

Chapter 239. Student Services Certificates

Subchapter A. School Counselor Certificate

Statutory Authority: The provisions of this Subchapter A issued under the Texas Education Code, §§21.031(a); 21.040(2) and (4); 21.041(a), (b)(1)-(5), and (9); 21.044; 21.0462; 21.048(a); 21.054; and 22.0831(f), unless otherwise noted.

§239.1. General Provisions.

- (a) Because the school counselor plays a critical role in campus effectiveness and student achievement, the rules adopted by the State Board for Educator Certification in this subchapter ensure that each candidate for the School Counselor Certificate is of the highest caliber and possesses the knowledge, skills, and credentials necessary to improve the performance of the diverse student population of this state.
- (b) An individual serving as a school counselor is expected to actively participate in counseling-related professional development activities to continually update his or her knowledge, skills, and credentials. Currency in best practices and research related to developing a quality, comprehensive school counseling program, which includes both campus leadership and student learning, is essential for all students.
- (c) The holder of the School Counselor Certificate issued under the provisions of this subchapter is certified to provide counseling services to all students in Prekindergarten-Grade 12.

Source: The provisions of this §239.1 adopted to be effective January 23, 2001, 26 TexReg 761; amended to be effective July 13, 2004, 29 TexReg 6644; amended to be effective December 23, 2009, 34 TexReg 9201; amended to be effective December 21, 2017, 42 TexReg 7144.

§239.5. Minimum Requirements for Admission to a School Counselor Preparation Program.

- (a) Prior to admission to an educator preparation program leading to the School Counselor Certificate, an individual must:
 - (1) hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution of higher education that at the time was accredited or otherwise approved by an accrediting organization recognized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board; and
 - (2) meet the requirements for admission to an educator preparation program under Chapter 227 of this title (relating to Provisions for Educator Preparation Candidates).
- (b) An educator preparation program may adopt requirements for admission in addition to those required in subsection (a) of this section.

Source: The provisions of this §239.5 adopted to be effective January 23, 2001, 26 TexReg 761; amended to be effective December 23, 2009, 34 TexReg 9201.

§239.10. Preparation Program Requirements.

- (a) Structured, field-based training must be focused on actual school-based experiences with each of the standards identified in §239.15 of this title (relating to Standards Required for the School Counselor Certificate) to include experiences with diverse types of students and grade levels.
- (b) An educator preparation program must develop and implement specific criteria and procedures that allow a candidate to substitute related professional counselor training directly related to the standards identified in §239.15 of this title for part of the preparation coursework or other program requirements.
- (c) An educator preparation program for the school counselor certificate must prepare students to understand and implement *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs* (Texas Education Code, Chapter 33, Subchapter A).

Source: The provisions of this §239.10 adopted to be effective January 23, 2001, 26 TexReg 761; amended to be effective December 23, 2009, 34 TexReg 9201; amended to be effective December 21, 2017, 42 TexReg 7144.

§239.15. Standards Required for the School Counselor Certificate.

- (a) School Counselor Certificate Standards. The knowledge and skills identified in this section must be used by an educator preparation program in the development of curricula and coursework and by the State Board for Educator Certification as the basis for developing the examination required to obtain the School Counselor Certificate. The standards also serve as the foundation for the professional growth plan and continuing professional education activities required by §239.25 of this title (relating to Requirements to Renew the Standard School Counselor Certificate).
- (b) Standard I. Learner-Centered Knowledge: The certified school counselor has a broad knowledge base. The certified school counselor must know and understand:
- (1) the history and philosophy of counseling;
 - (2) counseling and consultation theories and practices;
 - (3) career development theories and practices;
 - (4) the roles and responsibilities of a comprehensive school counseling program that emphasizes college and career readiness and postsecondary options for all students, including college admissions, college financial aid resources, application procedures, and workforce and career opportunities;
 - (5) assessment principles and procedures, including the appropriate use of tests, test interpretation, and test results;
 - (6) changing societal trends, including demographic, economic, and technological tendencies, and their relevance to school counseling;
 - (7) environmental, social, and cultural factors that affect learners' development and the relevance of those factors to educational, career, personal, and social development, along with comprehensive school counseling programs;
 - (8) learners' developmental characteristics and needs and their relevance to educational and career choices;
 - (9) legal and ethical standards, practices, and issues and the importance of commitment to and implementation of ethical principles;
 - (10) the characteristics and educational needs of special populations;
 - (11) techniques and behavioral interventions to assist teachers with classroom management;
 - (12) the integration of a school counseling program, the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards, and academic curricula;
 - (13) the roles and responsibilities of a comprehensive school counseling program that is responsive to all students;
 - (14) counseling-related research techniques and practices;
 - (15) developing and teaching best practices on leadership skills;
 - (16) how cultural factors and group membership impact individual students;
 - (17) the comprehensive school counseling program model;
 - (18) how to utilize various forms of technology and how inappropriate use could be professionally and personally harmful; and
 - (19) an understanding of systems, including family dynamics and school environments.
- (c) Standard II. Learner-Centered Skills: The certified school counselor applies the knowledge base to promote the educational, personal, social, and career development of the learner as outlined in *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*. The certified school counselor must:

