

COUNSELOR CONNECTIONS

November/December 2014 • NYC Department of Education — Office of Guidance and School Counseling

Promoting Pro-Social Behavior

The American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) [National Standards for Students](#) guides our work in three interrelated areas: personal-social, academic, and post-secondary. Personal-social development builds young people's social-emotional abilities, interpersonal skills to communicate with peers and authority, decisionmaking, goal setting, intrapersonal knowledge, and coping abilities.

These attributes should be the focus of the school's student support services team; school counselors should provide interventions so that students view behavioral incidents as opportunities for growth. Social-emotional development strengthens the other domains, so that students perform better academically, now, in college, and onward.

Guidance strategies for promoting pro-social behavior include:

- ▶ Help develop the school's ladder of referral, which is

then shared with the school faculty.

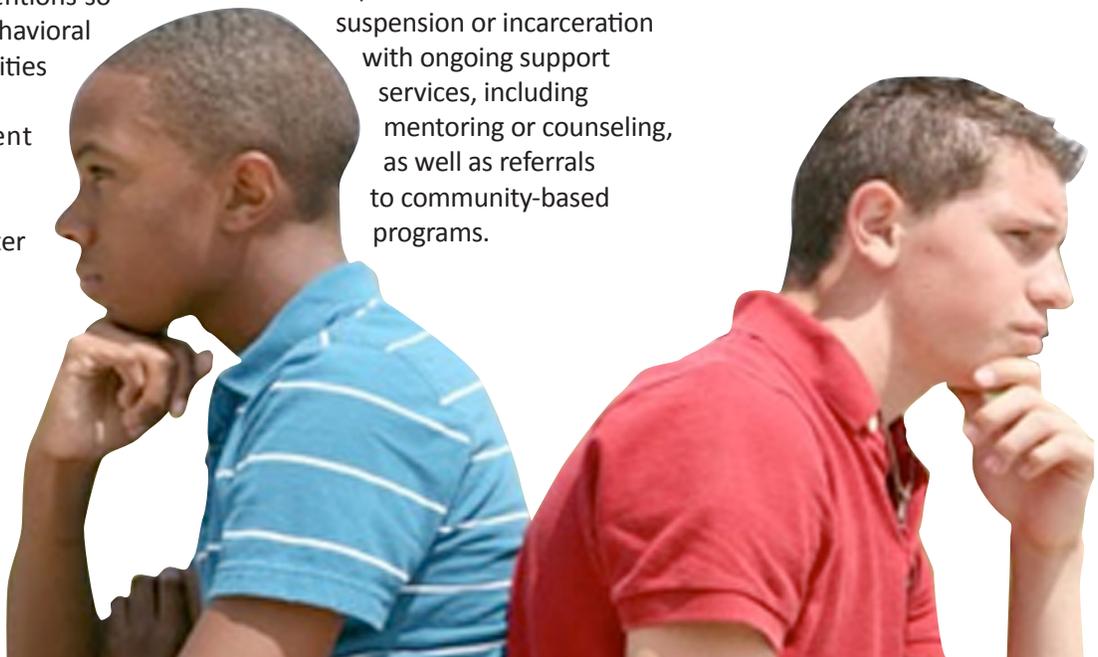
- ▶ Facilitate lessons on the [discipline code](#) in collaboration with the school dean(s) and classroom teachers.
- ▶ Collaborate with teacher teams on student interventions.
- ▶ Review OORS reports and SOHO suspension information, IEPs, and triennial social history reports (as applicable).
- ▶ Help facilitate guidance conferences to address behavioral patterns, and document this work at the ATS [ILOG](#) function.
- ▶ Help students transition from suspension or incarceration with ongoing support services, including mentoring or counseling, as well as referrals to community-based programs.

- ▶ Help develop and implement [Functional Behavioral Assessments and Behavioral Intervention Plans](#).

Key school-wide programs for promoting positive behavior include:

- ▶ [Restorative approaches/circles](#)
- ▶ [Positive Behavioral Intervention Services \(PBIS\)](#)
- ▶ [Conflict resolution/peer mediation](#)

For additional information, please see our [Best Practices Standards for Creating and Sustaining a Safe and Supportive School](#).



Youth Development Solutions For Student Achievement

Chancellor's Letter

Dear Colleagues,

When parents are involved in their child's education, they send a powerful message to teachers, staff, and students that schooling is a priority. Their presence also creates a more vibrant and diverse school community. As guidance and school counselors, you can serve as catalysts for better including families in our schools. Here are some methods I recommend for weaving parents into the fabric of our school communities:

- ▶ Survey parents to learn what is important to them and what they want out of your school. Experience has taught me that one size does not fit all: what draws parents in one neighborhood to a school may not resonate with parents in another part of the district. Never make assumptions. Once you have identified your families' interests, create events that will be meaningful to them: perhaps an evening or weekend session on bullying, peer pressure, curriculum, or study skills. If parents feel comfortable and accepted in the school, they will be more likely to become, and stay, involved, and better assist their child in every facet of school life.
- ▶ Play a larger role in parent-teacher conferences. You are in a unique position to help teachers deal with a variety of situations, like talking to parents



who are concerned about their child's grades, or guiding parents through middle, high school, or college choices. I highly recommend training teachers through role-play: being in parents' shoes can help teachers conduct more effective parent conferences.

- ▶ Hold workshops on strategies for improving parents' communication with their kids. As a mother and grandmother, I know that trying to get a child to discuss his or her school day can be an exercise in futility. Instead of asking an open-ended question – "How was your day?" – encourage parents to be more specific; for example, "Tell me something interesting you learned in math class today," or "Tell me about an activity you did with a classmate." The more parents learn about their child's school day, the better they can support his or her learning.

I hope you will try some of these ideas, and develop some creative ones of your own. I look forward to seeing the results of your efforts throughout the school year.

Thank you for the outstanding work you continue to do for our children.

Best,

Carmen Fariña
Chancellor

November 2014 Parent-Teacher Conference Schedule

Grade Level	Afternoon Dates	Evening Dates
Elementary	Thurs., Nov. 13	Wed., Nov. 12
Intermediate	Thurs., Nov. 20	Wed., Nov. 19
District 75	Tues., Nov. 18	Mon., Nov 17

“ Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world. ”

Nelson Mandela, 2003

DID YOU KNOW?

November 25 is International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

Access "**ORANGE DAY**" educator lesson plans on gender equality [here](#).

December is Universal Human Rights Month.

