



Preparation Manual School Counselor (252)

Overview and Exam Framework

Sample Selected-Response Questions

Sample Selected-Response Answers and Rationales

Sample Constructed-Response Question

Preparation Manual

Section 3: Overview and Exam Framework School Counselor (252)

Exam Overview

Exam Name	School Counselor
Exam Code	252
Time	5 hours
Number of Questions	90 selected-response questions and 1 constructed-response question
Format	Computer-administered test (CAT)

The TExES School Counselor (252) exam is designed to assess whether an examinee has the requisite knowledge and skills that an entry-level educator in this field in Texas public schools must possess. The 90 selected-response questions and the 1 constructed-response question are based on the School Counselor exam framework. Questions on this exam range from grades EC–12. Your final scaled score will be based only on scored questions.

The Standards

Standard I

Learner-Centered Knowledge: The certified school counselor has a broad knowledge base.

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*.

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.

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.

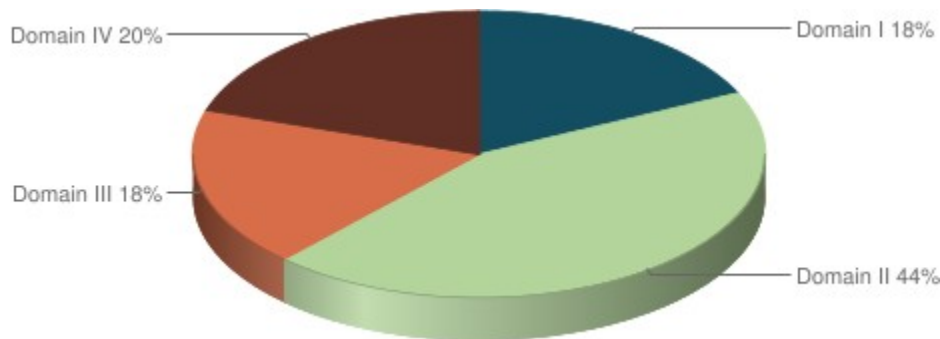
Standard V

Learner-Centered Communications: The certified school counselor, an advocate for all students and the school, demonstrates effective professional and interpersonal communication skills.

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.

Domains and Competencies



The content covered by this exam is organized into broad areas of content called **domains**. Each domain covers one or more of the educator standards for this field. Within each domain, the content is further defined by a set of **competencies**. Each competency is composed of two major parts:

- The **competency statement**, which broadly defines what an entry-level educator in this field in Texas public schools should know and be able to do.
- The **descriptive statements**, which describe in greater detail the knowledge and skills eligible for testing.

Domain I—Knowledge of Learners

Competency 001—(Human Development and Learning): Understand theories and processes of human development and learning as well as factors that influence development and learning.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of developmental progressions in the social, emotional, physical, motor, language, and cognitive domains in children and adolescents; developmental challenges at different stages of development; and how to support students' development across domains.
- Demonstrate knowledge of developmental variation, the interrelatedness of developmental domains, and how this interrelatedness may affect students' performance and behavior.
- Demonstrate knowledge of learning theories; how students construct knowledge, acquire skills, and develop strategies for responding effectively to challenges; and how students' development in the various domains can influence learning.
- Apply knowledge of variables that may influence a student's development, learning, and behavior (e.g., environment, health, socioeconomic circumstances, disability, life experiences, language fluency, stress, trauma, individual learning style, culture, gender identity, ethnicity, race, geopolitical factors).
- Apply knowledge of the characteristics and needs of students within special populations (e.g., gifted and talented, homeless, migrant, special education, English learners, immigrants, refugees, students who meet at-risk criteria).
- Apply knowledge of developmentally appropriate strategies that are based on research for building on students' strengths and helping students acquire effective learning strategies.
- Apply knowledge of how to plan and implement developmentally appropriate activities, experiences, and interventions that are responsive to students' needs and facilitate optimal development across the life span.

Competency 002—(Diversity and Cultural Competence): Understand diversity issues and cultural competencies related to school counseling and environments that promote respect and affirmation for all students.

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of ways in which diverse characteristics (e.g., race, culture, ethnicity, religion, gender identity, socioeconomic status, linguistic diversity, immigration status, exceptionality, learning styles, physical or cognitive abilities) may affect the manifestation of strengths and difficulties in the educational, career, personal, and social areas.
- B. Apply knowledge of strategies for promoting understanding of, sensitivity to, and interaction with students' diverse characteristics and for fostering awareness, appreciation, and respect for diversity.
- C. Apply knowledge of strategies for helping all students feel welcome; using students' diverse characteristics and backgrounds to enrich learning experiences; and building a learning community characterized by respect for, affirmation of, and interaction with all students.
- D. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to encourage the development of an inclusive learning community where students assume responsibility, participate in decision making, and work independently as well as collaboratively in learning activities.
- E. Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for teaching about bias, stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, and oppression and how these issues may affect students, including strategies for intervening with students who demonstrate inappropriate behaviors.
- F. Recognize changing societal trends (e.g., demographic, economic, technological) and cultural, economic, and political issues surrounding diversity, equity, and access.
- G. Demonstrate knowledge of cultural competencies related to diversity, equity, and access and the importance of acknowledging personal biases, addressing personal prejudices, and promoting culturally responsive behaviors that affirm all students' humanity.
- H. Demonstrate knowledge of restorative practices, mediation, and conflict resolution strategies, and ways to support the development of these programs within the school environment.

Domain II—The Comprehensive School Counseling Program

Competency 003—(Guidance): Understand instructional practices and strategies for facilitating students' educational, career, personal, and social growth and development as articulated in *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*.

For example:

- A. Apply knowledge of how to analyze various types of data (i.e., process, perception, and outcome) and other information to identify students' strengths and needs in order to inform guidance curriculum development.
- B. Demonstrate knowledge of procedures for engaging in ongoing review of students' knowledge, skills, and abilities; strategies for providing appropriate and relevant feedback; and methods for evaluating student progress.
- C. Demonstrate knowledge of curriculum design, lesson plan development, differentiated instruction, assessment of student competency attainment, and classroom management as applied to the developmental guidance curriculum.

