School Counselor Mentoring Checklists

AUGUST – INITIAL MEETING

OVERVIEW

The Mentor’s job for the first meeting with his/her protégé is to help the new counselor:

1. Plan for the first week of school
2. Establish school routines, procedures and expectations that will serve as a foundation for the year
3. Find and organize materials and resources
4. Establish a positive environment
5. Discuss the role of other professionals with whom you will work: administrators, school psychologist, social worker, TRT, counselor, paraprofessionals, supervisor, department chair, teachers...
6. Answer questions and give tips on ways to foster positive rapport with students, staff, and parents from day one

SCHOOL BUILDING & GENERAL PREPARATION

If your protégé attended the Beginning Teacher Institute on August 9-12, the lead mentor at your school went over the school building specifics with your protégé. Please make sure to go over the school counseling information. New Counselor Orientation is August 13, 2019 at Briar Woods High School Library from 8:30-4:00 p.m.

☐ Personnel
  o Lead Mentor in home school
  o School staff (consider making an introduction at the first staff meeting)
  o Mentor
  o School Office staff
  o Diagnosticians, nurses, school psychologists, social workers, parent liaison

☐ School Counseling
  o Central Office – 571-252-1017
  o Itinerant Counselors
    ▪ Locate best travel routes to schools (use a School Locator) and meet all teachers in your buildings
    ▪ Go over the process for submitting mileage forms
    ▪ Make a copy of daily schedule to distribute to the front office staff in each of your buildings
Building Procedures
- Duties and committees
- **School Counselor contracted for 7.5 hours a day** (additional 30 minutes)
- Emergency drills (i.e. fire, tornado, lockdown, evacuation)
- Schedules (give protégé a template to use when creating their schedule)
  
  LCPS always has an online school year calendar:
  
- Staff Meetings
- Policies (dress code, extracurricular attendance, etc.)

Open House and/or Back-to-School Night
- Make a list together of what is expected of the protégé in preparation for this event (handout, business cards, brochures, etc.)
- Orientation if applicable; for example, Kindergarten

Order business cards
- Put dates on the school calendar, and include important school-based dates on school counseling master calendar
- Go over school-wide and district initiatives - discuss counselor role in implementation
  - Explain acronyms – SIP, PBIS, CS, FBA/BIP, IEP, CLT, PLT, PSSST Team/etc.
  - Set plan to work on school counseling/MLP goals together in September

OFFICE SET-UP

Supplies - What do you need for group, individual and classroom counseling?
- Appropriate office equipment - available telephone, printer, and file cabinet with a lock for confidential communication
- A table for group counseling

How to work the sound system and microphones (if applicable – morning news show?)

Displays and Bulletin Boards
- Parent and Community resources
- PBIS, SWT (Stop, Walk, Talk)
- Motivational posters
- Border

Organization
- Class rosters
- Procedure for pulling students from a classroom
- Counseling appointment procedure
  - How will student schedule a confidential counseling appointment?
    - Basket outside of your office door with post-its and pens
    - Note in school mailbox
  - How will parents and teachers schedule an appointment to talk to you

WELCOME

Plan room arrangement without moving a chair!

http://teacher.scholastic.com/tools/class_setup/
CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

☐ Set up schedule and calendar according to Principal and District expectations
  o Elementary - Classroom lessons and group counseling schedule
  o MS - Student placement, student schedules
  o All - plan class visits to introduce yourself and assess student needs
  o MS & HS - Co-leading groups with school social worker/school psychologist

☐ Plans
  o Plan for the first week
  o Obtain the school calendar of activities and a schedule of programs as soon as possible
  o Update your school counseling webpage with information about yourself
    ▪ Look at other LCPS school counseling webpages for ideas!
  o Master School Counseling Department Calendar (working document that should be published online) - Plan based on needs assessment and with the end in sight!
  o School Counseling Services Meeting Schedule - available online on the intranet and/or SCS Google Drive
  o Begin Counselor/Principal Annual Conference (template on www.schoolcounselor.org) and complete once counseling goals have been established: Responsibilities, schedule, purchased programs/resources and plans need to be a collaborative discussion between Principal and Counselor, and signed as approved by Principal
  o Review School Counseling Services School Counseling Program Checklist of Program Components
  o Purchased programs need to be approved by Principal and Counseling Supervisor

☐ Resources – located online:
  o SCS Google Drive (Contact SCS to get access)
  o VISION: http://loudounvision.net/ (contact SCS for access)
  o Intranet: http://www.intranet.lcps/
  o LCPS: http://lcps.org
  o Familiarize yourself with forms, documents, sample lessons, etc.
  o Referral List of Private Practitioners
  o Human Resources and agencies
  o Monthly School Counseling Specialist Newsletter

☐ Organization - Set up filing system (files/binders)
  o Consultation/meetings: document correspondence with parents, teachers, administrators and students
  o Go over systems for organizing classroom guidance lessons – share ASCA model template for lesson plans
  o Group and individual counseling plans and notes
  o System for logging professional development for recertification (www.mylearningplan.com) and binder/folder for hard copies – keep a hard
copy of everything as a backup!

- Will they use a planner/calendar (paper) or Outlook/other electronic source for scheduling?
- Permission Forms for group/individual counseling (share a sample template)

☐ Special Considerations

- Special Education:
  - IEP’s - What accommodations are needed? How can IEPs be supported by the school counselor?
  - Identify the case manager for each grade level

- Medical concerns:
  - proper response to allergies and other health issues
  - Important to establish a positive connection with the school nurse

- Child Study meetings
  - Determine how counselor attendance is determine in the individual school building
  - Counseling services are not written into IEP’s, but are written into CS’s

- Religious and Cultural Diversity:
  - Assisting ELL (English Language Learner) students
  - Using knowledge of diversity when planning programs

- Custody arrangements: check the front office to see if there is paperwork prohibiting a student to be released to a specific parent/guardian.
CLASSTROOM MANAGEMENT

☐ Establish a positive atmosphere - clearly communicate your expectations/consequences (PBIS, school-wide guidelines behavior?)
☐ Procedures - How will things get done? Example: How will students leave a class to schedule an appointment to see you?
☐ Routines - What do you want your students to do each time you meet with them without needing to ask for directions? (Example: Should desks to be cleared immediately when you walk in for classroom lessons? Do you go get them for small group or should they meet you in your office? Do they walk with a buddy to the bathroom?)
☐ Keeping all students active and engaged
☐ Learn names of students as quickly as possible. Research shows this highly impacts our ability to set a positive tone.
☐ Discuss the benefits of Professional Organization Memberships:
  o ASCA https://www.schoolcounselor.org/
  o VSCA http://www.vsca.org/
☐ Please tell your Lead Mentor of items that you think should be added to this list.

PREPARE FOR NEXT MONTH
• Set the date of your September meeting today! Set the dates for EACH monthly meeting as soon as possible.
• Suggest ideas for Open House and/or Back-to-School.
• August 22 - First Day of School for Students
• August 30 &September 2 – Holiday (Labor Day)
SEPTEMBER

The first 4 topics are top priority for EACH month:

☐ Check on pacing and planning.
  o Plan together; make sure that pacing is on-target for this point in the year. Refer to counseling standards (state/national) located in SCS Google Drive
  o Coordinate lessons with colleagues

☐ Collaborate - Share ideas, instructional strategies, units and projects for the following month.

☐ Discuss and Problem Solve Specific issues (items that are specific to each protégé)

☐ Discuss Classroom Management and Consultation/Communication

☐ Observation/Evaluation - usually informal for the first month, but protégés need to be informed of the principal’s expectations
  o Go over what your principal will look for in an observation, whether an informal walk-through or a formal evaluation.
  o MLP Goals/Evaluation – make sure is submitted to principal and Tony Bauer
  o If your protégé needs assistance with classroom management, suggest the monthly workshops on MyLearningPlan that focus on this area.

☐ Needs Assessment
  o Consult with teachers at each grade level about at-risk students – issues concerning academic, personal/social, and career development
  o Assess needs of new students - Assist with adjustment and transitional needs

☐ Complete Counselor/Principal Annual Agreement (template on schoolcounselor.org) and complete once counseling goals have been established: Responsibilities, schedule, purchased programs/resources and plans need to be a collaborative discussion between Principal & Counselor, and signed as approved by Principal

☐ Organization

☐ Interruptions to schedule - Examples: Assemblies, parties, field trips, etc. may interfere with plans (are you required to sit with class during assemblies?).

☐ Supplies - need anything?

