Pass the TExES School Counselor

FOR TEXAS SCHOOL COUNSELORS
A test prep manual for the TExES School Counselor exam #152. SEMINAR AVAILABLE!

First Edition

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Also available from Ed Publishing:
Content Area Test Prep Books for Teachers
Domain I:
Understanding Students
Competencies 1-3
(30% of the test)

School Counselor Standards I-V:

Learner-Centered Knowledge:
The professional school counselor must have a broad knowledge base.

Learner-Centered Skills:
The professional school counselor applies the knowledge base to promote the education, personal, social, and career development of the learner.

Learner-Centered Process:
The professional school counselor participates in the development, monitoring, and evaluation of a developmental school guidance and counseling program that promotes learners’ knowledge, skills, motivation, and personal growth.

Learner-Centered Equity and Excellence for All Learners:
The professional school counselor promotes academic success for all learners by acknowledging, respecting, and responding to diversity while building on similarities that bond all people.

Learner-Centered Communications:
The professional school counselor, an advocate for all students and the school, demonstrates effective professional and interpersonal communication skills.
1. Human Development

Key Descriptors:
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Key Words:
Social
Emotional
Motor
Language
Cognitive/Career

NOTE: Refer to the bullet points under each Competency in the NES/SBEC study guide. On the lines above paraphrase each bullet point using a short phrase that is meaningful to you.

- Knowledge of developmental progressions in the social, emotional, physical, motor, language, and cognitive domains in children and adolescents.
- Knowledge of developmental issues including atypical differences, at different stages of development.
- Recognizes the interrelatedness of developmental domains.
- Understands the range of human development variation and knows how to provide appropriate, effective guidance.
- Understands students’ developmental characteristics and needs in relation to career awareness, planning and decision making.
Competency 1:
The school counselor understands processes of human development and applies this knowledge to provide a developmental guidance program, including counseling services, that meets the needs of all students.

The school counselor understands that effective school guidance and counseling services must appropriately meet needs of students at different levels of development in both cognitive and effective areas. Knowledge of leading theories of human growth and development assist the school counselor in creating a guidance and counseling program that fosters a sense of competency and empowerment within all students.

A. The school counselor demonstrates knowledge of developmental progressions in the social, emotional, motor, language, and cognitive domains in children and adolescents.

- **Erik Erikson’s Stages of Development**
  - Trust vs Mistrust (birth-18 months)
  - Autonomy vs Shame (1-3 yrs.)
  - Initiative vs Guilt (3-6 yrs.)
  - Industry vs Inferiority (6-12 yrs.)
  - Identity vs Identity Diffusion (12-18 yrs.)
  - Intimacy vs Isolation
  - Generativity vs Isolation
  - Integrity vs Despair

- **Jean Piaget**
  - Sensorimotor (Birth to 2 yrs.) Beginning of problem-solving
  - Pre-Operational (2-7 yrs.) Conservation and reversibility
  - Concrete Operational (7-12 yrs.) Classification and identification, inferences
  - Formal Operation (13 yrs.-adult) Abstract thinking

- **Lawrence Kohlberg**
  - Premoral
  - Punishment-reward
  - Relates to Self
  - Conventional
  - Rule Conformity
  - Approval of Others
  - Morality of Self-Accepted Moral Principles

  - Contractual societal obligations
  - Individual principles and conscience

- **Bloom's Taxonomy**
  - Knowledge
  - Comprehension
  - Application
  - Analysis
  - Synthesis
  - Evaluation

B. The school counselor demonstrates knowledge of developmental issues of particular importance including atypical differences at different stages of human development (e.g. early childhood, middle childhood, and adolescence).

- The school counselor is aware of the developmental stages of students and is able to determine what is atypical within the wide range of developmental levels. The counselor is able to identify the needs of these students and design specific interventions to help them be successful at school in cognitive and affective areas. Among these interventions are academic placement, accommodations, group counseling, peer tutoring, mentoring, and referral to community agencies.

C. The school counselor recognizes the interrelatedness of developmental domains and ways in which this interrelatedness may affect students’ behaviors (how affective characteristics may affect academic performance.)

- The school counselor is able to observe and consider the whole child rather than focus solely on academic concerns. The counselor recognizes how lack of industry leads to inferiority and poor academic performance on the part of the student and is then able to design appropriate interventions such as use of check lists or breaking assignments into small segments.