- D. Demonstrate knowledge of the scope and sequence of student competencies in the strategic curricular areas of the guidance curriculum (i.e., intrapersonal effectiveness, interpersonal effectiveness, postsecondary and career readiness, and personal health and safety) and strategies for supporting students in setting and attaining challenging educational, career, personal, and social goals.
- E. Apply knowledge of instructional strategies, activities, and resources to promote students' acquisition of age-appropriate knowledge, skills, and abilities in the developmental guidance curriculum and strategies for working collaboratively to integrate guidance and academic curricula.
- F. Apply knowledge of the components of and techniques for promoting social skills and emotional wellness across grade levels.

Competency 004—(Responsive Services): Understand techniques for designing supports and interventions to address the needs, concerns, and challenges affecting students' continued educational, career, personal, and social development.

For example:

- A. Distinguish between preventive, remedial, and crisis levels of responsive services.
- B. Apply knowledge of how to design and implement preventive services for fostering resiliency and facilitating students' development of strategies for coping with stress, anxiety, and challenging situations (e.g., peer pressure, social media, life events).
- C. Apply knowledge of how to design, implement, and evaluate intervention plans within a multi-tiered system of supports, linking interventions to assessment data and considering factors (e.g., cultural, socioeconomic, race, ethnicity, linguistic, experiential) related to the use of data.
- D. Apply knowledge of individual and group counseling theories and evidence-based practices, techniques, and skills associated with specific counseling approaches.
- E. Use appropriate methods and procedures for counseling individuals in given situations.
- F. Use appropriate methods and procedures for group counseling, and demonstrate knowledge of group dynamics as well as productive group interaction.
- G. Use consultative theories and related strategies, techniques, and behavioral interventions to assist teachers with classroom management.
- H. Apply knowledge of strategies for helping students clarify problems, consider causes, and identify alternative solutions and possible consequences in order to take appropriate actions and cope with developmental or environmental challenges.
- I. Use consultative skills to support parents/guardians in clarifying identified student problems and underlying causes and in determining alternative solutions for problem resolution.
- J. Apply knowledge of techniques for helping students develop decision-making skills, recognize the relationship between decisions and outcomes, and understand the potential consequences of choices.
- K. Demonstrate knowledge of signs and symptoms of mental health and trauma-related issues in children and adolescents and a variety of intervention skills and trauma-informed practices to respond effectively to the needs of individuals and groups experiencing crises or other traumatic events.

Competency 005—(Individual Planning): Understand techniques and strategies for guiding students in planning, monitoring, and managing their individual educational, career, personal, and social development.

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of individual educational planning as a component of the developmental school counseling program and how to guide students to help enhance their own educational development.
- B. Demonstrate knowledge of factors, issues, and procedures related to academic placement and selection of student courses in various situations.
- C. Apply knowledge of methods for helping students establish short- and long-term goals, monitor progress, and direct their own learning as appropriate.
- D. Apply knowledge of strategies for helping students fulfill graduation requirements, research and choose postsecondary programs, prepare for entrance examinations, and meet admission requirements.
- E. Apply knowledge of strategies for supporting students in identifying and understanding their abilities, interests, and aptitudes and for assisting all students with programs of study to prepare effectively for secondary and postsecondary educational or employment opportunities.
- F. Apply knowledge of theories, models, and principles of career development and methods for helping students meet the Texas College, Career, and Military Readiness Standards.
- G. Demonstrate knowledge of information sources and procedures related to postsecondary program application (e.g., college, university, vocational, technical, military, apprenticeship) and how to seek financial assistance (e.g., federal or state financial aid, loans, scholarships, grants).

Competency 006—(Systems Support): Understand procedures, processes, and strategies for providing systems support.

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of systems support as a component of a comprehensive school counseling program (e.g., participation on campus-based improvement teams, formation of campus policies and programs to address identified school needs, development of schoolwide programs to promote positive outcomes for students) and the school counselor's role as a change agent in support of systemic improvement.
- B. Demonstrate knowledge of the school counselor's role as a participant on decision-making teams (e.g., advisory boards, school improvement committees, student support teams, curriculum committees).
- C. Apply knowledge of procedures for planning, designing, and implementing schoolwide programs (e.g., drug education, bullying prevention, personal safety, mental health and wellness, crisis response) to address students' identified personal, social, educational, and career needs.
- D. Apply knowledge of procedures for designing and presenting professional growth activities to support school staff and parents/guardians in promoting optimal educational, career, personal, and social development of all students.
- E. Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for facilitating effective teamwork within the school and the community and for building effective working teams of educators, families, and community members to support students' achievement and success.

Competency 007—(Program Management): Understand the foundational components of and procedures for developing, implementing, and evaluating the comprehensive school counseling program.

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for and factors to consider in developing a meaningful and purposeful mission statement for the comprehensive school counseling program.

- B. Demonstrate knowledge of the assumptions on which effective and comprehensive school counseling programs are based, including recommended programmatic conditions and resource allocations, and strategies for defining the program's rationale and parameters.
- C. Apply knowledge of processes and strategies for defining goals and priorities for a comprehensive school counseling program based on various needs assessment strategies and data sources.
- D. Demonstrate knowledge of the organizational structure and components of an effective and comprehensive school counseling program that is aligned with *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*.
- E. Apply knowledge of strategies for communicating information about the comprehensive school counseling program to stakeholders, including teachers, parents/guardians, administrators, district personnel, and community partners.
- F. Apply knowledge of processes and techniques for engaging in ongoing data collection and analysis to assess, adapt, and improve the comprehensive school counseling program and demonstrate accountability; processes for defining criteria for the evaluation of the program; and methods for reporting results of program evaluations.
- G. Demonstrate knowledge of how to select appropriate and nondiscriminatory instruments, measures, methods, and materials for gathering information and the importance of collecting data and other information across environments (e.g., home, school, community).
- H. Demonstrate knowledge of planning and managing tasks that support the activities of the comprehensive school counseling program and the appropriate allocation of time and resources.

