonal communication skills in order to become positive members of their school and community.

4. **Advocacy and Leadership**

School counselors advocate for school counseling programs and positive learning environments that focus on student learning and achievement by collaborating and connecting with teachers, administrators, staff, parents, and the community. School counselors demonstrate a commitment to continuous learning and professional growth, leading professional development activities and providing leadership for plans to improve student achievement within the context of an effective school counseling program.

5. **Program Management and Administration**

School counselors use data-driven approaches to plan, develop, implement, and evaluate programs, and as resources in support of the mission of school counseling programs, ensuring alignment to the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors. Using these approaches, school counselors plan and recommend ongoing professional development to building and district leadership and advocate for appropriate supervision and evaluation of school counselors using evaluation tools specific to school counselors.

A [Quick Sheet document](#), intended to be a companion to this memo, is available from the OPPS Web site at www.michigan.gov/teachercert. This Quick Sheet contains more information and helpful resource links about the role of school counselors and a school counseling program in improving overall student achievement.

For additional information on deductions of state aid under MCL 388.1763, please contact Phil Chase at ChaseP2@michigan.gov or 517-241-3960.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance