

ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS
MINISTRY DESCRIPTION
School Guidance Counselor

Updated 04.14.2022

I. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Title: Catholic School Guidance Counselor
Status: Part-time or Full-time, Exempt
Reports To: Principal and, if applicable, Department Director

II. PRIMARY FUNCTIONS

The school guidance counselor, a minister of the faith, is a professional educator licensed under and performing duties aligned with Indiana Department of Education requirements and guidance offered at <https://www.in.gov/doe/educators/educator-licensing/current-indiana-school-services/>.

Adhering to mission, and within the school's supervisory structure, including the school principal and pastor or high school principal and president, the school guidance counselor will collaborate with parents and fellow professional educators to foster the spiritual, academic, social, and emotional growth of the children entrusted in his/her care.

III. POSITION CONTENT

(Note: Recognizing that Catholic schools differ in their programming and structures, site-specific position content may also be provided by the school administration.)

A. Role: Facilitates Faith Formation

1. Communicates the Catholic faith to students and families through implementation of the school's guidance curriculum, academic course planning, college and career planning, administration of the school's academic programs, and by offering direct support to individual students and families in efforts to foster the integration of faith, culture, and life.
2. Prays with and for students, families, and colleagues and their intentions. Participates in and celebrates liturgies and prayer services as appropriate.
3. Teaches and celebrates Catholic traditions and all observances in the Liturgical Year.
4. Models the example of Jesus, the Master Teacher, in what He taught, how He lived, and how He treated others.
5. Conveys the Church's message and carries out its mission by modeling a Christ-centered life.
6. Participates in religious instruction and Catholic formation, including Christian services, offered at the school. Non-Catholic school guidance counselors are expected to participate to the fullest extent possible (e.g., non-Catholics would come forward to receive a blessing instead of Holy Communion in the Catholic Mass).

B. Role: Designs and Plans the School's Guidance Curriculum and Programming

1. Participates in ongoing assessment of guidance department quality and uses archdiocesan and state standards, including diploma and graduation pathway requirements, for long-range and short-range planning.
2. Develops and communicates the school's guidance department goals and calendar to all constituencies.
3. Prepares daily, weekly, and/or monthly plans for the implementation of the school's guidance curriculum and submits them to the principal per the principal's directive.
4. Develops varied strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners and families, using data to inform professional practice.
5. Chooses high quality and appropriate materials for use with students and families aligned with the school's mission and the school's guidance curriculum.
6. Plans, if appropriate, field trips that enrich the school's guidance curriculum.

C. Role: Implements and Manages the School's Guidance Curriculum and Programming

1. Ensures high quality academic planning, including class/course scheduling aligned with progress toward graduation and attainment of goals for all learners and families.
2. Conducts, as appropriate and necessary, large group, small group, and individual school guidance counseling initiatives to meet the needs of all learners and families.
3. Uses a variety of methods and strategies suited to diverse students and families and aligned with the goals of the school's guidance programming.
4. Encourages the exploration of diverse curricular and extracurricular learning opportunities along with the exploration of diverse higher education and career pathways.
5. Uses media and technology to support learning, as appropriate.
6. Establishes efficient routines to maximize impact of the school's guidance curriculum and programming.
7. As directed by the principal, assists in the development of, follows, and ensures the implementation by each teacher of ISPs, CSEPs, and Catholic School Accommodation Plans for students who have them.
8. Is available to support students and families learning outside of traditional school hours (before and after school meetings and programming, etc.).
9. Works with incoming students and families to develop academic plans and to assist with induction into the life of the school.
10. As directed by the principal, coordinates and/or assists in the coordination of and implementation of assessments, including state and other standardized testing, and accommodations.
11. Works with students and families for post-high school educational and career placements, including assisting with identifying and applying for scholarships, college/university applications, and job applications.
12. Follows best practices and ethical responsibilities of the school guidance counseling profession, including following all mandatory reporting requirements.