Domain III—The Professional School Counselor

Competency 008—(Communication, Consultation, and Collaboration): Understand practices and strategies for effective communication, consultation, and collaboration within the school and community.

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of procedures and strategies for effective communication, consultation, and collaboration in the educational environment, including the use of face-to-face, written, and technology-based communication methods.
- B. Demonstrate knowledge of the components of culturally responsive, school-based consultation.
- C. Apply knowledge of strategies, procedures, and processes for collaborating with stakeholders and using data, resources, and technology to create learning environments that promote educational access, equity, and success for every student.
- D. Apply knowledge of methods for communicating with stakeholders for the purpose of promoting understanding of the professional school counselor's role and the comprehensive school counseling program's goals and services.
- E. Demonstrate knowledge of methods and processes for identifying, accessing, and coordinating school and community resources to make appropriate in-school and out-of-school referrals.
- F. Apply knowledge of strategies for facilitating parent/guardian involvement in the educational process in order to promote student achievement and success.
- G. Apply knowledge of strategies for communicating the purpose and results of assessment information accurately, legally, and ethically to students, parents/guardians, educational professionals, and others as appropriate.

Competency 009—(Professional Practice): Understand the roles, responsibilities, and orientation of the professional school counselor and legal and ethical standards of practice in school counseling.

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of the history and philosophy of comprehensive school counseling programs.
- B. Demonstrate knowledge of professional responsibility domains for school counselors articulated in *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*.
- C. Identify elements of the professional school counselor orientation; the roles and responsibilities of the school counselor in various educational contexts; and strategies for articulating, modeling, and advocating for an appropriate school counselor identity.
- D. Demonstrate knowledge and interpretation of various formal and informal assessments to assist students and others in sound decision making and goal setting.
- E. Apply knowledge of leadership and advocacy strategies to promote a positive school culture and support educational access, equity, inclusiveness, and student success in the school and community.
- F. Demonstrate knowledge of various activities to facilitate ongoing professional growth and development at the personal and program level.
- G. Demonstrate knowledge of how to use self-assessment, professional relationships and consultation, and continuing education, including maintaining technological proficiency, to improve professional practice and outcomes for students.
- H. Demonstrate knowledge of federal, state, and local laws, regulations, rules, and policies related to the practice of school counseling and their application in various school counseling contexts.
- I. Apply knowledge of ethical standards for professional school counselors (e.g., Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators, American Counseling Association Code of Ethics, American School Counselor Association Ethical Standards for School Counselors) and their application in various school counseling contexts.
- J. Recognize emerging issues and trends in school counseling and the legal and ethical implications associated with these issues and trends.

Domain IV—Analysis and Response

Competency 010—(Analysis and Response): In a written response, analyze and interpret qualitative and quantitative data to identify a given student's strengths and needs and design an effective intervention.

For example:

- A. Analyze various forms of student data to identify and describe, with supporting evidence, a student's educational, career, personal, or social need.
- B. Integrate knowledge of effective counseling approaches and best practice to select a developmentally appropriate intervention for addressing an identified student need.
- C. Apply knowledge of techniques for collaboration to explain an appropriate method for involving others in the implementation of interventions to address an identified student need.
- D. Apply knowledge of assessment to select an appropriate method for evaluating the effectiveness of an intervention in addressing an identified student need.

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Section 4: Sample Selected-Response Questions School Counselor (252)

This section presents some sample exam questions for you to review as part of your preparation for the exam. To demonstrate how each competency may be assessed, sample questions are accompanied by the competency that they measure. While studying, you may wish to read the competency before and after you consider each sample question. Please note that the competency statements do not appear on the actual exam.

For each sample exam question, there is a correct answer and a rationale for each answer option. The sample questions are included to illustrate the formats and types of questions you will see on the exam; however, your performance on the sample questions should not be viewed as a predictor of your performance on the actual exam.

Selected-Response Questions with Rationales

Each sample exam question here includes the correct answer and a rationale for each answer option.

Domain I—Knowledge of Learners

Competency 001—(Human Development and Learning): Understand theories and processes of human development and learning as well as factors that influence development and learning.

1. A middle school has identified a significant number of students who are at risk for academic failure and dropping out of school. In addition to academic supports for the students, the school counselor should advocate for programs that focus on which of the following goals?

- A. enhancing the development of the students' skills in the area of interpersonal communication
- B. providing opportunities for the students to mentor students at the elementary school level
- C. increasing the number of community-based enrichment experiences for the students
- D. helping the students develop a sense of connectedness and belonging within the school

Answer _____

2. A middle school includes a significant number of students who are recent refugees from political unrest and violence in their home countries. The school counselors can meet the needs of these students most effectively by taking which of the following steps?

- A. designing activities to facilitate the students' acculturation to their new communities
- B. conducting research on the social systems in the students' various home countries
- C. scheduling individual counseling sessions with the students and adult family members
- D. obtaining a migration narrative of students' lives before, during, and after leaving their home countries

Answer _____

Competency 002—(Diversity and Cultural Competence): Understand diversity issues and cultural competencies related to school counseling and environments that promote respect and affirmation for all students.

3. The demographics of a high school's population have changed over the past three years. In response to this trend, the school's achievement gap has widened. Which of the following schoolwide practices would best help the school counselor reverse this trend?

- A. ensuring equitable access for students to advanced learning opportunities through ongoing student readiness identification
- B. adopting a prescribed curriculum for students with pre-differentiated lessons and instructional sequences
- C. emphasizing homogeneous grouping practices to target skill needs related to grade-level standards
- D. incorporating social and emotional learning content into academic programs across grade levels

Answer _____

4. A middle school counselor works with teachers to implement community conferencing in their classrooms. Community conferences involve the participation of each person affected by an inappropriate or hurtful behavior and allow all stakeholders to contribute to the conflict resolution process. The counselor's efforts in this area are most likely to contribute to which of the following schoolwide outcomes?

