

## GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAM

The Patrick County School Board affirms that parents are the student's first teachers and that the public schools should serve to strengthen family and parental support. No student will be required to participate in any counseling program to which the student's parents object.

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- A. **Academic Guidance (Academic Advising)** - which assists students and their parents to acquire knowledge of the curricula choices available to students, to plan a program of studies, to arrange and interpret academic testing, and to seek post-secondary academic opportunities.
- B. **Career Guidance (Career Advising)** - which helps students to acquire information and plan action about work, jobs, apprenticeships, and post-secondary educational and career opportunities.
- C. **Personal/Social Counseling** - which assists a student to develop an understanding of themselves, the rights and needs of others, how to resolve conflict and to define individual goals, reflecting their interests, abilities and aptitudes. Information and records of personal/social counseling will be kept confidential and separate from a student's educational records and not disclosed to third parties without prior parental consent or as otherwise provided by law. Parents may elect, by notifying their child's school in writing, to have their child not participate in personal/social counseling.
- D. **Employment Counseling and Placement Services** - which furnish information relating to the employment opportunities available to students graduating from or leaving the public schools. Such information will be provided to secondary students and will include all types of employment opportunities, including, but not limited to, apprenticeships, the military, career education schools, and the teaching profession. In providing such services, the school board will consult and cooperate with the Virginia Employment Commission, the Department of Labor and Industry, local business and labor organizations, and career schools.

No student will be required to participate in any counseling program to which the student's parents object.

The guidance and counseling program will not include the use of counseling techniques which are beyond the scope of the professional certification or training of counselors, including hypnosis, or other psychotherapeutic techniques that are normally employed in medical or clinical settings and focus on mental illness or psychopathology.

Parents will be notified annually about the counseling programs which are available to their children. The notification will include the purpose and general description of the programs, information regarding ways parents may review materials to be used in guidance and counseling programs at their child's school and information about the procedures by which parents may limit their child's participation in such programs.

It shall be the policy of the Patrick County School Board with respect to personal/social counseling that parents will notify the school division in writing if the student is not to participate in the personal/social counseling program, (Opt – Out).

Adopted: September 8, 1997  
Revised: May 11, 2006

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Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-209  
8 VAC 20-620-10.

Cross Refs.: IJ Guidance and Counseling Program  
JO Student Records