D. Role: Assesses and Communicates Results

1. Uses both formal and informal methods to evaluate and document the progress of students toward graduation and the formation of students aligned with the mission of the school. Adjusts programming and methods in response to the needs of learners and families.
2. Aligns student and family programming with guidance curriculum objectives and uses data to enhance programming for the growth of all learners.
3. Provides frequent and useful feedback on progress to students and parents along with specific suggestions for improving performance.
4. Coordinates and/or participates in the school's Response to Intervention / Multi-Tiered System of Supports programming for all learners, as directed by the principal.
5. Communicates, as appropriate, progress according to the quarterly and interim school schedule.
6. Communicates individual and school-wide progress as per the principal's and/or president's directive.
7. Communicates the school's guidance department goals and programming to students, families, and colleagues.
8. Initiates conferences with parents/guardians, both proactively and reactively, as necessary and as aligned with the school's guidance curriculum.
9. Maintains accurate permanent records for students.

E. Role: Develops and Maintains a Positive Learning Environment

1. Maintains a caring rapport and relationship with students and families and demonstrates enjoyment in working with them.
2. As directed by the principal, coordinates safe environment programming and education for students and families, including Circle of Grace, bullying awareness and prevention, suicide awareness and prevention, substance abuse awareness and prevention, and other appropriate safe environment programming.
3. Contributes positively to the learning environment of the entire institution.
4. Supports teachers, staff members, and administrators in developing and implementing developmentally

appropriate practices and policies to ensure well-being and responsiveness to student needs.

5. Proactively identifies and addresses physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of individuals and of the community of learners, engaging other professionals as appropriate.
6. Uses techniques and methods that foster a Christ-centered atmosphere and the internalization of self-discipline and a sense of personal responsibility.
7. Maintains and communicates high academic and behavioral expectations and supports students in meeting those expectations.
8. Develops and maintains a stimulating, safe, and engaging environment that is neat, orderly, and attractive, including appropriate and engaging bulletin boards and displays.
9. Supports positive student behavior so that goals can be accomplished.
10. Addresses behavior and academic issues in an effective, consistent, and fair manner.
11. Documents and communicates issues and concerns to parents and the principal in a timely and appropriate manner.
12. Provides supervision and engages students outside of the classroom and as assigned by the principal.

F. Role: Professional Growth and Development

1. Commits to lifelong learning and demonstrates a passion for ongoing professional growth and development.
2. Maintains proper certification and licensure as required by the State of Indiana.
3. Meets the Archdiocese of Indianapolis's professional growth requirements and all local requirements as determined by the principal and/or his/her designee(s).
4. Maintains records of Professional Growth Points (PGPs) and submits them to the IDOE in collaboration with the principal or his/her designee.
5. Participates fully in faculty meetings and professional development meetings/in-services, contributes to school-wide goals, and supports colleagues and administrators in their own professional growth.
6. Participates fully in the school's performance appraisal processes for educators.
7. Participates in spiritual retreats, days of reflection, and spiritual formation programs as directed by the principal and as required by Archdiocesan faith formation expectations.

G. Role: Additional Professional Responsibilities

1. Serves on school committees and in other capacities as directed by the school principal.
2. Assists as requested with school fundraisers and development efforts.
3. Prepares for, attends, and participates in Registration, Open House, School Programs, Graduation, etc. as directed by the school principal.
4. Prepares, attends, and participates in grade level specific events/programs/initiatives, etc.
5. Has the potential and talent to be an effective Catholic school guidance counselor.

H. Communication and Interpersonal Effectiveness

1. Contributes positively to morale and to the culture of the Catholic school in service of the mission in all communications and actions.
2. Demonstrates loyalty to the school and its mission above individual views.
3. Openly and respectfully communicates concerns at the appropriate level.
4. Collaborates with and supports fellow school guidance counselors, teachers, staff members, and administrators.
5. Proactively engages parents in the formation of their children.
6. Communicates effectively with parents and works to resolve concerns or disagreements in a constructive manner.
7. Respects and maintains confidentiality.
8. Maintains the good reputation of the parish, school, and Archdiocese.

