

What Do School Counselors Do?

- The school counselors in Bessemer City Schools promote life-long learning through the implementation of programs and services that focus on four components:
 - **Curriculum:** The guidance curriculum consists of structured developmental activities presented systematically through classrooms and large groups from kindergarten through grade 12. The purpose of the guidance curriculum is to facilitate students' optimal growth and development by helping them acquire competencies that promote academic development, personal/social development and career development.
 - **Individual Planning:** Students are individually guided by their school counselor toward academic and career success in a variety of ways. Academic achievement is promoted through individual meetings, classroom lessons, small group activities and school-wide presentations. Students are assisted in transitioning by establishing short-and long-term educational, personal and career goals. Career exploration is done at every grade level through the use of classroom instruction, guest speakers, technology, and career fairs.
 - The individual planning component provides time for regular individual work with students as well as group sessions focusing on individual student planning. The importance and relevance of strong academic and career development skills are stressed in this component.
 - **Responsive Services:** The purpose of the responsive services component is to work with students whose personal circumstances, concerns, or problems are threatening to interfere with or are interfering with their healthy academic, career, and personal/social development. Much of the professional school counselor's school day is spent on responsive services. School counselors provide individual and group counseling, but not therapy. Most individual work involves decision-making, and other short-term personal/social issues. Group counseling depends on the identified needs of the students. Counselors work extensively with other school personnel and educators in consultation, when considering the personal, social/emotional and academic well-being of each student.
 - **System Support:** A comprehensive guidance program requires a system support component. The administration and management activities of a district's comprehensive guidance program are located in this component as are activities that support other education programs. The system support component is implemented through activities such as:
 - program management
 - fair share responsibilities
 - professional development
 - staff and community relations
 - consultation
 - committee participation
 - community outreach
 - evaluation
- School counselors actively participate at every level of the system support component. Following the Alabama Comprehensive Guidance Program, school counselors address academic, personal/social, and career development needs of every student in the district.