- A. helping reduce disciplinary referrals by engaging students in righting wrongs and repairing harm done
- B. adopting consistent strategies for de-escalating highly charged conflict situations
- C. promoting students' ability to function effectively in educational and workplace settings
- D. refocusing staff and students' attention on learning and academic achievement

Answer _____

Domain II—The Comprehensive School Counseling Program

Competency 003—(Guidance): Understand instructional practices and strategies for facilitating students' educational, career, personal, and social growth and development as articulated in *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*.

5. An elementary school counselor works with teachers to provide explicit instruction and reinforcement of social skills such as cooperation, self-regulation, and social communication. The counselor and teachers can best promote students' ability to apply these skills effectively by taking which of the following steps?

- A. focusing on one skill until students demonstrate mastery in varied contexts
- B. implementing peer evaluation of students' use of the targeted skills
- C. identifying ways to embed the targeted skills into daily classroom activities
- D. introducing skills through guidance lessons before implementing in the classroom

Answer _____

6. Use the information below to answer the question that follows.

Middle School Curriculum Survey
(Percentage of students rating each topic as very important)

Topic	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Managing multiple deadlines	77	65	62
Study skills	75	58	55
Time-management skills	79	63	66
Organizational strategies	80	70	68
Attendance	60	52	48
Bully prevention	56	53	50
Friendship skills	52	48	46
Conflict resolution	49	47	43
Substance abuse	37	39	45
Career exploration	35	48	69

A middle school counselor reviews the results of a student survey to guide guidance curriculum planning. Based on these data, the counselor should plan to incorporate instruction across grade levels to build skills in which of the following areas?

- A. relationship formation
- B. stress management
- C. interpersonal communication
- D. executive functioning

Answer _____

Competency 004—(Responsive Services): Understand techniques for designing supports and interventions to address the needs, concerns, and challenges affecting students' continued educational, career, personal, and social development.

7. In response to an increase in the number of students demonstrating social and emotional challenges, an elementary school implements a schoolwide program to promote students' skills in these domains. The school counselor and teachers gather baseline data and then work together to identify student activities to help students develop targeted social and emotional skills. Near the end of the first year of implementation, the counselor would like to evaluate the effectiveness of the program in achieving its goals. The counselor can most effectively accomplish this task by including which of the following data-collection tools in the evaluation process?

- A. documentation of teachers' use of the program's activities in their classes
- B. assessments of students' academic performance across school settings
- C. records of disciplinary actions in classrooms and other school environments
- D. checklists of students' mindsets and behaviors with regard to the targeted skills

Answer _____

8. A fourth-grade student is referred to the school counselor due to weekly behavioral referrals. The student has had altercations with classmates on the playground and states, "I want to be friends with classmates, but I don't know how to get their attention without making them mad." The counselor asks the student to imagine that a magic wand waves over the student and the actions that make classmates angry would be gone. The counselor then asks what would be the first change the classmates would observe. The counselor's technique is most clearly aligned with which of the following counseling approaches?

- A. reality therapy
- B. rational emotive behavior therapy
- C. systems therapy
- D. solution-focused brief therapy

Answer _____

Competency 005—(Individual Planning): Understand techniques and strategies for guiding students in planning, monitoring, and managing their individual educational, career, personal, and social development.

9. High school counselors encourage students to consult the College Navigator Web site when applying for postsecondary programs. The counselors' advisement is appropriate because this resource enables students to:

- A. locate loans, scholarships, and grants to finance the cost of various programs.
- B. submit documents required by multiple programs through a single clearinghouse.
- C. compare similar programs in terms of cost, resources, and measures of quality.
- D. contact representatives of different programs directly for questions and support.

Answer _____

10. A school counselor is working on individual planning with a student who has expressed a strong interest in earning a health science certificate offered at the high school. The counselor and the student work together to complete a four-year plan that includes graduation requirements as well as the required coursework to obtain the desired certification. The counselor's approach is likely to be most effective in helping the student build which of the following skills?

- A. understanding how to develop academic potential
- B. enhancing the ability to manage responsibility
- C. connecting educational goals and academic achievement
- D. establishing long-term goals for career development

Answer _____

Competency 006—(Systems Support): Understand procedures, processes, and strategies for providing systems support.

11. A school counselor is a member of the school improvement committee focused on school safety. The counselor wants to integrate guidance and classroom lessons on strategies related to conflict resolution, personal safety, and problem solving as part of the plan, but the committee is hesitant about giving up instructional time for these lessons. Which of the following statements provides the best rationale for integrating the lessons?

- A. Students' school attendance will increase as a result of the integrated lessons.
- B. Many parents/guardians are not teaching these strategies in the home.
- C. Discipline referrals will decrease as a result of the integrated lessons.
- D. More students will have the opportunity to learn and apply these strategies.

Answer _____

12. An elementary school has identified the need for a schoolwide antiviolence program based on a significant increase in discipline referrals for fighting. The school counselor will be involved in this effort. During the initial planning phase of the program, the counselor should take which of the following steps?

- A. meeting with classroom teachers to gather ideas about the potential root causes of students' use of violence
- B. consulting with colleagues in other schools about the methods that they have employed to address students' use of violence
- C. reviewing current research in violence prevention to identify strategies that have proven effective with similar student populations
- D. seeking guidance from local law enforcement agencies on techniques for preventing violence between students

Answer _____

Competency 007—(Program Management): Understand the foundational components of and procedures for developing, implementing, and evaluating the comprehensive school counseling program.

13. Use the school district's mission statement below to answer the question that follows.

Our purpose, in partnership with families and the community, is to provide a safe and equitable educational environment that supports all students in developing essential academic skills, practicing lifelong learning and complex thinking, and becoming contributing citizens locally and globally.

Which of the following mission statements for a school counseling program most closely aligns with the school district's mission statement?

