

## **Professional Growth Rubric School Counselor**

The school counselor professional growth rubrics are organized around seven areas of a school counselor's job performance. These seven areas:

- I. Plan and Prepare the School Counseling Program**
- II. Individual Student Planning**
- III. Building Relationships with Students**
- IV. Program Management**
- V. Monitoring and Follow-Up**
- VI. Family and Community Outreach**
- VII. Professional Responsibilities**

The rubrics are designed to give school counselors an assessment of where they stand in all performance areas with detailed guidance on what is expected to improve.

There are four levels of the school counselor professional growth rubrics. The *Proficient* level describes solid professional performance. This level is the expected level of performance for school counselors. The *Distinguished* level is reserved for truly outstanding counseling as described by the very demanding criteria of the area. This level may have relatively few scores. The *Professional Support Needed* level indicates that performance has deficiencies and school counselors and building principals should not be content with scores at this level. Performance at the *Does Not Meet Standard* level is unacceptable and needs to be remediated immediately.

The professional growth summary conference between the principal and the school counselor can be greatly enhanced when each fills out the rubrics in advance (using the highlighter approach below). Once each has filled out the rubrics, they should meet and compare scores one page at a time. The principal has the final say, but the discussion should aim for consensus based on evidence of the fairest score for each criterion. Principals cannot know everything about all rubric areas and must approach this with some humility while school counselor must be open to feedback from someone with an outside perspective.

Using the highlighter approach, it is important to consider each of the nine criteria individually. Then, the school counselor and principal move up and down the four levels (reading the descriptions for items at Distinguished, Proficient, Professional Support Needed, and Does Not Meet Standards level). Each finds the specific descriptor level that best describes the performances and highlights the line. This creates a graphic display of overall performance, areas for commendation, and areas that need work. The back page will be completed together and put into the employee's file.

It is important that the principals help school counselors to continue to grow in their positions by giving candid, evidence-based feedback, and follow-up support. It is also important that school counselors score themselves candidly and honestly. Working together can bring about professional growth and ultimately impact student achievement.

# I. Plan and Prepare the School Counseling Program

The school counselor:

## 4 – Distinguished

- a. Demonstrates broad knowledge of counseling theories and practices.
- b. Displays extensive knowledge of child development characteristics.
- c. Consistently uses the goals and objectives of the counseling curriculum to plan the school counseling program.
- d. Designs counseling materials with clear objectives to meet the developmental needs of students.
- e. Designs highly relevant lessons that will motivate all students and engage them in active learning.
- f. Consistently encourages staff involvement to ensure the effective implementation of the school guidance program.
- g. Designs lessons involving an appropriate mix of high quality materials and a wide range of teaching tools.
- h. Designs and implements effective counseling procedures and routines to maximize counseling sessions.
- i. Utilizes the room arrangement, materials, and displays to maximize student learning of all materials.

## 3 – Proficient

- a. Knows various counseling theories and practices.
- b. Demonstrates an understanding of child development characteristics.
- c. Frequently uses the goals and objectives of the counseling curriculum to plan the school counseling program.
- d. Designs counseling materials to meet the developmental needs of students.
- e. Designs lessons that are relevant, motivating, and likely to engage students in active learning.
- f. Frequently encourages staff involvement to ensure the effective implementation of the school guidance program.
- g. Designs lessons that use an effective mix of counseling materials and various teaching strategies.
- h. Develops and implements effective counseling procedures and routines.
- i. Arranges the classroom, materials, and displays to support unit and lesson goals.

## 2 – Professional Support Needed

- a. Is somewhat familiar with counseling theories and practices..
- b. Has a narrow understanding of child development characteristics..
- c. Occasionally uses the goals and objectives of the counseling curriculum to plan the school counseling program.
- d. Designs counseling materials with few objectives to meet the developmental needs of students.
- e. Designs lessons that mainly address the middle of the class and do not promote active learning.
- f. Occasionally encourages staff involvement to ensure the effective implementation of the school guidance program.
- g. Plans lessons that involve a mixture of good and mediocre learning materials and instructional strategies.
- h. Some routines and procedures are in place, but counseling time is often lost.
- i. The room is organized for general learning only with little thought regarding displays to support units and lessons.

## 1 – Does Not Meet Standard

- a. Has little to no knowledge of counseling theories and practices.
- b. Has little familiarity of child development characteristics.
- c. Plans lesson by lesson with little consideration of the standards or overall curriculum goals.
- d. Designs counseling materials with no evident objective.
- e. Plans lessons with little likelihood of motivating or involving students.
- f. Does not involve staff in implementation of the school guidance program.
- g. Plans lessons that rely mainly on mediocre and low-quality textbooks, workbooks, or worksheets.
- h. Few, if any, counseling routines and procedures are evident; much counseling time is lost.
- i. Room arrangement is awkward; materials are hard to access; wall displays are lacking.