Counselors are encouraged to partner with deans, teachers, and administrators to conduct guidance lessons and parent workshops on [Respect for All](#) and the [Discipline Code](#).

Message from the Senior Executive Director

Dear Counselors,

I am sure that most counselors would agree that we are uniquely positioned to support students in their college and career planning. This longterm post-secondary planning should consider exposure to the world of work; one's needs, wants, and interests; and the training process to enter a chosen field.

Counselors engage in this process by helping students ponder these questions: Who am I? Where am I going? How will I get there?

An integral part of planning for college and careers involves helping students build the requisite skill set to be successful, academic and personal behaviors that support resilience and college and career persistence. These behaviors for college and career readiness include determination, engagement, work habits and organizational skills, communication and collaboration skills, and self-regulation. Certainly, these college and career readiness behaviors, particularly coping skills, self-control, and confidence to face challenges inform one's behavior and speak to the work of counselors. Please see the overview on [academic and personal behaviors](#), one of the four domains of the DOE's [College and Career Readiness Benchmarks](#) for more.

Another key way that counselors help students progress towards their post-secondary plans is by

promoting pro-social behavior. We help students build positive social-emotional skills, work habits, and grit while extinguishing those behaviors that are maladaptive.

Some counselors shy away from "discipline," but in practice, discipline functions as teaching and should not be confused with being a disciplinarian. The difference is one of viewing behavior as a teachable moment and opportunity for growth, the heart of progressive discipline. In Spanish, to be "educado" (educated) also means to be "well behaved or polite."

As educators, it is our job to teach students pro-social behavior that will enable them to succeed in their future endeavors.

Counselors can support progressive discipline by supporting school-wide initiatives, conducting targeted interventions, and providing support for students presenting behavioral challenges. The Citywide Standards of Intervention and Discipline Measures (the [Discipline Code](#)) provides numerous examples of supports and interventions at each of these levels: school wide, targeted, and individualized supports.

Counselors must work collaboratively with other stakeholders in these behavioral initiatives. The results of this work will be students who are better prepared, behaviorally and social-emotionally, for the challenges and demands of post-secondary success and beyond.

Lois Herrera,
Senior Executive Director
Office of Guidance and School Counseling



Suicide Prevention and Intervention

The Office of Guidance and School Counseling, in partnership with the Office of School Health, will facilitate borough-wide trainings on suicide prevention and intervention for middle school and high school counselors and social workers. The training will focus on essential strategies, including the QPR (Question, Persuade, and Refer) approach.

For more information and to register, please visit the Guidance Portal [PD and Student Opportunities page](#).

STAY INFORMED!

For comprehensive school counseling resources, please visit the Guidance Portal at schools.nyc.gov/Teachers/guidance.

THE FOUR PILLARS

A Vision for All New York City Public Schools

Strategies for School Guidance Teams

Following the Chancellor’s Welcome Back address on August 26 and September 23, school counselors, social workers, and SAPIS counselors submitted the following suggestions in support of the Four Pillars. Look to incorporate these ideas into your own work and be inspired to develop your own.

The work of school Earlier this month, the Chancellor announced the [Capacity Framework](#), a more comprehensive, long-term vision for NYC schools. The suggestions and feedback submitted already align to this Framework as well. The work of school counselors, social workers, and SAPIS counselors are vital to the Capacity Framework’s six interconnected elements: rigorous instruction, supportive environment, collaborative teachers, effective school leadership, strong family-community ties, and trust. At the center of the Framework is student achievement, also a shared goal of school counseling.

PILLAR 1:

Improve Student Achievement by Providing High-Quality Instruction Aligned to the Common Core Standards.

- ▶ Ensure that guidance lessons and activities are aligned with the [ASCA National Standards for Students](#) in support of the College and Career Readiness [Anchor Standards](#) of the Common Core.
- ▶ Continually strengthen communication among students, parents, and teachers by providing feedback between teacher teams and families.
- ▶ Provide differentiated support to teachers to enhance parent engagement and pro-social behavior strategies.

- ▶ Develop and implement systems for Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) and Response to Intervention (RtI) as early as pre-kindergarten to ensure academic success.
- ▶ Use academic and attendance data systemically to design and implement student interventions, facilitate parent outreach, and celebrate student success.
- ▶ Conduct student/family need assessments as early as pre-kindergarten in order to collaborate with teachers, pupil personnel team members, and parents on intervention strategies.
- ▶ Expand the role of the school counselor in academic planning and post-secondary readiness at the elementary and middle school levels.

PILLAR 2:

Restore Dignity and Respect to the Craft of Teaching and to School Leadership.

- ▶ Take the initiative to coordinate the delivery of a series of guidance lessons or parent workshops, or organize a school-community event.
- ▶ Help recognize school staff members, including fellow counselors, throughout the year by highlighting their accomplishments, such as through celebratory events.

- ▶ Provide a listening ear to teachers and school administrators.
- ▶ Support new teachers by helping them get acclimated, providing guidance interventions to students in need, and recognizing teachers’ accomplishments.
- ▶ Share and adopt best practices (e.g., “Share your Guidance Success Story” in *Counselor Connections*).
- ▶ Share responsibility to increase the school community’s understanding of the role of the school counselor, social worker, and SAPIS counselor. (See [School Counseling Frameworks](#) presentation.)

PILLAR 3:

Engage Parents and Families in Every Aspect of School Life.

- ▶ Survey parents for their interests in workshop topics. Organize and/or facilitate workshops based on these interests.
 - ▶ Cultivate parent leadership by asking parents to facilitate parent workshops.
 - ▶ Help parents discuss school experiences with their child by hosting workshops on “Effective Communication with your Child or Teenager.”
 - ▶ Seek significant and meaningful parent input in planning school initiatives and programs.
 - ▶ Encourage fathers to have an ongoing presence and a leadership role in school life.
- ▶ Incorporate celebrations of student success into all parent forums.
 - ▶ Help promote a campaign to ensure your school has accurate student information in ATS (e.g., family phone numbers).
 - ▶ Help organize cultural heritage events and invite community partners to participate.
 - ▶ Help organize community-building events (e.g., family movie night or “Parent Fridays”) to create opportunities for parents to connect with each other, and to help them feel more welcome at school.
 - ▶ Invite family members, community representatives, and alumni to discuss a wide range of careers and employment opportunities at career days and job fair events.
 - ▶ Connect families to community-based services through referrals and by organizing community events.

PILLAR 4:

Create New Collaborative and Innovative Models.

- ▶ Infuse student leadership opportunities (e.g., public speaking) into all aspects of school life, including school events, guidance lessons, and parent workshops/meetings.
 - ▶ Enlist the support of community members by inviting them to be guest speakers at school leadership, parent association, guidance, and/or faculty meetings, or to attend a community summit.
 - ▶ Host a resource fair (e.g., health) to address specific needs of the students and families (e.g., asthma, high blood pressure, stress management, etc.). Invite community partners to participate (e.g., local hospitals, health clinics, neighborhood doctors and nurses, and the school nurse). See the Health Information Tool for [Empowerment \(HITE\) website](#).
- ▶ Strengthen articulation through multiple communication forums, including guidance lessons, breakfasts, open houses, and inter-visitations.
 - ▶ Consult with colleagues from other schools on best practices, effective professional development topics, and guest speakers.
 - ▶ Consult with the school’s administration and network on acquiring college planning software.
 - ▶ Engage students and families in college and career exploration activities across all grade levels, including virtual and in-person college visits, career and college fairs, workshops, and student planning.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

The **Overcoming Obstacles Life Skills Program** builds the capacity of middle and high school educators to help students develop skills for success, including communication, decision-making, and goal setting.

With prior approval from their principal, DOE staff may pre-register for one or more Overcoming Obstacles Special Topics workshops. Email Margarita Suero-Duran at msuerod@schools.nyc.gov.

Please indicate: Session date, participant name and title, DOE email, phone number, school name and DBN#, grade levels served, principal’s name, and principal’s

email address. Seating is limited, and registration will be confirmed in the order received. We thank our host schools for their gracious hospitality!

- ▶ Fostering Student Leadership Through Service Learning on Wednesday, Nov. 19 from 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m. at the High School of Arts & Technology, MLK, Jr. campus, 122 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY.
- ▶ Easy Talk, Tough Talk: Helping Students Communicate for Success! on Friday, Dec. 5 from 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m. at Explorations Academy, 1619 Boston Road, Bronx, NY.

How Can School Counselors Help Support New Teachers?

Schools are vibrant communities, constantly growing and changing. The landscape can change as teachers retire or change schools, and new teachers join, bringing enthusiasm as they begin or continue their careers. New teachers are essential to continuing the great work of those before them, teaching and nurturing our children. Unfortunately, we know that the first few years can be the most challenging for teachers, it's when attrition rates are highest. Many cite challenges in classroom management, constantly changing curriculum requirements, unsupportive environments, and feelings of isolation or loneliness among the biggest stressors facing new teachers. School counselors are in a unique position to provide support to new teachers while helping ease the transition into their new role.

Here are a few proactive strategies:

Be a Resource

Offer tips and suggestions for creative classroom management. Provide interventions for individual students who may need support.

Consider co-facilitating classroom lessons incorporating social-emotional development into the existing curriculum. Introduce stress management skills and support to students as well as teachers throughout the year, particularly to those in testing grades.

Think about existing resources. Does your school have a new teacher orientation? Consider facilitating one. Are school policies/procedures readily available to new teachers in a handbook? Is there a website that teachers should be referencing? Try to make sure that new teachers have access to these kinds of school resources.

Work with new teachers to identify areas in which they would like professional development and help connect them with opportunities for growth. A new teacher may be reluctant to request such help for fear of judgment. As a counselor, you may be able to offer teachers feedback on how to enhance their skills without the fear of evaluation.



Be a Connector

Help new teachers feel welcome and become familiar with others working at the school. Similar to students, teacher achievement can be linked to the level of connection felt with the school. Teaching in a classroom can be a very isolating experience; new teachers will already be familiar with the administration and hiring committee, but may not have been introduced to some vital members of the staff. Introduce new teachers to the parent coordinator, custodian, school secretaries, and other teachers. Talk to your principal about assigning new teachers mentors when they begin. Encourage new teachers to get involved in school-wide events or volunteer at school functions to become more familiar with staff and families.

Be a Sounding Board

New teachers may need someone with whom to bounce off ideas, vent, or ask questions without judgment. As the counselor in the school you are in an ideal position to be that person.

Watch for teacher burnout or for signs that a new teacher is feeling isolated or overwhelmed. Check in regularly and consider having regular coffee conferences or tea time for relaxed conversation.

Be a Cheerleader

Provide encouragement and praise. New teachers are often their own harshest critics, focusing primarily on things that go wrong during the day rather than all the things going right. Everyone needs to hear that they are doing a good job once in a while. Offer to sit in on new lessons and give feedback. This may be particularly helpful to new teachers who are anxious about being observed by administrators.

As the social and emotional heart of the school, the school counselor can do a lot to make new teachers feel welcome and to improve their feelings of success and belonging. Reach out and be available: You can make a tremendous impact on how new teachers feel about their first few years at school, and their success ultimately ensures student achievement.

Red Ribbon Week

October is recognized as National Substance Abuse Prevention Month. The Red Ribbon Campaign is the oldest and largest drug prevention program in the nation, reaching millions of young people each year during Red Ribbon Week, October 23-31.

Special events and activities are held in all of our schools that receive SAPIS (Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention Specialist) services. We would like to thank our SAPIS counselors for all of their efforts to organize and facilitate these activities. Many schools have a full schedule of activities during Red Ribbon Week, including assembly programs with guest speakers and students pledging to be drug-free; student-led classroom presentations on the meaning of Red Ribbon Week; school-wide arts projects that include poster contests on drug-free themes; special announcements with prevention messages; dedicated bulletin boards; distribution and wearing of Red Ribbons; and prevention information tables with booklets and handouts on alcohol and substance abuse effects, drug-free strategies, and resources for students and their families. SAPIS counselors can share their Red Ribbon Week success stories by emailing guidance@schools.nyc.gov.

The History of Red Ribbon Week

The tradition of wearing Red Ribbons began in 1985 in response to the murder of Drug Enforcement Agent Kiki Camarena by drug traffickers in Mexico City. The Red Ribbon is a symbol of the commitment of students, families, and school communities to build safe, healthy, and drug-free lifestyles.

Highlights from the Office of English Language Learners

NYS Association for Bilingual Education (NYSABE) Conference

The annual NYSABE conference will take place March 12-14, 2015 at the Crowne Plaza White Plains Downtown Hotel. The conference theme, "Building Bridges: Bilingual Education across Borders," will address the key issues in our field as they relate to ELLs/bilingual learners, their educators, and families. Each day will focus on a different border that begins at the geo-political/immigration, moves to field-based borders (i.e. bilingual, TESOL, special education, and general education), and concludes with generational divisions. Please continue to visit the [conference website](#) for up-to-date information about registration, speakers and special events.