- A. The purpose of the school counseling program is to create an inclusive learning environment that helps students reach high levels of achievement and academic competence.
- B. The purpose of the school counseling program is to improve academic outcomes across all grade levels, enhance well-being for students and staff, and promote continuous learning for the school community.
- C. The purpose of the school counseling program is to respond to students' needs in the academic, college and career, and personal and social domains at time and point of need.
- D. The purpose of the school counseling program is to provide equitable access to curricula and services that support and empower all students to achieve their full academic and developmental potential.

Answer _____

14. A school counselor is meeting with the principal to discuss reassigning noncounseling duties to other staff as appropriate. The counselor can best make the case for the reassignment of duties by using which of the following approaches?

- A. offering to make a presentation at a staff meeting on the distinction between noncounseling and counseling duties
- B. identifying counseling activities that would replace the noncounseling duties and the expected benefits for students
- C. providing weekly and monthly counseling calendars showing the amount of time spent on noncounseling duties
- D. sharing state and national standards for school counseling along with descriptions of what constitutes noncounseling duties

Answer _____

15. Use the information below to answer the question that follows.

Program Assessment

Conditions	Yes	No	Somewhat
Professionally certified school counselor	✓		
Access to the program by all students, teachers, and families	✓		
Parents/guardians as full educational partners			✓
Administrative commitment and support			✓
Positive work environment	✓		

Resources	Yes	No	Somewhat
Time and opportunity for designing and evaluating the program		✓	
Adequate budget	✓		
Adequate materials, supplies, and equipment			✓
Sufficient and appropriate facilities	✓		

A new school counselor recently completed an informal assessment of the current programmatic conditions and resources for the school counseling program. Based on the data provided, the counselor should make which of the following issues the program's *first* priority?

- A. informing members of the school community about the school counseling program's goals and objectives
- B. reallocating funding for ancillary materials to support the school counseling program's guidance curriculum and instruction
- C. improving communication with students' families about available school counseling resources and support
- D. establishing an understanding with the school principal regarding the integral role of the school counseling program

Answer _____

Domain III—The Professional School Counselor

Competency 008—(Communication, Consultation, and Collaboration): Understand practices and strategies for effective communication, consultation, and collaboration within the school and community.

16. A teacher consults the school counselor about a student whose behavior is causing the teacher to lose patience. The teacher asks the counselor for ideas about how to help the student, explaining that the student is very active and is causing problems by disrupting quiet work times in the classroom. Which of the following responses by the counselor best illustrates the appropriate consultant role?

- A. "Maybe you can stop the behavior by turning the student's desk away from peers' desks."
- B. "Yes, I can sympathize with that. I used to have students who behaved like that when I was a teacher."
- C. "Have you contacted the student's parents? They can often make sure that their child behaves at school."
- D. "You seem really bothered by this student's actions. Can you give me a specific example of this behavior?"

Answer _____

17. A school counselor can best ensure that the developmental school counseling program is responsive to the needs of all students by taking which of the following actions?

- A. encouraging the principal to meet with teachers to discuss current ineffective instructional practices
- B. providing regular classroom instruction to students on explicit test-taking strategies to use on assessments
- C. arranging for school specialist staff to participate with teachers in instructional planning meetings
- D. providing professional development on strategies for promoting school success for diverse groups of students

Answer _____

18. When coordinating out-of-school referrals for students, school counselors have which of the following obligations?

- A. providing the referral agency or individual with an informal diagnosis of the student's key issues and needs
- B. making formal introductions of the student, the student's parents/guardians, and parties who will be providing outside services
- C. assembling data related to the student's functioning and the interventions that have been implemented to date
- D. conducting an exit interview with the student and the student's parents/guardians for the referral agency or individual

Answer _____

Competency 009—(Professional Practice): Understand the roles, responsibilities, and orientation of the professional school counselor and legal and ethical standards of practice in school counseling.

19. A high school counselor who is analyzing enrollment data for advanced courses offered by the school notes that students who are members of minority populations are significantly underrepresented in these courses. The counselor can best advocate for educational equity for these students by taking which of the following initial approaches?

- A. conducting focus groups with students who are members of minority populations to identify reasons for their disinterest in selecting advanced courses
- B. presenting the data at a faculty meeting and providing suggestions for expanding the criteria for admission to advanced courses
- C. surveying members of the faculty to understand their perceptions of students from minority populations with regard to advanced courses
- D. providing the data to school administrators and developing outreach strategies targeting specific students for enrollment in advanced courses

Answer _____

20. An emerging issue of importance in the field of school counseling is developing ways to enhance services in which of the following areas?

- A. supporting school administrators in formulating school improvement plans
- B. evaluating the effectiveness of various instructional strategies in classrooms
- C. promoting the ethical use of information and technologies within the educational environment
- D. providing preventive and responsive programs that address mental health needs

Answer _____

21. An exemplary comprehensive school counseling program is most appropriately described in which of the following ways?

- A. developmental, systematic, and sequential in nature
- B. process oriented in the provision of services
- C. defined, organized, and implemented independently
- D. reactive in addressing challenges as they arise

Answer _____

Clustered Questions

Use the information below to answer the four questions that follow.

A high school counselor's use-of-time tracking table for the first six months of the school year is shown below as well as a summary of a midyear evaluation of the counselor by the school principal.

**School Counselor Use of Time
(Percentage of time)**

Month	Guidance Curriculum	Individual Planning	Responsive Services	Support System	Non-Counseling Duties
September	30	25	20	7	18
October	26	24	30	9	11
November	22	25	33	10	10
December	23	20	29	13	15
January	26	20	31	10	13
February	30	19	29	10	12
Average	26	22	29	8.2	13

School Counselor Evaluation Summary

Domain	Rating
Program Management	2
Guidance	2
Counseling	3
Consultation	5
Coordination	4
Student Assessment	5
Advocacy	2
Leadership	2
Professional Behavior	4
Professional Standards	5

Key:

- 5 = Clearly outstanding
- 4 = Exceeds standard
- 3 = Meets standard
- 2 = Below expectation
- 1 = Unsatisfactory

Competency 007—(Program Management): Understand the foundational components of and procedures for developing, implementing, and evaluating the comprehensive school counseling program.