IV. POSITION SPECIFICATION/REQUIREMENTS

A. MINISTERIAL EXPECTATIONS

1. Displays Gospel values, good judgment, diplomacy.
2. Follows Archdiocese and local protocols, policies, rules, and regulations including those published in the in the faculty/staff handbook and student/family handbook. *This includes the policies and handbook of the Archdiocese.*
3. *Complies with the [Archdiocese of Indianapolis Code of Conduct](#).*
4. Maintains and safeguards confidential information.

B. EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND/OR EXPERIENCE

Licensure/Degree

1. Holds an advanced degree and license as prescribed by the Indiana Department of Education’s Office of Educator Effectiveness and Licensing (<https://www.in.gov/doi/educators/educator-licensing/current-indiana-school-services/>; content).
2. Progress toward a degree and emergency licensure may be sufficient as prescribed by the Indiana Department of Education’s Office of Educator Effectiveness and Licensing (<https://www.in.gov/doi/educators/educator-licensing/current-indiana-school-services/>; content).

Other Training/Expectations

1. *“[Safe Parish](#)”* Child Protection Training
2. Criminal background check
3. *DCS check*
4. Ongoing professional development and faith formation.

V. WORK ENVIRONMENT

1. *Required to work some nights and weekends.*
2. *Exposure to outdoor weather conditions.*
3. *Required to manage high to moderate levels of stress.*
4. *The ability to communicate information and ideas so others will understand. Must be able to exchange accurate information in these situations.*
5. *Constant positioning of self to interact with and provide instruction to students, bending, sitting, standing, reaching.*
6. *Required to perform repetitive physical tasks such as computer keyboarding, writing, and reading.*
7. *Required to monitor students in a variety of locations including those with noise, activity, and inclement weather.*
8. *Required to lift or carry classroom supplies, textbooks, furniture, and equipment to a maximum of 35 pounds.*

VI. MISSION AND CATHOLIC IDENTITY EXPECTATIONS

- A. Catholic schools are ministries of the Catholic Church, and school guidance counselors are vital ministers sharing the mission of the Church. School guidance counselors are expected to be role models and are expressly charged with leading students toward Christian maturity and with teaching the Word of God. As role models for students, the personal conduct of every school guidance counselor, teacher, administrator, and staff member, both at school and away from school, must convey and be supportive of the teachings of the Catholic Church. These teachings include but are not limited to: honoring the dignity of each human life from conception to natural death, care for God’s creation, and the belief that all persons are called to respect human sexuality and its expression in the Sacrament of Marriage as a sign of God’s love and fidelity to His Church. The Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching can be found at <https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching>. A thorough description of Catholic Church teaching can be found in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

- B.** The Archdiocese recognizes that many school guidance counselors, who contribute positively to the mission of the Church in forming young people through our Catholic schools, are not practicing Catholics. For school guidance counselors of other faith traditions, there remains an expectation that, regardless of their personal religious affiliations and beliefs, they will become knowledgeable of Catholic Church teachings, will be credible witnesses of the Catholic faith, and will be models of Christian values.

- C.** Determining whether a school guidance counselor is conducting him/herself in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church is an internal Church matter and is at the discretion of the pastor, administrator, and ultimately, the Archbishop.

- D.** Accompaniment is a pastoral approach intended to educate and form employees who may not understand or who may be struggling with the particular teachings of the Catholic Church. If an employee publicly and/or persistently demonstrates conduct or lifestyle at variance with the policies of the Archdiocese or the moral/religious teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, the school leader and/or pastor/dean will attempt to accompany the employee toward the ideal. Should the employee refuse such accompaniment, or should the employee and the employer reach an impasse where such accompaniment is stagnant or no longer beneficial, suspension or termination of the employee is left to the employer's discretion. Ultimately, the final decision of one's employment in Catholic school ministry is left to the discretion of the Archbishop.

Employee signature below indicates the employee has received a copy of this description and indicates the employee's understanding of the requirements, essential functions and duties to this position.

Employee Name: _____

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____