☐ IEP’s
  o Make sure that IEP’s have been read and are understood. Questions can be discussed with case manager

☐ Non-instructional duties (bus/car duty)

☐ Consultation with parents (Make sure written communication is proofread by someone else and approved by principal or designee.)
  o Newsletter - show sample, give template
  o Web Page (CMS) - provide assistance and ideas (keep it simple). Consult with TRT (now called IFT) if necessary
  o Phone Calls - where to find numbers and how to document the date, time, and topic; file in folder marked “Parent Communication”

CAPTURING THOUGHTS!
All teachers who are new to LCPS received a small notepad in their T.L.C. welcome bag. Ask your protégés to jot down questions and ideas to share with you and other colleagues. We know how fleeting thoughts can be during the fast pace of a school day!
- Emails - must maintain confidentiality – use initials only: no student names
- Professional Relationships - Teams, Paraprofessionals, Administrators, TRT’s, etc.

- Technology
  - Checking Outlook regularly? Discuss how to check email from home. (www.lcps.org>staff>Outlook)
  - Confirm webpage is updated and protégé is comfortable and able to update monthly
    - Review Bio – is it in 3rd person?
    - Review and offer suggestion on website content
  - Phoenix - training on https://www.mylearningplan.com/Index.html
  - VISION – http://loudounvision.net/ make sure protégé has access and are utilizing vision resources
  - School Counseling Services (SCS) Google Drive
  - ORACLE/iExpense
  - Intranet - http://www.intranet.lcps/
    - Review how to find Curriculum and Pacing Guides, Content Newsletters, field trip forms, and counseling resources etc.
  - Managing passwords/log in information

- Resources
  - Make sure protégés have necessary resources and know how to use them.
  - Anything needed for classroom lessons, small group or individual counseling?
  - Teacher stores
    - Example, Loudoun Learning: http://www.loudounlearning.com/
  - Online resources (counselor blogs, Pinterest, VISION)

- Mileage report (Itinerant teachers)
- Receipts - hold onto them for tax purposes
- Consider joining the PTO (or PTA) to support your school
- Celebrate Success! Give your protégé the opportunity to tell you what is working well!

LOOKING AHEAD
- Upload Annual agreement to School Counseling Share-point Folder
- ASCA Model, goal progress
- Provide ideas for parent/teacher conferences
- October is Disabilities Awareness Month/Bullying Prevention Month
- VSCA Annual Conference
- October 14 – Holiday (Columbus Day)
- October 28-Student Holiday (Staff Development Day)
**OCTOBER**

*The first 4 topics are top priority for EACH month:*

- **Check on pacing and planning.**
  - Plan together; make sure that pacing is on-target for this point in the year.
  - Coordinate lessons with colleagues
- **Collaborate - Share ideas, instructional strategies, units and projects for the following month.**
- **Discuss and Problem Solve Specific issues (items that are specific to each protégé)**
- **Discuss Classroom Management and Communication**

- The first grading period ends November 1.
  - Be familiar with procedures and policies when reviewing student report cards, however, if parents contact you about report cards you can refer them to the teacher.
- **Differentiation - how to plan and carry out differentiated services**
  - Remind the protégés to check IEP’s for accommodations.
- **Observations**
  - Formal - How to prepare, what the principal will expect and look for
  - Informal observations with mentor when applicable
- **Communication/Technology**
  - Web Page - Provide assistance if necessary
  - Newsletters - Share examples
  - Parents - Ask about parent contacts
  - Check Outlook email regularly (emails should be answered within 24 hours)
  - Keep online master calendar updated monthly
- **Classroom Management**
  - Discuss behavior issues/using positive and proactive tools and strategies
  - How to complete discipline forms
  - Monthly workshops available on *My Learning Plan*
- **See handbook for first allotment due date; provide assistance and suggestions for ordering curriculum**
- **Celebrate Success! The first quarter is about to end...what has gone well?**

**LOOKING AHEAD**

- **November 1– End of First Grading Period**
- **November 4 & 5– Student Holidays** (Planning/Records/Conference Days)
- Plan for American Education Week, November
- Thanksgiving Break is **November 27-29!**
NOVEMBER

The first 4 topics are top priority for EACH month:

☐ Check on pacing and planning.
  o Plan together; make sure that pacing is on-target for this point in the year.
  o Coordinate lessons with colleagues

☐ Collaborate - Share ideas, instructional strategies, units and projects for the following month.

☐ Discuss and Problem Solve Specific issues (items that are specific to each protégé)

☐ Discuss Classroom Management and Communication

☐ Parent Conferences - Be prepared! Discuss possible scenarios.
  o When applicable, help with a plan for students who are making inadequate progress or are having behavior or social issues.