Continued
D. The school counselor understands the range of human developmental variation (e.g. typical and atypical behaviors) and knows how to provide appropriate, effective, guidance and counseling services that are responsive to students’ developmental characteristics and differences.

- The school counselor addresses the needs of students demonstrating atypical behaviors effectively. Through careful observation, student interview, and consultation with parent and teachers, the counselor is able to determine the specific behavioral need of the student and devise a plan to help that student be successful. The plan may include behavior monitoring through use of a specific instrument such as a behavior plan or communication log. It may also include group counseling or referral to a community agency.

E. The school counselor understands students’ developmental characteristics and needs in relation to education and career awareness, planning and decision making.

- The school counselor is aware of the developmental stages of the career making process and creates experiences and provides information at the appropriate level of all students accordingly.

Career Awareness  K-6
Awareness of self, various occupations, and role of work in society.

Career Exploration  6-10
Development of concepts and basic skills Related to self and world of work.

Career Orientation  9-10
Development of occupational knowledge and understanding of basic economic needs for career planning.

Career Preparation  10-12
Knowledge for entry into an occupation, ethical work habits, plans for post secondary education or training.

Post Secondary
Reaffirmation of occupational choice by further exploration of interests and aptitudes, development of career skills, and interpersonal skills.
6. Responsive Services

Key Descriptors:

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NOTE: Refer to the bullet points under each Competency in the ETS/SBEC study guide. On the lines above paraphrase each bullet point using a short phrase that is meaningful to you.

Key Words:

Rapport
Active Listening
Effective Communication
Group Leadership Skills
Proactive Planning
Determining Needs
Communicating Group Availability
Group Topics
Group Counseling Theories
Psychoanalytic
Alderian
Behavior Therapy
Rational Emotive

Existential
Client-centered
Gestalt
Reality Therapy
Transactional Analysis
Brief Therapy
Principles of Group
Stages of Group
Techniques of Group
Benefits of Group
Limitations of Group
Needed Consultation

• Applies knowledge of counseling and consultation theories, principles, and practices in a school community.
• Understands the scope of his or her job, and knows how and when to make referrals.
• Understands the roles and responsibilities of the counselor in various situations.
• Uses appropriate counseling theories and techniques.
• Understands group dynamics.
• Knows how to use counseling-related research techniques and practices.
• Knows how to coordinate resources for students within the school and community.
• Understands the use of prevention approaches.
6. Responsive Services

**Competency 6:**
The professional school counselor understands how to provide effective counseling services to individuals and small groups.

The school counselor knows strategies for establishing rapport with students from a variety of backgrounds. The school counselor is proactive in providing services to address common concerns of the student population such as divorce, loss, friendship, anger management, and conflict resolution. The counselor knows and uses theories, principles, and techniques of group counseling to facilitate the growth of the students served. The counselor understands the benefits and the imitations of school counseling and also understands how and when to consult with or refer students to other mental health professionals and agencies.

A. The school counselor knows strategies for establishing rapport with students from a variety of backgrounds.

1. Active listening
   - Being alert, attentive, and concentrating on the speaker
   - Maintaining eye contact
   - Using effective body language—“leaning in” with open posture
   - Being genuinely interested in the speaker (Rogers’ Unconditional Positive Regard)
   - Being accepting of what the speaker has to say without judgement
   - Remembering what has been said
   - Not interrupting

2. Effective responding
   - Using verbal or nonverbal reinforcers to let the student know his messages are being received. Nodding of head, facial expression, “Uh-huh”
   - Clarifying meaning and understanding when necessary.
   - Summarizing or restating ideas or information for further clarification “So what you are saying is...” or “What I hear you saying is...”
   - Reflecting feelings expressed – “Sounds like you feel--” or “You must be--”

B. The school counselor addresses common student concerns proactively.

1. Determine the needs of students
   - Informal counselor observation
   - Routine annual formal needs assessment
   - Student, teacher, parent, staff recommendations
   - Survey of student guidance classes
   - Current school change or crisis events

2. Schedule groups
3. Make list of groups offered available to students
   - Newsletters - Counselor Corner
   - Postings
   - Student contact

4. Common group topics
   - Social skills - friendship
   - Loss - death
   - Changing Families – divorce, blended families

Continued
C. The school counselor knows and uses theories, principles, and techniques of group counseling effectively