22. Analysis of the data provided suggests that the school counselor can bring the school counseling program into better alignment with recommendations for program balance in *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs* by taking which of the following actions?

- A. providing additional support to school administrators in the area of student assessment
- B. increasing collaborative activities with instructional staff on defining classroom guidance topics and needs
- C. dedicating a larger number of weekly slots for teacher and parent/guardian consultation
- D. reevaluating the time spent on non-counseling duties to identify tasks that could be performed by other available school staff

Answer _____

23. These data suggest that the school counselor should primarily focus on which of the following goals for improving the services offered by the school counseling program?

- A. implementing small-group counseling sessions in response to student needs
- B. increasing emphasis on the individual planning component of the program
- C. taking a more active role in the creation of the school's mission and vision
- D. meeting regularly with the principal to discuss ongoing school needs

Answer _____

Competency 009—(Professional Practice): Understand the roles, responsibilities, and orientation of the professional school counselor and legal and ethical standards of practice in school counseling.

24. Which of the following professional development topics would best support the school counselor in addressing identified areas of need?

- A. Giving Students a Voice—Advocacy Strategies for School Counselors
- B. New Applications for Counseling Theory in Public Schools
- C. Integrating Service Learning and School Counseling Programs
- D. Emerging Roles for School Counselors in the School Organization

Answer _____

25. The school counselor has identified two professional development workshops to address areas of need revealed by the data. Which of the following additional strategies would best help the counselor improve professional practice in the second half of the school year?

- A. making video recordings of counseling sessions with individual students given appropriate permissions
- B. subscribing to one or more peer-reviewed journals on school counseling techniques and practices
- C. engaging in ongoing reflection and self-assessment of performance in relation to school counseling standards
- D. surveying teachers and other school staff periodically to determine levels of satisfaction

Answer _____

Additional Selected-Response Questions

This section includes additional sample selected-response questions for you to review in preparation for the exam. The correct answer is provided for each question below.

Domain I—Knowledge of Learners

Competency 001—(Human Development and Learning): Understand theories and processes of human development and learning as well as factors that influence development and learning.

26. A four-year-old student is attending prekindergarten for the first time. During the first two weeks of school, the student cries to go home upon arrival at school. The student also throws or stomps on blocks. Which of the following responses by the school counselor to the student's parent/guardian would be most helpful?

- A. expressing concern that the student may be too young and should perhaps wait until the following year for school
- B. suggesting that the student see an outside therapist to address issues related to separation anxiety
- C. providing reassurance that the student's behaviors are age appropriate and will likely diminish over time
- D. recommending several alternate educational settings that might be more suitable for the student

Answer _____

27. A school counselor is working with a student who has above-average intelligence but consistently underachieves and feels discouraged. The counselor can work most effectively with this student to improve learning outcomes by engaging the student in which of the following tasks *first*?

- A. developing concrete plans for the future
- B. articulating needs and wants clearly
- C. improving communication with peers
- D. identifying personal strengths and abilities

Answer _____

Competency 002—(Diversity and Cultural Competence): Understand diversity issues and cultural competencies related to school counseling and environments that promote respect and affirmation for all students.

28. A high school counselor is concerned that a very competent senior is not pursuing college. The English teacher reports that the student refuses to write a college admissions essay for a class assignment. In a meeting with the counselor, the student explains that it is necessary for the student to work since the father has been deported and the family needs immediate income. The student states that there is no point in planning for college. The counselor can best help the student by:

- A. advising the student to join a peer support group and checking in with the student on a regular basis.
- B. explaining that this mindset toward college is likely to have a significant negative effect on the student's long-term success.
- C. putting the student in contact with an immigration lawyer who can provide assistance to the family.
- D. discussing how going to college could benefit the family in the long run and facilitating access to needed resources.

Answer _____

29. A school counselor can most effectively promote appreciation among school staff for students' diverse characteristics by consistently communicating which of the following concepts?

- A. Teachers are in the best position to uncover students' talents and abilities.
- B. Each student has unique strengths and assets that they bring to the educational process.
- C. Every student is capable of the highest level of academic achievement.
- D. Educators have an obligation to take whatever steps needed to ensure student success.

Answer _____

Domain II—The Comprehensive School Counseling Program

Competency 003—(Guidance): Understand instructional practices and strategies for facilitating students' educational, career, personal, and social growth and development as articulated in *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*.

30. A student is working to achieve behavioral goals. Which of the following approaches to providing feedback is likely to be most effective in promoting the student's continued progress?

- A. acknowledging specific positive actions the student has taken related to targeted behaviors
- B. sending the student occasional notes recognizing an overall improvement in behavior
- C. commenting on general behavior traits, such as persistence, that the student has demonstrated
- D. inviting the student to a lunch to discuss ongoing challenges and successes in improving behavior

Answer _____

31. According to *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*, which of the following competency indicators in the area of postsecondary and career readiness would be most appropriate to introduce at the primary level?

- A. Define the steps in the goal-setting process related to college and careers.
- B. Identify personal skills, interests, and abilities that may affect career choice.
- C. Evaluate the importance of setting realistic career goals and striving toward them.
- D. Distinguish between short-, intermediate-, and long-term career goals.

Answer _____

32. A school counselor is presenting a guidance lesson on wellness to a class of seventh-grade students who are gifted and talented. The students describe their average days as beginning early with school, transitioning to school-related extracurricular activities, participating in volunteering or language/music lessons, and finally having dinner and studying before bedtime. Which of the following student learning objectives would most appropriately address wellness for these students?

- A. Evaluate current ability to manage multiple responsibilities.
- B. Identify personal limits and boundaries necessary for effective self-care.
- C. Evaluate the benefits derived from self-care practices.
- D. Identify methods for controlling internal and external factors that create stress.