Overall rating: \_\_\_ Comments:

## II. Individual Student Planning

The school counselor:

### 4 - Distinguished

- a. Provides students a clear sense of the counseling process by addressing essential questions, goals, or objectives.
- b. Utilizes highly effective individual and/or small group counseling activities to maximize student development.
- c. Presents material clearly and explicitly, makes connections, and uses vivid and appropriate language.
- d. Orchestrates highly effective counseling strategies and materials to meet student goals.
- e. Engages all students in focused work in which they are active learners and problem-solvers.
- f. Employs effective guidance strategies and opportunities which guide students to recognize and to adjust attitude and behavior.
- g. Consistently gives reinforcement and encouragement while counseling.
- h. Differentiates counseling services to facilitate students' growth and opportunities.
- i. Has students summarize and internalize what they learn and apply it to real-life situations.

### 3 – Proficient

- a. Provides students a clear sense of the counseling process.
- b. Utilizes appropriate individual and/or small group counseling activities to enhance student development.
- c. Uses clear explanations, appropriate language, and good examples.
- d. Orchestrates effective counseling strategies and materials to meet student goals.
- e. Encourages students to actively think about, discuss and use the ideas and skills being presented.
- f. Employs effective guidance strategies to facilitate attitude and behavior change.
- g. Frequently gives reinforcement and encouragement while counseling.
- h. Differentiates counseling services to accommodate students' needs.
- i. Has students summarize what they have learned and apply it in different contexts.

### 2 – Professional Support Needed

- a. Sometimes provides students a clear sense of the counseling process.
- b. Occasionally utilizes appropriate individual and/or small group counseling activities to enhance student development.
- c. Uses language and explanations that are sometimes fuzzy, confusing or inappropriate.
- d. Uses limited counseling strategies and materials to meet student goals.
- e. Attempts to actively involve students, but many students are disengaged.
- f. Employs limited guidance strategies to facilitate attitude and behavior change.
- g. Rarely gives reinforcement and encouragement while counseling.
- h. Attempts to provide counseling services to accommodate students' needs.
- i. Asks students to think about real-life applications for their counseling goals.

### 1 – Does Not Meet Standards

- a. Begins counseling without giving students a sense of direction.
- b. Does not utilize appropriate individual and/or small group counseling activities to enhance student development.
- c. Often presents material in a confusing way, using language that is inappropriate.
- d. Does not utilize counseling strategies or materials to meet student goals.
- e. Fails to actively involve students, and many students are disengaged.
- f. Fails to employ effective guidance strategies to facilitate attitude and behavior change.
- g. Fails to give reinforcement and encouragement while counseling.
- h. Fails to provide for differentiated counseling services for students' needs.
- i. Moves on at the end of each counseling session without talking about real-life situations or contexts.

Overall rating: \_\_\_ Comments:

### III. Building Relationships with Students

The school counselor:

#### 4 – Distinguished

- a. Demonstrates genuine caring and respect for individual students.
- b. Is readily available to students before, during and after school.
- c. Shows great sensitivity and respect for students’ cultures, values, and beliefs.
- d. Creates a counseling environment that nurtures positive relationships.
- e. Consistently smiles and uses a friendly tone of voice.
- f. Consistently seeks student input.
- g. Builds a comfort level that allows students to take risks.
- h. Encourages students choices in counseling activities.
- i. Consistently uses effective praise to reinforce success.

#### 3 – Proficient

- a. Is friendly and demonstrates general warmth, caring, and respect.
- b. Is usually available to students before, during, and after school.
- c. Shows respect for students’ cultures, values, and beliefs.
- d. Creates a counseling environment that nurtures positive relationships.
- e. Smiles and uses a friendly tone of voice.
- f. Seeks student input.
- g. Builds a comfort level that allows students to take risks.
- h. Allows students choices in counseling activities.
- i. Uses effective praise to reinforce success.

#### 2 – Professional Support Needed

- a. Is generally warm and caring, but may reflect occasional inconsistencies, favoritism, or disregard for students.
- b. Is sometimes available to students before, during, and after school.
- c. Tries to be sensitive to students’ cultures, values, and beliefs, but sometimes fails.
- d. Appears unconcerned about creating a counseling environment that nurtures positive relationships.
- e. Occasionally smiles and may use monotone voice.
- f. Rarely seeks student input.
- g. Seldom builds a comfort level that allows students to take risks.
- h. Seldom allows students choices in counseling activities.
- i. Seldom uses effective praises to reinforce success.