☐ American Education Week: November 11-15

☐ Work with parent liaison and staff to identify families in need of assistance
  o Check with principal on procedure to assist identified families

☐ My Learning Plan - Check to see if there are workshops and classes that would be helpful in Professional Development.

☐ Recertification points – Keep documentation of any professional development events you attend
  o 2 year probation period
  o 360 points needed in a 10-year re-licensure cycle - when to begin the process, how to get the points, how to keep track of them
  o Those on a Provisional License need to stay closely in touch with the school’s assigned Licensure Specialist.
  o Maintain a portfolio

☐ Rescheduling events due to inclement weather

LOOKING AHEAD!

- December is often the month when new educators hit a “low”. Watch for signs of burn-out. Perhaps you can have your next meeting at a restaurant or plan a joint meeting with another mentor and his/her protégés!
- **December 23 - January 3** - Winter Break (Classes resume: Tuesday, January 6, 2020)
DECEMBER

The first 4 topics are top priority for EACH month:

☐ Check on pacing and planning.
  o Plan together; make sure that pacing is on-target for this point in the year.
  o Coordinate lessons with colleagues

☐ Collaborate - Share ideas, instructional strategies, units and projects for the following month

☐ Discuss and Problem Solve Specific issues (items that are specific to each protégé)

☐ Discuss Classroom Management and Communication

☐ Self-care: How is the work/life balance going?

☐ Holidays
  o Awareness of various religious holidays and customs celebrated
  o Understanding of your school’s policies for holiday displays
  o Understanding of procedure to assist identified families in need of assistance

☐ My Learning Plan
  o Interested in enrolling in a class or workshop for second semester?

☐ Probation
  o Even though a Principal cannot officially discuss a protégé who is going on the “December list”, you can probably read your protégé well enough to know that there is a problem.

☐ Have plans completed before leaving for the Winter Break to minimize stress when you return

☐ Celebrate success!

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LOOKING AHEAD

- Make sure your protégés do not return from Winter Break to piles of paper. Take some time to help them file what is important and toss what is not.
- December 23 – January 3 - Winter Break (Classes Resume Tuesday, Jan. 6)
- January 20 - Holiday (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)
- January 17 - The second quarter ends.
- January 21 - Moveable Student Holiday (Planning/Records/Conference Day)
JANUARY

The first 4 topics are top priority for EACH month:

- Check on pacing and planning.
  - Plan together; make sure that pacing is on-target for this point in the year.
  - Cluster Meetings – great time to coordinate lessons with colleagues
- Collaborate - Share ideas, instructional strategies, units and projects for the following month.
- Discuss and Problem Solve Specific issues (items that are specific to each protégé)
- Discuss Classroom Management and Communication

- Plan for transitional activities for rising 6th and 9th graders
  - Review county, cluster, and school specific protocols

- Talk with teachers about at-risk students.

- Review school counseling program goals and discuss goal progress.

- Review ASCA Model School Counseling Program basics
  - Foundation, Management, Delivery, Accountability
  - Advocacy, Leadership, Collaboration, Systemic Change

- Encourage informal “Walk-Throughs” to observe students in a variety of environments

- Technology
  - Up-dating web page
  - Checking Outlook email regularly
  - Checking MyLearningPlan for workshops
  - Up-dating calendar

- Opt-out form - Explain the procedure for experienced counselors who wish to opt out of the Mentor Program
- Encourage your protégé to take advantage of professional development opportunities through MyLearningPlan, VCA, VSCA, ASCA, webinars, etc. this spring/summer

LOOKING AHEAD

- Black History Month
- Valentine’s Day
- February 3-7 - National School Counselor Week
- February 17 - Holiday (Presidents’ Day)
FEBRUARY

The first 4 topics are top priority for EACH month:

☐ Check on pacing and planning.
  o Plan together; make sure that pacing is on-target for this point in the year.
  o Coordinate lessons with colleagues

☐ Collaborate - Share ideas, instructional strategies, units and projects for the following month.

☐ Discuss and Problem Solve Specific issues (items that are specific to each protégé)

☐ Discuss Classroom Management and Consultation/Communication

☐ My Learning Plan - make sure they know how to keep track of recertification points in “My Profile”.

☐ National School Counselors Week – (First week in February 3-2)
  https://www.schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors-members/about-asca-(1)/national-school-counseling-week

☐ Encourage your protégé to look into opportunities for professional development this spring/summer

☐ Celebrate success!