Answer _____

33. Which of the following scenarios best illustrates effective integration of guidance and academic curricula for elementary school students?

- A. The school counselor and classroom teacher co-teach a lesson on classroom rules and behavior expectations.
- B. Students who are studying a current event survey others about their opinions of the event and present the information to the class.
- C. The school counselor leads a guidance lesson on cooperation to help prepare students for an upcoming small-group project in social studies.
- D. Students use a variety of art materials to create individual vision boards that include at least one learning goal.

Answer _____

Competency 004—(Responsive Services): Understand techniques for designing supports and interventions to address the needs, concerns, and challenges affecting students' continued educational, career, personal, and social development.

34. Which of the following scenarios best illustrates an elementary school counselor providing responsive services at the remedial level?

- A. A school counselor meets with a student who has begun having temper outbursts in the classroom to determine what may be causing the behavior.
- B. A school counselor works with a student whose grades have recently declined to develop a study plan.
- C. A school counselor contacts Child Protective Services to report suspicions of physical abuse and neglect.
- D. A school counselor presents lessons on making friends to primary students at the beginning of the school year.

Answer _____

35. A school counselor is working with a sixth-grade student who becomes easily aggravated and verbally and physically aggressive when things do not go the student's way. The counselor and the student are working on a plan to develop the student's interpersonal effectiveness across settings. An effective plan for this purpose should focus on which of the following goals?

- A. assisting the student in identifying strategies to apply when interacting with others in the school
- B. working with the student and family to locate an outside behavioral therapist
- C. asking the student to reflect on personal values and beliefs
- D. helping the student develop awareness of how to generalize behaviors to different settings

Answer _____

Competency 005—(Individual Planning): Understand techniques and strategies for guiding students in planning, monitoring, and managing their individual educational, career, personal, and social development.

36. A high school junior expresses interest in a career in architectural engineering or computer programming. The student's grade point average is 3.2, with As in drafting, mathematics, and science and mostly Cs in English, history, and Spanish. Which of the following suggestions by the school counselor would best help the student in determining which of the following career paths would be most suitable?

- A. conducting research on postsecondary options in the selected careers
- B. participating in a job-shadowing program
- C. taking a personality assessment and career interest inventory
- D. completing a generic college application

Answer _____

37. Not long after course selections have been made, a student comes to the school counselor requesting to drop one elective and add a construction course in its place. Which of the following questions would be most important for the counselor to consider before placing the student in the construction course?

- A. Does the course match the student's interests and desired endorsement?
- B. What is the number of requests for the course schoolwide?
- C. Are there peers already taking the course with whom the student is familiar?
- D. Is the course taught by an engaging and flexible teacher?

Answer _____

38. A high school student meets with the school counselor to select courses for the upcoming school year. The student plans to attend college to become a biologist after graduation. The student has excelled in all of the science courses taken at the high school while maintaining a B average in other courses. Given this information, which of the following actions by the counselor would best support the student?

- A. working with the student and nearby colleges to arrange dual enrollment in science courses
- B. registering the student for the next administration of college entrance exams
- C. helping the student research summer enrichment programs in the sciences offered by colleges in the area
- D. exploring options with the student for early graduation and college entrance

Answer _____

Competency 006—(Systems Support): Understand procedures, processes, and strategies for providing systems support.

39. In which of the following situations is a school counselor most clearly providing systems support?
- A. To address a teacher's concerns about negative interactions between students, a school counselor provides a guidance lesson on effective communication.
 - B. Following a serious flooding event in the community, a school counselor provides small-group counseling to students who are having trouble coping.
 - C. As part of the postsecondary planning process, a school counselor instructs high school students in the use of various online career exploration tools.
 - D. A school counselor participates as a member of the school's data-analysis team to identify achievement gaps and develop plans for addressing the gaps.

Answer _____

40. A school counselor has designed a program of professional growth activities for staff on strategies for creating caring and supportive learning communities. The counselor can most effectively promote use of the strategies presented by including which of the following elements in the program?
- A. research supporting the strategies highlighted during the training
 - B. techniques that teachers can apply immediately in their classrooms
 - C. instructions for creating materials needed to implement the strategies
 - D. lists of resources on related topics that teachers can investigate as needed

Answer _____

41. A school counselor will be leading a new collaboration with a team of teachers, parents/guardians, and community members to support students' academic success. The counselor can best promote effective teamwork among group members by taking which of the following actions?
- A. rotating responsibility for facilitating discussions among group members
 - B. helping the group select one team member to be a final authority when decision making has reached a stalemate
 - C. requesting that team members submit topics to be included on the meeting agenda
 - D. working with team members to establish group norms for communication and interaction that enable each member to provide input

Answer _____

Competency 007—(Program Management): Understand the foundational components of and procedures for developing, implementing, and evaluating the comprehensive school counseling program.

42. Use the excerpt below from a needs assessment survey for elementary school teachers to answer the question that follows.

Needs Assessment Survey
Please indicate how important it is to address the following topics with students.

Topic	Very	Somewhat	Not at All
1. Getting along with others	78%	12%	10%
2. Teasing and bullying	70%	15%	15%
3. Dealing with change	38%	34%	28%
4. Stress	30%	25%	45%
5. Inattention	25%	35%	40%
6. Not accepting people's differences	68%	15%	17%
7. Understanding personal abilities	32%	20%	48%

Based on the survey, the data most clearly suggest that the school counseling program should make which of the following overarching goals for students a priority?