A New Pedagogical Framework for English Language Development

The Council of the Great City Schools has released a new resource, entitled [A Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners](#) that addresses challenges faced by educators who are implementing college and career-ready standards with students who are acquiring English. Access the [CGCS website](#) for more resources and publications.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

Per Chancellor's Regulation [A 750-Child Abuse Prevention](#), all designated liaisons must attend an annual training. If you are your school's designated liaison and have yet to attend the mandated training this school year, there are still a number of training dates available. Please see the schedule of training dates [here](#).

As the designated liaison, please share training information with your school administration, faculty, guidance team, and crisis intervention team. Ensure that your colleagues are aware of the resources available on the [Child Abuse Prevention and Intervention page](#) (i.e., [ACS DOE Interagency Liaisons](#) and [Highlights of Chancellor's Regulation A -750 Blue Card](#)). Please have your school guidance team and colleagues proactively analyze how to address a number of possible concerns related to child welfare, as well as the appropriate responsibilities of faculty members.

For questions, please contact your network youth development manager or Citywide Coordinator Cheryl Hall at CHall3@schools.nyc.gov.

Elementary Schools: Responding to Student Behavior

If a six-year-old student were to take a potato chip off of her classmate's plate because she was hungry, would the effective response be to deny her lunch? If a student keeps getting up out of his seat or running around the room, would the effective response be to deny him recess? If a student does not complete her homework on a regular basis, would the effective response be to assign her extra work? Or if a student is inconsiderate or rude toward others, is the most effective response to isolate him?

These types of responses can elicit students' fear for consequences. But if the goal is to teach students pro-social behaviors that teach them to respond constructively to similar circumstances in the future, then other approaches are needed.

Researcher George Bear (2010) stresses the importance of viewing a moment for discipline as an opportunity for both the adult and the student to play both "active and reflective roles" (p. 168). The problem solving process should involve two components: the student's response and the school's response in a joint effort to prevent the behavior from reoccurring. Changes in the classroom, school environment, or teacher's approach to the student can positively contribute to the student's efforts to amend the behavior.

Instead of separating an inconsiderate or rude student from others, encourage value in relationships. Taking the time to have that student hear the other student's point of view, explore ways to make amends, and plan for the same situation in the future is more in line with embracing a teachable moment than a reactive punishment or consequence.

The mere fact that there are 30 six-year-olds sitting in a classroom does not mean that each of those first graders arrive with the same level of problem solving skills, self-control, self-regulation, or self-awareness, just as they do not all possess the exact same reading or writing skills. They are likely assigned books based on their reading level and teachers adjust instructional approaches to fit the learning styles and competency levels of their class. Since all students do not function at the same behavioral skill level either, we should customize differentiated learning responses to increase pro-social skills.

One of our key leadership roles is to be

advocates for change on behalf of students' social-emotional needs. Help your teachers and administrators explore new approaches to behavior. If a class tends to be chatty, the teacher can build in more opportunities for vocal expression and communication. If a class tends to be physically active, build in times for a class walk or a quick game of Simon Says.

Recognize the developmental needs of students as well as their individual circumstances (comprehension levels, past experiences, present supports, opportunities, family and environmental stressors) in order to guide an individualized or differentiated response to behavior, fostering positive results.

Consider the student reaching for someone else's potato chip when she is hungry. Let us take our lesson beyond merely the concept of rules and right and wrong. Let us teach her caring by modeling our

own efforts to determine whether she has adequate access to food. Let us teach her communication skills by role playing with her other ways to ask for what she needs. Let

us teach her to take responsibility for her actions by facilitating a conversation between her and the original owner of the potato chip. Let us teach the student whose potato chip was taken to be compassionate and understanding.

Recidivism is generally not due to a lack of knowledge of right and wrong. Often times, repeated disruptive behaviors are a result of multiple environmental, emotional, and experiential factors. How we identify, address, and approach these issues impact the likelihood of repeat behaviors or the development of academically and socially engaged students.

Jaye Murray is Senior Administrator of Guidance and School Counseling for Elementary Schools; contact at: JMurray7@schools.nyc.gov.

REFERENCES:

- ▶ Bear, G. (2010). *School discipline and self-discipline: A practical guide to promoting prosocial student behavior*. Guilford Press: New York.
- ▶ Craig, S. E. (2008) *Reaching and Teaching Children Who Hurt*. Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.: Baltimore.

One of our key leadership roles is to be an advocate for change on behalf of students' social-emotional needs.

Tap into Your Kuumba to Incorporate a New “Twist” into Your Middle School and High School Guidance Program

Kuumba is a Swahili word that means creativity, a perfect word to describe school counselors. We must be creative to effectively handle the myriad of responsibilities that are on our plates everyday. Let’s face it, like it or not, we live in the age where our youngsters look to social media for validation. During the middle school and high school years, social acceptance and popularity are quantified by the number of likes on your latest “Instagram” picture.

As school counselors, we have to use our Kuumba to identify the interests of our youngsters as a means of connecting with them. One of these interests is often music. Middle and high school students often struggle with communication in some capacity. The good news is that you can frequently tell what is going on with tweens and adolescents by the music they are listening to. Music can be a means of communication for them. As such, why not use music in counseling to connect with them and help them navigate through some of the inevitable challenges they will face at this daunting stage in their lives? Music is a cross-cultural mode of communication that gives youngsters a non-verbal alternative to traditional communication. Music can stimulate the senses, feelings, and emotions, elicit physiological and mental responses, energize the mind and body, and influence behavior. Here are some examples:

Gossiping and spreading rumors? A chance to sing along as Queen Latifah calls for U.N.I.T.Y.

A little disrespect in the air? How about Aretha Franklin’s R.E.S.P.E.C.T.?

Dating drama? Let’s listen to the lyrics of Daughtry’s “Over You.”

Feeling a little melancholy? Try “Happy” by Pharrell Williams or “Don’t Worry, Be Happy” by Bobby McFerrin.

You can use “music therapy” for classroom guidance sessions or individual or group counseling. You can put together a few samples of music, and have students write down words which describe their feelings as they listen to the song. (A sample activity follows on page 10.)