#### 1 – Does Not Meet Standard

- a. Interacts negatively, sarcastically, or inappropriately with students.
- b. Is not available to students before, during, and after school.
- c. Is often insensitive to students’ cultures, values, and beliefs.
- d. Creates a counseling environment that is negative or threatening.
- e. Does not smile; uses a sarcastic tone of voice.
- f. Does not seek student input.
- g. Does not build a comfort level that allows students to take risks.
- h. Does not allow students choices in counseling activities.
- i. Does not use effective praise to reinforce success.

Overall rating:\_\_\_ Comments:

## IV. Classroom Management

The school counselor:

### 4 – Distinguished

- a. Sets significant and challenging expectations for students; communicates confidence in students' abilities to meet the expectations.
- b. Finds ways to integrate and reinforce social skills throughout the day that successfully develop positive interactions among students.
- c. Motivates students and creates a sense of urgency for behavior change by utilizing effective praise and specific feedback.
- d. Has a highly effective counseling repertoire and is responsive to student needs.
- e. Is keenly aware of student behavior; consistently responds to student misbehaviors with effective interactions.
- f. Uses counseling time effectively to maximize student engagement and achievement.
- g. Establishes efficient pacing and scheduling; transitions are seamless resulting in minimal loss of counseling time.
- h. Teaches school guidance materials effectively with an emphasis on real-life situations.
- i. Creates an engaging, safe, and efficiently organized environment to maximize development opportunities.

### 3 – Proficient

- a. Communicates clearly and consistently, models, and enforces high expectations for students.
- b. Teaches appropriate social skills and fosters positive interactions among students.
- c. Motivates and encourages students utilizing effective praise and positive feedback.
- d. Has an effective communicative repertoire and is responsive to student needs.
- e. Monitors student behavior and responds to misbehaviors with appropriate interactions.
- f. Makes adequate use of time available.
- g. Demonstrates successful scheduling techniques and transitions with little loss of counseling time.
- h. Teaches school guidance materials effectively.
- i. Creates a safe and organized environment for students.

### 2 – Professional Support Needed

- a. Expectations are somewhat clear to students; counselor attempts to respond to student behavior with inconsistent results.
- b. Often lectures students about the need for good social skills but may reflect occasional inconsistencies or favoritism.
- c. Relies on extrinsic rewards and general praise in an attempt to get students to cooperate or comply.
- d. Has a limited counseling repertoire; may overlook student behaviors.
- e. Makes an effort to respond to student misbehaviors, but interactions with students are hit or miss.
- f. Students are frequently off task or not engaged in the counseling process.
- g. Poor pacing and transitions may result in loss of counseling time.
- h. Occasionally teaches school guidance materials effectively.
- i. Has adequate organization and provides a somewhat safe counseling environment; counseling environment is bland.

### 1 – Does Not Meet Standard

- a. Student expectations are unclear; no communication provided by the counselor.
- b. Interactions with students are negative, sarcastic, or humiliating.
- c. Makes little or no attempt to motivate students; students demonstrate a lack of compliance.
- d. Does not appear to have a communication repertoire; counselor is unresponsive to student behaviors.
- e. Does not respond to student misbehaviors or responds to misbehaviors inconsistently or inappropriately.
- f. Does not use counseling time effectively resulting in off-task behavior or poor student development.
- g. Loses much time during counseling due to poor pacing and ineffective transitions.
- h. Teaches school guidance materials with limited effectiveness.
- i. Has an unorganized classroom; classroom seems uninviting or may be unsafe.

Overall rating: \_\_\_ Comments:

## V. Monitoring and Follow-Up

The school counselor:

### 4 – Distinguished

- a. Provides clear concepts of personal, social and academic responsibility using handouts/examples for students to internalize.
- b. Uses a variety of research based counseling tools to immediately and continuously monitor and to encourage student growth.
- c. Continuously checks for understanding, unscrambles confusion, and gives specific, helpful feedback.
- d. Constantly follows up with struggling students; gives time and support to reach counseling goals.
- e. Constantly reflects on the effectiveness of counseling interventions and works every day to improve.
- f. Analyzes counseling strategies to draw conclusions; collaborates with colleagues on successful strategies.
- g. Teaches students and parents how to monitor academic progress.
- h. Assigns highly engaging counseling homework, receives 100% return, and provides rich feedback.
- i. Has students set ambitious goals, self-assess and self-monitor, and take responsibility for their progress.