☐ Questions and Concerns

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LOOKING AHEAD

- **March 2** – Read Across America Day
- **March 3** – County-wide Staff Development Day
- March is Music in Our Schools Month
- March is Women’s History Month
- March is Nutritional Month. Check out [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)
- March 27 Student Holiday (Planning/Records/Conference Day)
MARCH

The first 4 topics are top priority for EACH month:

☐ Check on pacing and planning.
  o Plan together; make sure that pacing is on-target for this point in the year.
  o Coordinate lessons with colleagues

☐ Collaborate - Share ideas, instructional strategies, units and projects for the following month.

☐ Discuss and Problem Solve Specific issues (items that are specific to each protégé)

☐ Discuss Classroom Management and Consultation/Communication

☐ Transfer - refer protégés to the LCPS web site for an explanation of the process

☐ Observations - Make sure protégés are prepared for a formal observation by your principal

☐ “Group-a-rama” - encourage protégés to take advantage of professional development opportunities such as group-a-rama

☐ Questions and Concerns

☐ ________________________________

LOOKING AHEAD

• April is Counseling Awareness Month
• April 6- 10 Spring Break
APRIL

The first 4 topics are top priority for EACH month:

☐ Check on pacing and planning.
  o Plan together; make sure that pacing is on-target for this point in the year.
  o Coordinate lessons with colleagues
☐ Collaborate - share ideas, instructional strategies, units and projects for the following month.
☐ Discuss and problem solve specific issues (items that are specific to each protégé)
☐ Discuss classroom management and communication/collaboration

☐ Make sure allotment has been spent
  o Review “Reimbursement Procedures for iExpense” in Oracle

☐ When applicable, be aware of summer programs for students (summer school, camps, programs specific to students with special needs, etc.)

☐ Make sure protégés understand end-of-year assemblies/procedures in which they may play a role.

☐ Maintain expectations in behavior and quality of work

☐ Earth Day is April 22

☐ Discuss ways to help students with test taking skills

LOOKING AHEAD

• SOL tests are next month. Find out how they will affect your schedule.
• May 25 - Holiday (Memorial Day)
• May is Mental Health Awareness Month
MAY

The first 4 topics are top priority for EACH month:

☐ Check on pacing and planning.
  o Plan together; make sure that pacing is on-target for this point in the year.
  o Coordinate lessons with colleagues

☐ Collaborate - Share ideas, instructional strategies, units and projects for the following month.

☐ Discuss and Problem Solve Specific issues (items that are specific to each protégé)

☐ Discuss Classroom Management and Communication/Collaboration

☐ End-Of-Year Planning
  o County, Cluster, & School specific expectations of the school counselor
  o Graduation
  o Awards and certificates

☐ Be aware of school supply order

☐ Mental Health Awareness Month
  o NAMI: National Alliance on Mental Health - http://www.nami.org/

☐ SOL testing
  o Be available and flexible during the testing window
  o Prepare for stress during and after testing
  o Discuss ways to provide motivation, encouragement, and support to students

☐ Celebrate success!

☐ Questions and Concerns

☐ ————————————————————

LOOKING AHEAD

• June 9 – Last Day of School/4th quarter ends!
• Plan activities for those exciting last days of school.
• June 10 and 11 - Planning/Records/Conference Days
• Begin to prepare calendars for next year
JUNE

☐ REFLECTION! REFLECTION!! REFLECTION!!!
  o What was the best part of the school year?
  o What was the most difficult part of the year?
  o What would you like to do differently next year? (Take notes so your protégé will remember his/her ideas)
  o What can be done over the summer months?
  o What Professional Development should be planned for the future?

☐ Share ideas, units and projects for the following year.

☐ Specific issues (items to be addressed that are specific to your protégé’s concerns)

☐ End-of-Year Checklists

☐ End-of-year parties and celebrations-how will they affect your schedule?

☐ Review school specific protocols regarding counseling lessons the last week of school

☐ Packing up
  o Inventory (throw away broken stuff)
  o Clean and organize
  o File
  o Take down posters and bulletin boards

☐ Celebrate the successes of the year!

☐

LOOKING AHEAD

- Help your protégés set goals for next year based on:
  o ASCA National Model
  o School SIP
  o School Data Profile (review county & school specific data)
    - http://webinter.lcps.org/schoolprofiles/home
  o County & Cluster Initiatives
  o MLP Evaluation Goals Progress
  o School SIP
  o Follow up Needs Assessment