You can also have students suggest songs, but let them know the criteria for the selection of music (clean lyrics). Start by asking a student to share the lyrics of the suggested song from the previous session. Ask this student to bring printed lyrics for each member of the small group (or have the counselor provide copies). Ask the student to discuss the song, lyrics, its personal meaning, and why he or she had chosen to share the song that week. The group would then listen to the song and discuss any subsequent thoughts, feelings, or reactions. Have students make the connection between their feelings and their school performance.

The group can then proceed to engage through the typical stages of group development, including forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning. What are some of your Kuumba counseling strategies?

Zuri Jackson-Woods is Senior Administrator of Guidance and School Counseling for Middle Schools; contact at: ZWoods@schools.nyc.gov.

“Share Your Guidance Success Story”

Do you have a Guidance Success Story that you would like to share with your colleagues?

Please email your submissions to guidance@schools.nyc.gov. A success story could feature:

- ▶ An individual student who made a significant turnaround or achieved

his or her fullest potential through the efforts of a school-based counselor

- ▶ A school-wide guidance intervention that was noteworthy in its effectiveness on impacting student attendance, behavior, and/or course-marks (the A, B, Cs)

- ▶ An impactful group counseling activity or guidance lesson that students enjoyed.

School-based counselors, social workers, and SAPIS counselors whose submissions are published will be invited to a special lunch with Senior Executive Director Lois Herrera, Office of Guidance and School Counseling, at the end of the school year!



Connecting Music and Feelings

Listen to six samples of music. For each sample, please write three words that describe your feelings (e.g., happy, peaceful, excited, angry, sad, tense, frustrated, worried, disgusted) as you listen to the sample.

Music Sample 1:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Music Sample 3:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Music Sample 5:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Music Sample 2:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Music Sample 4:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Music Sample 6:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Discussion Questions:

1. Which situation best matches how you feel right now?
2. Can feelings impact school performance? If so, how?
3. What are strategies that can positively impact your negative emotions?
4. How might we impact the emotions of others (classmates, friends, teachers, family members)?

This activity meets [American School Counselor Association \(ASCA\) National Standards for Students:](#)

PS:A1 Acquire Self-knowledge (PS:A1.5 Identify and express feelings.)

ALL SCHOOLS HIGHLIGHTS

Suggestions for Pupil Personnel Services

Academic Planning:

- ◇ For non-annualized high schools: Set an ambitious school-based deadline to complete spring 2015 programming. Meet with students for academic programming for the spring 2015 term.
- ◇ Facilitate comprehensive check-ins with students to discuss their report card, daily attendance, period attendance (high schools), extracurricular activities, goals, successes, and social/emotional performance. Maintain a daily sign-in sheet and log conferences via the ATS [ILOG](#) function.

Guidance Lessons:

- ◇ Plan and facilitate guidance lessons on the three domains of the American School Counselor Association model:
- ◇ Academic planning (i.e., diploma requirements/transcript review for high schools, decision-making and goal setting, motivation, studying techniques, test preparation, test taking, time-management, organizational and note-taking strategies).
- ◇ Personal-social development (i.e., Respect for All, Overcoming Obstacles, stress management, respecting self and others, peer pressure, conflict resolution, suicide prevention, etc.)
- ◇ Career and post-secondary planning (i.e., career interest inventories, decision-making and goal setting, career fairs and college tours, financial aid workshops, and application deadlines).

Group Counseling:

- ◇ Facilitate thematic group counseling for at-risk students (i.e., students failing a specified number of classes, recidivist in disciplinary action, students who are potentially chronically absent).

Fall 2014 Parent-Teacher Conferences:

- ◇ Prepare handouts to discuss promotion and graduation requirements, the report card distribution schedule, parent association meeting dates, attendance, tutoring and academic interventions, college and career plans, personal-social development, extracurricular opportunities, and referrals to community-based organizations as needed.

Student Support Services Team Meetings:

- ◇ **Attendance Committee:** Select and use a specific attendance data report (i.e., the ATS [RRSA](#), [RCUA](#), or [RAMO](#) report or the [chronic absenteeism tool](#)) to plan activities and student interventions (personalization strategies including mentoring and counseling) to support students who are potentially chronically absent (absent more than 2 days a month, which would equate to 20 days absent by the end of the school year).
- ◇ **Crisis Intervention Team:** Conduct crisis response/prevention or education/intervention team (“Crisis Team”) meetings. Review [Chancellor’s Regulation A-755](#), [Crisis Intervention Overview 2014-2015 School Year](#), and the [Crisis Response & Recovery Protocols for Networks and Schools](#), and plan proactively.
- ◇ **Pupil Personnel Team:** Continue to facilitate PPT meetings featuring student case conferences. Revisit former case conferences to evaluate student progress. Analyze commonalities in case conferences to determine needs for systemic interventions, supporting [students in temporary housing](#) and their families.

Celebrate Success:

- ◇ Dedicate bulletin boards near your office to celebrating student success. Celebrate student leadership, the honor roll, students passing all of their classes, attendance (perfect, above 95%, and improved), and civics. Organize celebratory events to recognize these successes. Incorporate celebrations into parent association meetings.

Highlights from the Office of Student Enrollment

Middle School Admissions Updates

The middle school admissions process is underway for 5th grade families. By now, all families should have received a directory and attended their middle school fair. Customized applications will be delivered to elementary schools in November for families to complete and return in early December.

At this time, elementary school guidance counselors should be collecting 4th grade report card grades and teacher recommendations for all 5th graders entering the information into the Student Enrollment Management System (SEMS). This information is used by many middle schools to evaluate students, and it is imperative that this information is entered. Students missing information in SEMS are disadvantaged in the middle school admissions process. You do not need to wait for the application to enter this information. A template that you can distribute to your teachers to collect this information is available in SEMS for your convenience.

The Office of Student Enrollment held trainings for guidance counselors about the admissions process in October. We hope that you were able to attend and found it informative. If you continue to have questions about the middle school admissions process, please reach out to MS_enrollment@schools.nyc.gov.

High School Admissions Updates

Thank you to the over 500 guidance counselors who attended our high school admissions workshops early this fall. For those who were unable to attend, please review the presentation now available in SEMS. Questions and concerns should be directed to HS_Enrollment@schools.nyc.gov.

SHSAT Make-up Requests

Deadline: November 10

Students who were unable to attend their registered SHSAT date may request a make-up testing date of November 16, 2014. Make-up testing will only take place at Brooklyn Technical High School. Please request the make-up testing on the Request for Testing (RFT) tab in SEMS by selecting the appropriate reason and faxing all required documentation to 212-374-5568. Make-up requests are only available to students who were registered for the test by October 22. Requests will be reviewed within two business days, after which, if approved, you will be able to print a new test ticket. Please

ensure students review the ticket for accuracy.