### 3 – Proficient

- a. Provides clear concepts of personal, social and academic responsibility.
- b. Uses a variety of counseling tools to monitor and encourage student growth.
- c. Checks for understanding and gives students helpful feedback.
- d. Takes responsibility to help students succeed with counseling goals; provides follow-up assistance.
- e. Reflects on the effectiveness of counseling interventions and works to improve them.
- f. Draws conclusions on counseling strategies and periodically consults with colleagues.
- g. Provides students and parents with academic updates to monitor students progress.
- h. Utilizes counseling homework and provides useful feedback.
- i. Has students set goals, self-assess, and monitor academic and behavioral progress.

### 2 – Professional Support Needed

- a. Tells students about responsibility and how they should behave, but lacks examples of how to improve.
- b. Uses counseling tools that lack variety and quality to monitor and encourage student growth.
- c. Asks questions to see if students understand but lacks frequent quality feedback.
- d. Provides limited assistance and follow-up to help students succeed with counseling goals.
- e. Thinks about what might have been done better but does not make changes at the end of a counseling session.
- f. Infrequently analyzes counseling strategies or consults with colleagues.
- g. Upon request, will provide student and parents with academic updates.
- h. Assigns counseling homework, urging completion, but does not hold students accountable.
- i. Urges students to set goals but does not follow up to help students manage them.

### 1 – Does Not Meet Standard

- a. Expects student to know how to behave and how to be responsible.
- b. Uses only one type of counseling tool to monitor and encourage student growth.
- c. Rarely checks with students to see if they understand.
- d. Provides no follow-up or assistance for students with counseling goals.
- e. Refuses or seems unable to modify approach, if a counseling session does not go well.
- f. Fails to analyze counseling strategies or consult with colleagues.
- g. Does not discuss academic progress with students or parents.
- h. Assigns counseling homework but is resigned to the fact that many students will not turn it in.
- i. Does not help students set and manage goals.

Overall rating: \_\_\_ Comments:

# VI. Family and Community Outreach

The school counselor:

## 4 – Distinguished

- a. Shows great sensitivity and respect for family and community cultures, values, and beliefs.
- b. Communicates with parents a genuine interest and belief in each child's ability to reach their counseling goals.
- c. Gives parents clear, succinct expectations of counseling services.
- d. Makes sure parents hear positive news about their child first, and immediately flags any problems.
- e. Frequently involves parents in supporting and enriching the counseling goals within the boundaries of confidentiality.
- f. Deals immediately and successfully with parents' concerns; makes parents feel welcome any time.
- g. Gives parents detailed feedback on child's progress through the use of varied communications.
- h. Is successful in contacting and working with all parents, including those who are hard to reach.
- i. Utilizes additional resources with students and successfully guides parents to those resources.

## 3 – Proficient

- a. Communicates respectfully with parents and is sensitive to different families' culture and values.
- b. Shows each parent an interest and belief in their child's ability to reach the counseling goals.
- c. Shares with parents the expectations of counseling services.
- d. Promptly informs parents of behavior concerns and also updates parents on good news.
- e. Updates parents on counseling services to support improvements at home within boundaries of confidentiality.
- f. Responds promptly and effectively to parents' concerns; makes parents feel welcome in the school.
- g. Uses conferences, emails, and phone calls to communicate with parents.
- h. Tries to contact all parents and is persistent in contacting hard-to-reach parents.
- i. Reaches out to families and the community to utilize available resources.

## 2 – Professional Support Needed

- a. Tries to be sensitive to the cultures and beliefs of students' families but sometimes is indifferent.
- b. Tells parents that he or she cares about their child but does not share counseling goals.
- c. Sends home a list of counseling rules but with little follow through.
- d. Lets parents know about problems their child is having but rarely mentions positive news.
- e. Sends home occasional suggestions on how parents can help their child with counseling goals (when appropriate).
- f. Is slow to respond to some parent concerns; may give off an unwelcoming perception.
- g. Uses conferences and email only to tell parents the areas in which their child can improve.
- h. Tries to contact all parents, but ends up talking mainly to the parents of high-achieving students.
- i. Provides parents with a list of community resources but does not follow-up.

## 1 – Does Not Meet Standard

- a. Is often insensitive to the cultures and beliefs of students' families.
- b. Does not communicate with parents about their child or share concern about his/her future.
- c. Does not share behavior expectations with parents.
- d. Seldom informs parents of concern or positive news about their child.
- e. Rarely if ever communicates with parents on ways to help their child at home.
- f. Does not respond to parent concerns; makes parents feel unwelcome.
- g. Expects parents to follow up on areas that need improvement without communication.
- h. Makes little or no effort to contact parents.
- i. Does not reach out for extra support from parents or the community.