1. Counseling Theories

- **Psychoanalytic** – Sigmund Freud emphasizes the division of the personality and the importance of the past for the reason for problems in the present.
- **Adlerian** – Alfred Adler stresses the conscious as the center of the personality. Stress is on an individual’s positive attitude to give meaning and direction to his or her life through behavior changes.
- **Behavior Therapy** – Lazarus, Bandura, and Wolpe stress changing behavior based not on past history but upon present situations. It is action based therapy motivated by the agreed upon goals of the individual and empirical evaluation of outcomes.
- **Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy** – Albert Ellis holds that although problems began in childhood, they continue due to irrational and illogical thinking. Growth comes from the correction of these irrational thoughts and the identification of the reality of the moment.
- **Existential Therapy** – Victor Frankl expounds the developmental concepts of the capacity for self-awareness, the acceptance of responsibility for our freedom, the preservation of our identity, human mortality, ever present anxiety, and the significance of death to the living.
- **Client-Centered Therapy** – Carl Rogers emphasizes the ability of one to direct one’s life without the interpretation of a therapist, to experience the present moment, to accept oneself and to determine the methods to change one’s own behavior.
- **Gestalt Therapy** – Frederick “Fritz” Perls focuses on the acceptance of responsibility, to experience the present, to resolve unfinished business from the past in order to move on, to deal with impasses in our lives by challenging the ways we use to fight our reaching the realization of our ability to solve our own problems.
- **Reality Therapy** – William Glasser explains that behavior is our method to control our environment to fit our inner needs. He attempts to help individuals develop better ways of meeting the inner needs we have through the acceptance of the reality of our situations.
- **Transactional Analysis** – Eric Berne believes that people operate in three ego states and that awareness is an important first step in changing our ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving. Three basic needs are stimulus, recognition, and structure.
- **Brief Therapy** – Rosenberg and Wright maintain that this therapy is well suited to managed care and others include the school counseling setting. The group therapist sets clear and realistic treatment goals with the members, maintains an active therapist role, and works within a set and limited time frame.

2. Principles of Group Counseling

a. The rights of group participants

- Informed consent — parental consent of minors
- Knowledge of purpose and format of group
- Knowledge of responsibilities of group members
- Confidentiality (expected but not guaranteed)
- Freedom from coercion
- Freedom to leave a group

b. The Stages of the Group Process

- Initial Stage – Orientation and Exploration
- Transition Stage – Goal-setting
- Working Stage – Cohesion and Productivity

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*Continued*
6. Responsive Services, cont’d.

- Final Stage – Consolidation and Termination

3. Techniques of Group Counseling
- Recruitment of group members
- Size limitation of group
- Physical setting
- Establishing group trust — setting norms
- Communicating responsibilities of group members
- Setting goals and/or use of contracts
- Journal writing, art, problem check lists and structured questionnaires, autobiographies, role-play, puppetry
- Dealing with conflict, fears, resistance
- Validation of members
- Celebration of progress
- Consolidation and termination

D. The school counselor understands the benefits and limitations of school counseling.

1. Benefits
   - Provides non-threatening environment for students to resolve issues, especially those occurring at school
   - Convenient and cost effective for students/parents
   - Provides/extends support system of students
   - Facilitates realistic goal-setting
   - Provides opportunity for valuable feedback from peers
   - Guidance from counselor who understands school life and issues

2. Limitations
   - Time limitations of counselor especially with individual counseling
   - Shorter than ideal counseling sessions – short term therapy
   - Confidentiality of group members may be more limited
   - School counselor cannot effectively work with the whole family system

E. The school counselor knows when to consult or refer to other mental health professionals.
   - Whenever student discloses plans to hurt himself or others
   - Minor use of alcohol or drugs
   - Child abuse
   - Family violence
   - Symptoms of anorexia or bulimia
   - Significant signs of depression
   - Chronic problems with no progress
   - Consistent At-Risk behaviors
   - Threatening statements
   - Cutting or body mutilation
   - Debilitating family dysfunction

F. The school counselor knows how to refer students to other mental health Professionals and agencies.
   - CPS for related issues
   - School district drug/alcohol counselors for related issues
   - Conference with parents and/or teacher and/or student
   - Provide names of local mental health professionals and agencies upon parent request. Use of statements like “Have you considered---?” or “Some parents decide to---.”

Responsive Services, cont’d.