Resources: [SEMS Guide for SHSAT and LaGuardia Auditions](#)

High School Admissions Application Submission

Applications due December 2

Guidance counselors for 8th graders and first-time 9th graders submitting High School Applications should continue to help students and families make informed choices by:

- ▶ Understanding admissions methods and admissions priorities
- ▶ Diversifying their application lists, including adding a mix of admissions methods and program selectivity
- ▶ Comparing student academic data with screened and audition program selection criteria
- ▶ Adding additional programs of interest to applications
- ▶ Attending information sessions, especially for Limited Unscreened programs
- ▶ Participating in auditions and interviews, if necessary

Resources: [Family Workshop Presentation](#), [High School Directory](#), [Information Session Calendar](#)

High School Admissions SEMS Data Entry

December 2, 2014–January 5, 2015

Guidance counselors will enter in all application choices in SEMS. Remember, Specialized High Schools should not be included as one of the 12 program choices. Please review the Applicant Submission List (ASL) training located in SEMS Resources for step by step instructions on entering application choices. This time period also allows you to follow up with students who have not submitted an application, or have submitted a low number of program choices. Finally, please remember that [Chancellor's Regulation A-820](#) states that paper applications must be retained for six years. Families should also keep a copy of the application, in addition to the SEMS application receipt.

Resources: [ASL Training for Public Schools in SEMS](#).

Highlights from the Office of Academic Policy and Systems

In New York City, academic policies set by the City and State govern the way schools structure academic programs in grades K–12, promote students to the next grade level, and graduate students who are prepared for college and careers. The NYC DOE’s academic policy resources Intranet page, maintained by the Office of Academic Policy and Systems (OAPS), contains academic planning resources that guidance counselors can use to clarify many City and State policies on academic programs, grade promotion, and college preparation. For questions about this material or the policies described in academic policy resources, school personnel may contact their network academic policy point.

New Guidance on the Common Core Regents Exams

We have updated the guidance on the transition to the new Common Core-aligned Regents exams in English language arts and math, based on new information from NYSED. This year, the new Geometry Common Core-aligned Regents exam begins to phase in. This also is the last year the non-Common Core-aligned Integrated Algebra and Comprehensive English Regents exams will be administered.

Policy Review: Transfer Credits

Additional guidance for schools around the process of evaluating foreign transcripts will be available soon. Currently, our Transfer Credit Frequently Asked Questions

document provides basic facts about transferring credits into the NYCDOE. In addition, please refer to page 21 of the Middle School Academic Policy Guide and/or page 22 of the High School Academic Policy Guide. Test your knowledge on transfer credits with these questions:

1. Who makes the final determination about which credits to accept from a foreign transcript?
2. Whose responsibility is it to translate a foreign transcript if it is brought to the school in another language?
3. Can a school award credits for a religious studies course?
4. What if a student comes from a country that did not require or even allow physical education as part of its education? Must the student still meet physical education requirements in NY State?
5. What is the maximum number of LOTE credits a student can earn for living in a non-English-speaking country?

Answers: [1.] The principal; see Transfer Credit FAQs, question 3. [2.] It is the school’s responsibility. They can use the NYCDOE Translation Unit; see Transfer Credit FAQs, question 3. [3.] No, not if it is solely a religion course. There are no NY State standards in religion; see Transfer Credit FAQs, question 8. [4.] Yes, they must meet the requirements and can be kept from graduating if they do not; see Transfer Credit FAQs, question 7.

FEATURED PROFESSIONAL ARTICLE

Spotlighted by Margarita Suero-Duran, Ed.D., Senior Administrator, OGSC

Dockery, D. J. (2012). [School Dropout Indicators, Trends, and Interventions for School Counselors](#). *Journal of School Counseling*, Volume 10(12).

Nationwide, over half a million students leave school annually without a high school diploma. Rather than a one single event, dropping out is considered a complex process involving over 40 different risk factors, including:

- ▶ Academic performance

- ▶ The combination of failing core academic classes, poor attendance, and earning poor classroom behavior marks
- ▶ Psychological disengagement, low expectations, and lack of academic plans after high school
- ▶ Disruptive behavior and delinquency

To increase the likelihood of identifying and supporting students most at risk in elementary, middle, and high school, it is recommended that schools monitor several risk factors. Strategies include:

- ▶ Implementing longitudinal, accessible tracking systems
- ▶ Training and involving adult advocates
- ▶ Providing academic support and

enrichment

- ▶ Promoting social skills development
- ▶ Addressing student transitions
- ▶ Implementing school-wide interventions to promote a positive school climate

School counselors are uniquely positioned to develop programs that promote success for all students, including those at risk for dropping out of school. Access the full article [here](#).

For additional resources, please visit the [Respect For All Resources page](#) and [Principals’ Portal Attendance page](#), and access the [Additional Ways to Graduate](#) and [Overcoming Obstacles Life Skills Curriculum](#) resources for middle and high schools.

Highlights from the Office of Postsecondary Readiness

Higher education has long been seen as one of the best ways out of poverty, but connecting low-income students with colleges and universities remains a challenge. There are significant differences in college matriculation rates among lower, middle, and upper income students. In 2012, the most recent year for which [National Center for Education Statistics](#) data on the subject is available, 50.9% of recent low-income high school completers were enrolled in a two or four year college. However, enrollment rates among middle and high income students stand at 80.7%. Early awareness and helping our students learn college terminology, goal setting, post-secondary options, and the basics of financial planning, as early as 6th grade, are strategies to help increase the number of low income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in a post-secondary education.

There are many online resources with college planning tools for elementary, middle, and early high school grades including:

- ▶ [College Planning Resources and Volunteers](#)
- ▶ [New York's Private Colleges & Universities Admissions & Financial Aid](#)
- ▶ [FinAid: The Smart Student Guide to Financial Aid](#)

The NYC DOE strongly believes that early college awareness is key to helping students see and prepare for the possibilities in their future. The Office of Guidance and School Counseling and Office of Postsecondary Readiness are facilitating a counselor workshop that will focus on the PSAT and other resources that help counselors get younger students thinking about life after high school and how class choices, grades, and extracurricular activities impact their postsecondary positions. We hope to see you on December 17!

College Preparation Tools for 9th and 10th Grade Students

Wednesday, December 17

8 AM to 3 PM

American Bible Society

1865 Broadway

New York, NY 10023

To learn more about the workshop and to register, please click [here](#).

