

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Revised School Counseling Model of Practice and Standards

**1. *Where can I find the revised school counseling model of practice and standards?***

Revisions can be found on the Tennessee State Board of Education website [here](#). Additionally, school counseling information can be found on the department website ([here](#)). This webpage will be updated regularly.

**2. *When do the new model and standards go into practice?***

The revised model and standards will go into effect at the beginning of the 2018-19 school year.

**3. *Am I required to have a school counselor/school counseling program?***

Yes. Per [Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-303](#), "Each LEA shall employ or contract with school counselors for pre-kindergarten through grade twelve (pre-K-12)" and "The school counseling program shall be established and operated under guidelines adopted by the state board of education."

**4. *Are districts required to meet the basic education program (BEP) funding ratios for school counselors to students of 1:500 for grades K-6 and 1:350 for grades 7-12?***

No. The suggested ratios in [BEP](#) are a funding formula but not a spending formula. District administrators must determine how to best use these funding dollars for personnel to meet the needs of their students. While the law mentioned above does mandate a school counseling program, it does not mandate a certain school counselor to student ratio. [Research](#) indicates smaller ratios do increase student outcomes and the national recommendation of the [American School Counseling Association](#) (ASCA) is 1:250, pre-K-12.

**5. *When do I have to remove misaligned responsibilities from school counselors?***

Because the revised model will go into practice in the 2018-19 school year, districts and schools have a full year to realign the responsibilities of school counselors. The department will be working with school leaders to identify and communicate effective strategies to reassign those responsibilities that prevent school counselors from providing the services outlined in both state board policy and state statute. Examples of these strategies are outlined in the [Implementation Guide](#).

**6. *What is the Program Management Agreement? When should it be completed?***

The [Program Management Agreement](#) is a tool designed to help facilitate the planning of the comprehensive school counseling program between the administrator and school counselor(s). It should be completed at the beginning of each school year. Examples can be found in the Implementation Guide and the department will provide training for counselors and administrators through spring and summer 2018.

**7. How do I provide training for my counselors to begin implementing the revised model?**

The department will provide training for counselors through regional school counselor collaboratives, summer training opportunities, professional conferences, webinars, and online modules. Additional strategies for district-led training will be provided throughout the 2017-18 school year. To learn about your region's next school counselor collaborative, please contact your local CORE office.

**8. Does the revised model and standards change the evaluation for school counselors?**

No. Current evaluation procedures state that school counselors should be evaluated using the [TEAM School Services Personnel Rubric](#). However, because the revised model and standards create new expectations for school counselors we will be reviewing the evaluation policies for school counselors and making recommendations for revision. These recommendations will ensure that school counselors are evaluated on the totality of their counseling programs and receive high quality feedback so they can improve their practice. The department will provide guidance on how to evaluate school counselors in accordance to the revised model and standards and the current SSP Rubric.

**9. Who can I contact if I have additional questions about the revised school counseling model and standards?**

The director of school counseling services, Leigh Bagwell, can be reached via email at [School.Counseling@tn.gov](mailto:School.Counseling@tn.gov).