Overall rating: \_\_\_ Comments:

## VII. Professional Responsibilities

The school counselor:

### 4 – Distinguished

- a. Maintains meticulous records (student information) conscientiously and punctually, and is never late.
- b. Presents oneself as a consummate professional; always observes appropriate boundaries.
- c. Is ethical, honest, and above-board, using impeccable judgment; respects confidentiality.
- d. Is an important member of teacher teams and committees; frequently attends school activities.
- e. Frequently contributes valuable ideas and expertise to promote the school's mission and District goals.
- f. Informs the administration of any concerns; reaches out for help and suggestions when needed.
- g. Actively seeks out feedback and suggestions and uses them to improve performance.
- h. Meets frequently with colleagues to plan, share ideas, and analyze assessments.
- i. Devours effective practices from fellow professionals, workshops, readings, study groups, the Web, etc.

### 3 – Proficient

- a. Keeps accurate records of student information; is punctual and reliable with paperwork.
- b. Demonstrates professional demeanor and dress and maintains appropriate boundaries.
- c. Is ethical, honest, and above-board, uses good judgment; maintains confidentiality with student records.
- d. Shares responsibility for school activities; volunteers to serve on committees.
- e. Is a positive team player and contributes ideas, expertise, and time to the mission of school and District goals.
- f. Keeps the administration informed about concerns; asks for help when it is needed.
- g. Listens thoughtfully to other viewpoints; responds constructively to suggestions and criticism.
- h. Collaborates with colleagues, shares counseling ideas, and discusses current issues in counseling.
- i. Seeks out effective counseling ideas from supervisors, colleagues, workshops, reading, the Internet, etc.

### 2 - Professional Support Needed

- a. Occasionally skips assignments, is late, makes errors in records, and/or misses paperwork deadlines.
- b. Occasionally acts and/or dresses in an unprofessional manner and/or violates boundaries.
- c. Sometimes uses poor judgment, is less than completely honest, and/or discloses student information.
- d. Will serve on a committee or attend a school activity when asked to do so.
- e. Occasionally suggests an idea aimed at improving the school.
- f. Is reluctant to share concerns with the administration or ask for help.
- g. Is somewhat defensive but does listen to feedback and suggestions.
- h. Meets occasionally with colleagues to share ideas about counseling and students.
- i. Keeps an eye out for new ideas for improving counseling and learning.

### 1 – Does Not Meet Standard

- a. Frequently skips assignments, is late, makes errors in records or misses paperwork deadlines.
- b. Frequently acts and/or dresses in an unprofessional manner and violates boundaries.
- c. Acts in an ethically questionable manner, uses poor judgment, and/or discloses student information.
- d. Declines invitations to serve on committees or attend school activities.
- e. Rarely if ever contributes ideas that might help improve the school.
- f. Fails to voice concerns or constantly complains, and is not open to help.
- g. Is defensive about criticism and resistant to changing professional practice.
- h. Meets infrequently with colleagues; conversations lack counseling or educational substance.
- i. Is not open to ideas for improving counseling and learning.

Overall rating: \_\_\_ Comments:

Professional Growth Summary Page  
School Counselor

School Counselor's name \_\_\_\_\_ School year \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Subject area/Grade level \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_

Average Ratings on Individual Rubrics:

<b>I. Plan and Prepare the School Counseling Program</b>	Distinguished	Proficient	Prof. Support Needed	Does Not Meet Standards
<b>II. Individual Student Planning</b>	Distinguished	Proficient	Prof. Support Needed	Does Not Meet Standards
<b>III. Building Relationships with Students</b>	Distinguished	Proficient	Prof. Support Needed	Does Not Meet Standards
<b>IV. Program Management</b>	Distinguished	Proficient	Prof. Support Needed	Does Not Meet Standards
<b>V. Monitoring and Follow-Up</b>	Distinguished	Proficient	Prof. Support Needed	Does Not Meet Standards
<b>VI. Family and Community Outreach</b>	Distinguished	Proficient	Prof. Support Needed	Does Not Meet Standards
<b>VII. Professional Responsibilities</b>	Distinguished	Proficient	Prof. Support Needed	Does Not Meet Standards

Overall Rating:

Distinguished      Proficient      Prof. Support Needed      Does Not Meet Standards

Overall Comments by Principal/Director:

Overall Comments by the School Counselor:

Principal's/Director's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

School Counselor's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(School Counselor's signature indicates he/she has seen and discussed the professional growth summary. It does not necessarily denote agreement with the report.)