Highlights from the Special Education Office

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

The Special Education Office's (SEO) Understanding Behavioral Supports website provides PBIS information on [The Basics, Resources and Training Materials](#), including a webinar on the Foundational Principles of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. PBIS promotes school-based prevention systems to improve student behavioral outcomes and build positive school climate and culture.

Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

A functional behavior assessment (FBA) is a process for understanding when and how a student's problem behaviors tend to arise. FBAs must be considered by school staff when a student with a disability engages in behavior that impedes his/her learning or that of others or places the student or others at risk of harm, despite classroom-wide intervention or restrictive programs or placements are being considered as a result of the student's behavior. The SEO Behavior website provides links to Guidance Documents and Required Forms in the [Resources](#) section. A "How to" Series of 12 Webinars detailing The FBA, BIP, and Progress Monitoring Process may be found in the [Training Materials](#) section.

Manifestation Determination Reviews (MDR)

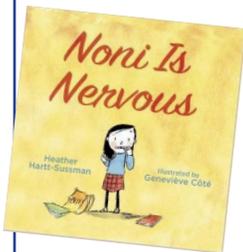
The SEO Behavior website provides information and links to resources about the MDR process in the [Basics and Resources](#) sections. When a student with a disability is removed from his or her regular educational placement for more than 10 consecutive school days as a result of a Superintendent's Suspension, a manifestation determination review (MDR) must be conducted.

Professional Development

The DOE Special Education Office (SEO) provides workshops in behavior, quality IEPs, access and transition planning. Check out the Professional Development opportunities section on the [Intranet](#) to reach the Shared Path to Success PD registration system. To sign up for weekly Professional Development Notifications, please make this request via email to sharedpathpd@schools.nyc.gov.

RECOMMENDED CHILDREN'S

Books



Noni is Nervous, by Heather Hartt-Sussman

A unique hardcover picture book for two to five-year-olds, this is the story of a lovely little girl who is nervous about many things. Noni finds a way to control her nerves and work through her anxiety, making life much more bearable for everyone!

Noni is nervous about playdates, global warming, and most of all, the first day of school. Her parents are worried too, and even her brother is a little wary. But Noni finds a friend, someone a little more outgoing than herself, and discovers that through friendship, she can belong and succeed in a world that once filled her with dread. The story is a universal one about the power of friendship and belonging, delightfully illustrated by award-winning illustrator Genevieve Cote.

School counselors can use the story to begin a counseling session on feelings, stress management, and coping skills. A related session can meet [American School Counselor Association \(ASCA\) National Standards for Students: PS:B1 Self-knowledge Application](#) (PS:B1.4 Develop effective coping skills for dealing with problems).

The Girl Who Wouldn't Brush Her Hair, by Kate Bernheimer

Young fans of the Disney movie *Tangled* will especially love this hair-raising story. What happens when one little girl refuses to brush her long, beautiful hair? Well, one day a mouse comes to live in a particularly tangled lock. Soon after, more mice move in, and the girl's unruly mop is transformed into a marvelous mouse palace complete with secret passageways and a cheese cellar! She loves her new companions—they tell knock-knock jokes and are sweet to her doll, Baby—but as the girl comes to find out, living with more than a hundred mice atop your head isn't always easy. . . . Here's a fantastic tale that will have kids poring over the mice's elaborate world within the girl's wild, ever-changing hairdo.



School counselors can use the story as a tool to teach young children about the importance of personal hygiene and grooming, as well as decision-making. A related session can meet [American School Counselor Association \(ASCA\) National Standards for Students: PS:B1 Self-knowledge Application](#) (PS:B1.2 Understand consequences of decisions and choices).

FEATURED BOOK

INVINCIBLE: The 10 Lies You Learn Growing Up With Domestic Violence and the Truths to Set You Free by Brian F. Martin

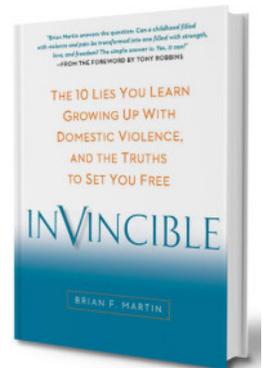
"I have an important question to ask you...Did you or someone you love grow up living with domestic violence?"

The Office of Guidance and School Counseling has partnered with CDV-Children of Domestic Violence (www.cdv.org). This October, CDV has generously donated and sent one copy of INVINCIBLE and the corresponding Discussion Guide to the guidance team at each NYC public school. A sampler is available [here](#). You can also download the [Discussion Guide](#) using the password **CDVInvincibleBook**.

INVINCIBLE shares some key truths and simple steps that can be taken to help promote resiliency for any young person who is growing up with domestic violence.

The following book discussion groups are also available:

1. Join the social media book launch and follow CDV founder and author of INVINCIBLE, Brian F. Martin, on Twitter at [@brianfmartin](https://twitter.com/brianfmartin). CDV will automatically follow you if you use the hashtag [#InvincibleTheBook](https://twitter.com/InvincibleTheBook) as this will allow them to identify those who are part of the launch. Alternatively, you can join the conversation on Facebook [here](#).
2. Watch and share this powerful video book trailer featuring Tony Robbins [here](#).



Guidance Success Stories

Turn Your Ears Off to Teasers

Submitted by Howard Honigsfeld, School Social Worker

To address name calling, **P.S. 48 Joseph R. Drake** works closely with both students who tease, as well as those who are teased. School Social Worker Howard Honigsfeld uses a group activity as one of his strategies to help students who may experience mild teasing. The activity is designed to help build students' resiliency. To replicate Mr. Honigsfeld's activity, make a large drawing of a child's head with ears. Copy this drawing, and then make two cutouts. Cut the ears off the second copy.

Mr. Honigsfeld keeps two such cutouts in his office. He calls the cutouts Ned and Ted. Ted 'turns off' his ears when another child mildly teases him. The classmate teasing Ted gets tired as Ted does not react. Ned, on the other hand, listens to everything, and gets angry. In a small group, students can role play ignoring mild teasing. Group members can also color in a picture of themselves without ears, depicting mild teasing and ignoring it. This group activity suggests using the behavioral technique of extinction as a strategy for eliminating mild teasing.

Counseling Café

Submitted by Fiordaliza Connell, Bilingual School Counselor

The Counseling Department at **The Bronx School of Young Leaders** produces [Counseling Café](#), a catalog of customized guidance services, available to students. The services are aligned with the framework of the American School Counselor Association's three domains: academic planning, social-emotional development, and post-secondary planning. Counseling Café also highlights opportunities for students to apply to help with school publications and community service projects.