- (1) develop processes and procedures for planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*;
 - (2) provide a proactive, comprehensive, developmental school counseling program based on the needs of students, as set forth in *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*;
 - (3) counsel individuals and small groups using appropriate counseling theories and techniques in response to students' needs;
 - (4) consult with parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and other individuals as appropriate to enhance his or her work with students;
 - (5) coordinate resources, referrals, and follow-up procedures for students within the school and community;
 - (6) demonstrate proficiency in teaching small and large groups by actively engaging students in the learning process;
 - (7) participate in the selection, use, and interpretation of assessments and assessment results;
 - (8) use multiple sets of information and data to make decisions about students, programs, and services;
 - (9) use counseling-related research techniques and evidence-based practices to address student needs;
 - (10) advocate for a comprehensive school counseling program that is responsive to all students;
 - (11) facilitate learners' ability to achieve their potential by helping them set and attain challenging educational, career, personal, and social goals based on various types of information;
 - (12) maintain proficiency in counseling and campus-related technology; and
 - (13) use varied sources of information, resources, and practices to counsel students about postsecondary opportunities and college and career readiness.
- (d) Standard III. Learner-Centered Process: The certified school counselor participates in the development, monitoring, revision, and evaluation of a campus based on *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs* that promotes learners' knowledge, skills, motivation, and personal growth. The certified school counselor must:
- (1) collaborate with others in the school and community to implement a guidance curriculum that promotes learners' development in all domains, including cognitive, social, and emotional areas;
 - (2) facilitate learners' ability to achieve their potential by helping them set and attain challenging educational, career, personal, and social goals based on various types of information;
 - (3) use both preventive and intervening strategies to address the concerns of learners and to help them clarify problems and situations, set goals, explore options, and implement change;
 - (4) implement effective referral procedures to facilitate the use of special programs and services;
 - (5) act as a consultant to help learners achieve success inside and outside of school;
 - (6) advocate for a comprehensive school counseling program and recognize the required time commitment to fully apply the program implementation cycle;
 - (7) create a program mission, goal, and services in alignment with the school mission and campus improvement plan;
 - (8) create and disseminate literature or newsletters to all stakeholders that describe the comprehensive school counseling program and reduce negative stigmas associated with receiving counseling services in a school-based program;
 - (9) establish an advisory council or board with membership of all stakeholders (student, parent, teacher, administrator, community member, other personnel, and support specialists);

- (10) increase public relations and awareness through community outreach, such as fundraising, grant writing, donations, volunteerism, local businesses, and use of public or guest speakers;
 - (11) provide school-wide professional development and parent workshops throughout the school year;
 - (12) support participation in fair-share responsibilities versus non-counseling related duties;
 - (13) know district, state, and federal initiatives that are to be reflected in a comprehensive school counseling program; and
 - (14) develop practices to promote learners' knowledge about college and career readiness processes necessary to pursue postsecondary opportunities.
- (e) Standard IV. Learner-Centered Equity and Excellence for All Learners: The certified school counselor promotes academic success for all learners by acknowledging, respecting, and responding to diversity while building on similarities that bond all people. The certified school counselor must:
- (1) understand learner differences, including those related to cultural background, gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic levels, academic ability, and learning styles, and know ways to create and maintain a positive school environment that is responsive to all learners;
 - (2) advocate for a school environment in which diversity is acknowledged and respected, resulting in positive interactions across all cultures, genders, ethnicities, and learning styles;
 - (3) facilitate learning and achievement for all students to ensure services that cover an array of exceptionalities, including special populations, by promoting a cooperative, inclusive, purposeful learning environment;
 - (4) take a positive, strength-based approach that builds on commonalities versus differences in all learners;
 - (5) understand how environment and behavior may impact or influence individual learners;
 - (6) ensure equitable access to programs and services for all students;
 - (7) understand how family values, group membership, and culture intersect;
 - (8) acknowledge learners' gifts, strengths, and extracurricular talents when considering programs and services;
 - (9) increase students' awareness and include their voices regarding educational and individualized plans; and
 - (10) ensure equitable access and exposure to postsecondary opportunities and college and career readiness information and resources for students and parents/guardians.
- (f) Standard V. Learner-Centered Communications: The certified school counselor, an advocate for all students and the school, demonstrates effective professional and interpersonal communication skills. The certified school counselor must:
- (1) demonstrate effective communication through oral, written, and nonverbal expression;
 - (2) use knowledge of group dynamics and productive group interaction;
 - (3) support responsive interventions by effectively communicating with parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and community members;
 - (4) facilitate learners' access to community resources;
 - (5) develop and implement strategies for effective internal and external communications;
 - (6) facilitate parent/guardian involvement in their children's education;
 - (7) develop partnerships with parents/guardians, businesses, and other groups in the community to facilitate learning;

