Proposed Rules Change: School Counselor Role

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

# What is the purpose of these new rules?

The updated rules aim to clarify the role of school counselors, enhance counseling services, and ensure that all students have access to comprehensive support through a structured counseling program.

# When should schools begin following the new requirements?

If approved, the changes would begin in the 2025-2026 school year through a phase-in process supported by the Oklahoma State Department of Education Office of Student Development.

# How will these rules impact school counselors?

The new rules formalize the expectation that counselors spend at least 80% of their work time providing direct and indirect services to students, while 20% is reserved for program planning and school support activities.

# What does “direct and indirect services” mean?

#  Direct services include face-to-face interactions with students, such as classroom lessons, individual or small group instruction, appraisal and advisement, and counseling services. Indirect services are provided on behalf of students as a result of the school counselor’s interactions with others such as teachers, parents, and community resources.

# What does “program planning and school support” mean?

# This involves developing, managing, and evaluating a comprehensive school counseling program that meets the needs of all students, and includes tasks such as analyzing data, setting program goals, and ensuring alignment with school-wide objectives. Additionally, counselors contribute to the broader school community by collaborating with staff, participating in committees and fair-share responsibilities, and supporting initiatives that enhance school climate and student success. These activities ensure the counseling program is effective, sustainable, and integrated into the overall mission of the school.

# What training or support will be provided to implement these rules?

The Oklahoma State Department of Education will offer support and guidance through the Oklahoma Comprehensive School Counseling Implementation Guide and Framework and will provide additional professional development resources as districts build out their programming to support student well-being.

Schools can access the Implementation Guide [HERE](https://osdeconnect.instructure.com/courses/712/pages/implementation-guide?module_item_id=32217).

# Are schools required to hire more counselors to meet these standards?

The rules do not explicitly mandate hiring additional staff but emphasize that school counseling services must be delivered by certified Oklahoma school counselors and that 80% of time must be devoted to student assistance activities. School may need to adjust roles and expectations to comply.



# How can I submit feedback on the proposed rules?

#  During the public comment period, feedback can be submitted by email to kory.kile@sde.ok.gov. Written comments may also be hand delivered to the agency during regular business hours or via regular mail at the following address:

#  Office of Legal Services

#  State Department of Education

#  Hodge Education Building

#  2500 North Lincoln Boulevard

# Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105-4599

# The written public comment period will close at 5:00 p.m. on January 17, 2025

# Why is it important for school counselors to submit comments?

# Counselor input ensures the rules reflect the practical realities of the profession and address the needs of both students and staff effectively. It allows others to truly understand the work school counselor do to improve student outcomes and to support academic, college and career, and life skills development.