The Counseling Department has also designed a student-centered [magazine](#), which showcases student success stories, youth leadership, extracurricular activities, community service projects, as well as high school admissions opportunities.

The guidance team has taken the initiative to produce these two publications in order to enhance connections with students, promote engagement opportunities, and to celebrate success. Students can volunteer and are called upon to work on the publications in such capacities as editor, opinion column writer, journalist, and photographer.

Mentoring at its Best, the BCA Way!

Submitted by Al Maisonet, School Counselor

Bronx Collegiate Academy (BCA)'s mentoring program has been instrumental in increasing student attendance, improving academic achievement, and building strong relationships with teachers. The program begins with a formal application process that places the onus on students to honor deadlines, meet attendance and academic benchmarks, write a personal narrative, and follow through on mandates. Selected students are matched with teachers and other staff members in the community.

Assignments vary and placements take into account student interest, student strengths and more importantly, student growth. Duties include after-school tutoring, working at the school safety front desk, promoting community events, organizing the supply room, and clerical work. Students receive a small bi-weekly stipend.

In particular, one 12th grader at BCA greatly benefitted from the mentoring program. This student had experienced many challenges during his high school career, ranging from peer pressure to attendance and lateness issues. The student was struggling academically due in part to a language barrier, as well as inconsistent work habits. He also became engaged in multiple conflicts in the community. BCA's student intervention team decided that the student would benefit from having a staff mentor. The staff mentor guided him to develop leadership ability, pride in accomplishment, and a renewed focus on academics. This summer, the young man passed his remaining required courses and Regents exams in order to receive his high school diploma. Way to go!

Featured Toolkit: Pupil Personnel Teams

To address the needs of students who may be struggling academically or exhibiting behavioral concerns, schools conduct regularly scheduled, cross-functional committees, often called Pupil Personnel Team (PPT) meetings, which feature in-depth case conferences. Meetings are held on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis as needed.

Members of the Team

Members of the Team frequently include, but are not limited to the principal, the Assistant Principal of Pupil Personnel Services, the Assistant Principal of Instructional Support Services, the school psychologist, the guidance counselor(s), school social worker(s), the Academic Intervention Services (AIS)/Response to Intervention (RtI) Coordinator, related services providers, the dean, family workers, the attendance teacher, the college advisor (high schools only), the SAPIS counselor, an ELL specialist, and community-based organization representatives.

Needs Assessment

PPT case conferences include a review of the teacher's referral and feedback, other teachers' feedback, classroom observations, the report card, transcript (for high schools), exam history (ATS HIST function), academic record from previous school (if applicable), Response to Intervention (RtI) program, and/or previous instructional strategies, attendance record, ATS ILOG report, any guidance interventions and parent engagement strategies, as well as the SOHO suspension history and/or dean's file. Based on this data, the PPT conducts the needs assessment.

Proposed Interventions and Initial Referrals for Special Education

Following the needs assessment, the PPT determines appropriate academic and social-emotional

interventions. Social-emotional interventions may include peer mediation, daily conduct sheets monitored by a member of the guidance team, at-risk counseling, or a mental health referral to a community-based organization. Academic interventions may include small groups, cluster work, tutoring, extended day classes, or at-risk academic supports. If previous academic interventions are insufficient in meeting the student's needs, the PPT considers the option of an initial referral for an evaluation with the student's family. Members of the PPT then manage these important dialogues by having a conference with the family prior to the implementation of the PPT's recommendations.

School-Wide Interventions and Progress Meetings

The PPT revisits previous student cases to evaluate the success of student interventions, and to determine next steps as needed. The PPT also conducts meetings dedicated to evaluating progress of all previous cases from the school year. Metrics for evaluating success before and after intervention can include teacher assessments, student attendance rates, grade point averages, and the number of classes passed. The PPT uses the individual case conference to determine if the needs of the individual student have implications for school-wide interventions or programs. The Pupil Personnel Team also serves as a model for other school committees (e.g., common planning time meetings) on how to conduct student case conferences.

Tools

To assist schools in coordinating these efforts, the following tools are also available:

- ▶ [PPT Referral Form – Student Assistance Request](#)
- ▶ [PPT \(Post Meeting\) Student Intervention Plan Recommendations](#)

PUPIL PERSONNEL TEAM REFERRAL -- STUDENT ASSISTANCE REQUEST

Date: ____ \ ____ \ ____

Student Name: _____ I.D.#: _____ D.O.B.: ____ \ ____ \ ____

Teacher's Name: _____ Subject Class: _____

Grade: _____ Official Class: _____ Counselor's Name: _____

Describe the difficulty the student is experiencing in your class:

Complete the following checklist.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading skills below grade level | <input type="checkbox"/> Math skills below grade level |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulties with verbal directions | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulties in completing assignments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulties with written directions | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow rate of work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulties with exams/study skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulties with retention |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulties with organization skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Limited class participation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Easily distracted | <input type="checkbox"/> Limited initiative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulties in peer relationships | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulties with school authority figures |

Other Indicators (comments):

Describe the student's strengths and interests:

PUPIL PERSONNEL TEAM (POST MEETING) STUDENT INTERVENTION PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Student Name: _____ I.D.#: _____ D.O.B.: ____ \ ____ \ ____

Grade: _____ Official Class: _____ Referred to PPT by: _____

Date of PPT Referral: ____ \ ____ \ ____ Counselor: _____

The Pupil Personnel Team has made the following recommendations:

Academic Interventions:

- tutoring (briefly describe): _____

- Response to Intervention (Rtl) (small group or extended day) strategies (briefly describe):

- an initial referral for special education evaluation

Social/Emotional Interventions:

- daily conduct sheets/progress reports to Guidance Counselor
- after-school activities (briefly describe): _____
- guidance/counseling in school or mentoring (briefly describe): _____

- mental health or community based referral (briefly describe): _____

- peer mediation
- home visit by family worker or attendance teacher

Additional Recommendations/Comments:

Date of follow-up guidance conference with parent and student prior to the implementation of recommendations: ____ \ ____ \ ____ (Enter in ATS with the ILOG function.)

Date(s) of PPT update(s): ____ \ ____ \ ____ ____ \ ____ \ ____ ____ \ ____ \ ____

Changes to PPT recommendations: _____