- (8) work effectively as a team member to promote positive change for individuals, groups, and the school community;
 - (9) take a positive, strength-based approach that verbalizes commonalities versus differences in all learners;
 - (10) effectively communicate his or her role and responsibility and counselor identity to all stakeholders to reduce confusion about the duties of a school counselor;
 - (11) adhere to best practices connected to ethical and legal considerations around appropriate use of technology and email, documentation, record keeping, privileged communication, and informed consent process; and
 - (12) facilitate access to and use of school and community information and resources related to postsecondary opportunities and college and career readiness by learners, parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and community members.
- (g) Standard VI. Learner-Centered Professional Development: The certified school counselor continues professional development, demonstrating a commitment to learn, to improve the profession, and to model professional ethics and personal integrity. The certified school counselor must:
- (1) use reflection, self-assessment, and interactions with colleagues to promote personal professional development;
 - (2) use counseling-related research techniques and practices as well as technology and other resources to facilitate continued professional growth;
 - (3) strive toward the highest level of professionalism by adhering to and modeling professional, ethical, and legal standards;
 - (4) apply research-based practice to improve the school guidance and counseling program;
 - (5) engage in ongoing professional development to improve the school guidance and counseling program; and
 - (6) engage in continued professional development experiences to learn and apply concepts, skills, and practices related to increasing college and career readiness and promoting postsecondary opportunities and preparation for all learners.

Source: The provisions of this §239.15 adopted to be effective January 23, 2001, 26 TexReg 761; amended to be effective December 23, 2009, 34 TexReg 9201; amended to be effective December 21, 2017, 42 TexReg 7144.

§239.20. Requirements for the Issuance of the Standard School Counselor Certificate.

To be eligible to receive the standard School Counselor Certificate, a candidate must:

- (1) successfully complete a school counselor preparation program that meets the requirements of §239.10 of this title (relating to Preparation Program Requirements) and §239.15 of this title (relating to Standards Required for the School Counselor Certificate);
- (2) successfully complete the examination based on the standards identified in §239.15 of this title; and
- (3) hold, at a minimum, a 48-hour master's degree in counseling from an accredited institution of higher education that at the time was accredited or otherwise approved by an accrediting organization recognized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §239.20 issued under the Texas Education Code, §§21.031(a); 21.040(2) and (4); 21.041(a), (b)(1)-(5), and (9); 21.044; 21.0462, as added by SB 798, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023; 21.048(a); 21.054, as amended by House Bill (HB) 2929, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023; and 22.0831(f).

Source: The provisions of this §239.20 adopted to be effective January 23, 2001, 26 TexReg 761; amended to be effective December 23, 2009, 34 TexReg 9201; amended to be effective December 21, 2017, 42 TexReg 7144; amended to be effective May 19, 2024, 49 TexReg 3560.

§239.25 Requirements to Renew the Standard School Counselor Certificate

- (a) An individual issued the standard School Counselor Certificate on or after September 1, 2000, is subject to Chapter 232, Subchapter A, of this title (relating to Certificate Renewal and Continuing Professional Education Requirements) and must satisfy the most current requirements for renewal.
- (b) An individual who holds a valid Texas counselor certificate issued prior to September 1, 1999, may voluntarily comply with the requirements of this section under procedures implemented by the Texas Education Agency staff under §232.3 of this title (relating to Voluntary Renewal of Current Texas Educators).

Source: The provisions of this §239.25 adopted to be effective January 23, 2001, 26 TexReg 761; amended to be effective December 23, 2009, 34 TexReg 9201; amended to be effective December 21, 2017, 42 TexReg 7144.

§239.30 Implementation Date

The provisions of this subchapter apply to an applicant who is admitted to an educator preparation program for the School Counselor Certificate on or after September 1, 2019.

Source: The provisions of this §239.30 adopted to be effective December 21, 2017, 42 TexReg 7144.