- A. developing positive social skills
- B. understanding self
- C. learning effective coping strategies
- D. self-regulating behavior

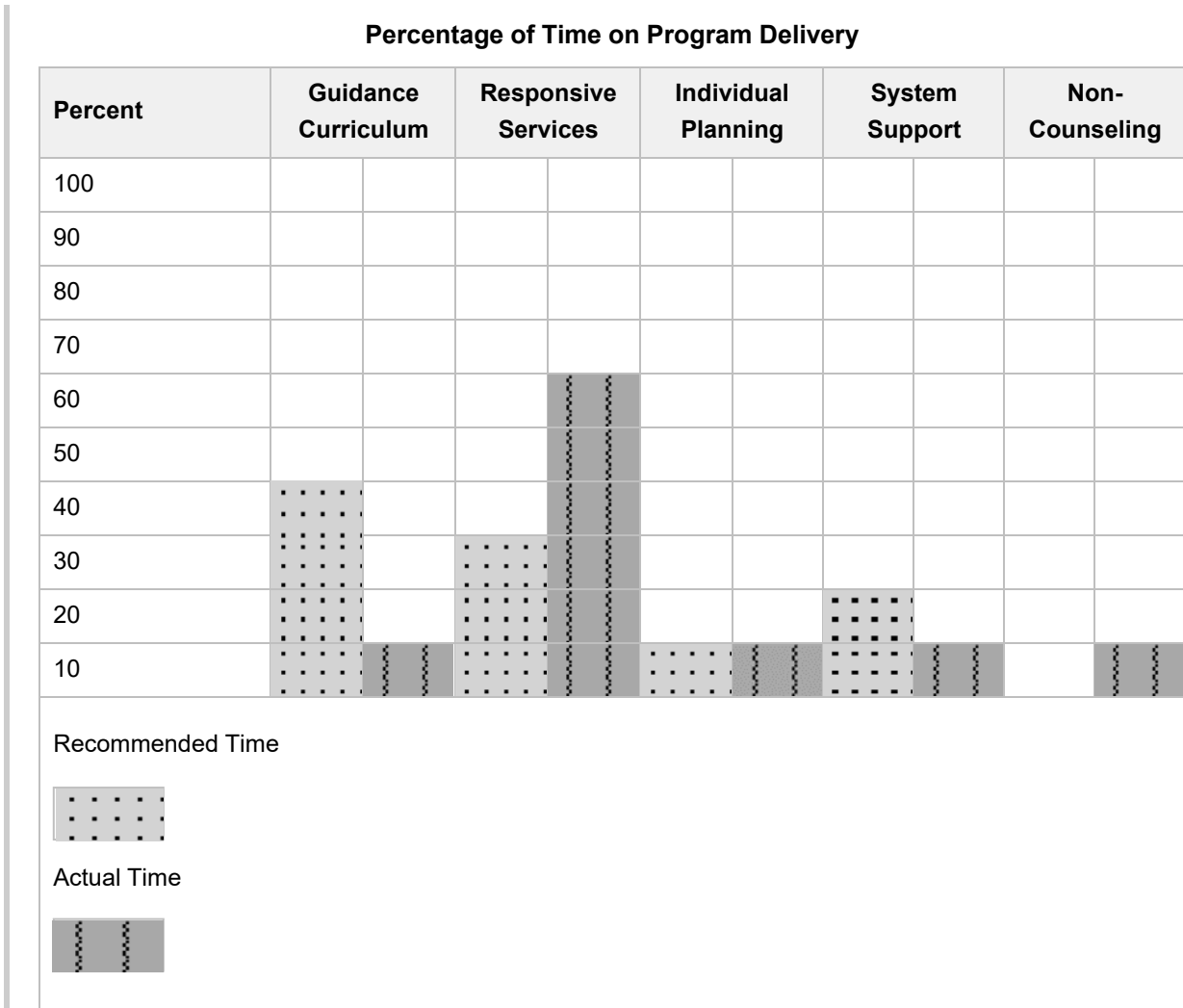
Answer _____

43. Within the context of *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*, the primary purpose of the responsive services component of a school counseling program is to:

- A. guide students as they manage their individual educational, career, personal, and social development.
- B. intervene on behalf of students whose immediate concerns or circumstances put them at risk.
- C. use differentiated instructional approaches and lessons to teach students transferrable skills.
- D. coordinate resources and activities on campus and in the community that indirectly benefit students.

Answer _____

44. Use the information below to answer the question that follows.



An elementary school counselor recently gathered data related to time spent in the four service delivery components for the previous school year. Based on these data, a decrease in the amount of time dedicated to responsive services would be appropriately redirected toward which of the following components of the comprehensive school counseling program?

- A. Guidance Curriculum
- B. Individual Planning
- C. System Support
- D. Noncounseling

Answer _____

Domain III—The Professional School Counselor

Competency 008—(Communication, Consultation, and Collaboration): Understand practices and strategies for effective communication, consultation, and collaboration within the school and community.

45. At the beginning of each school year, a school counselor works with the school principal to arrange brief presentations to teachers, families, and community partners about the school counseling program. In tailoring these presentations for each stakeholder audience, the counselor should emphasize which of the following approaches?
- A. distributing handouts that outline how to access counseling services at the school and district levels
 - B. reassuring stakeholders of the school counselor's expertise in providing effective counseling services
 - C. using an open format that allows individual stakeholders to pose questions about needed counseling services
 - D. describing the integral role of various counseling services in helping students achieve school success

Answer _____

46. An elementary school counselor who has been working with a student on self-regulation in the classroom setting wants to bring the student's parents/guardians into the process. Which of the following approaches by the counselor would best facilitate the parents'/guardians' involvement?
- A. arranging for the parents/guardians to observe how the strategies are being implemented in the classroom
 - B. sharing with the parents/guardians specific strategies that are being used at school that are applicable to the home environment
 - C. asking the parents/guardians to provide feedback on any changes in the student's behavior outside of school
 - D. holding a meeting with the parents/guardians to discuss the relationship between the student's behavior and school success

Answer _____

Competency 009—(Professional Practice): Understand the roles, responsibilities, and orientation of the professional school counselor and legal and ethical standards of practice in school counseling.

47. According to *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*, a school counselor's activities within the Program Management Domain should primarily focus on which of the following goals?
- A. promoting understanding and application of professional rules, policies, regulations, and guidelines in programs
 - B. providing proactive guidance to assist students in developing and applying skills for optimal growth during the school years and beyond
 - C. using professional expertise to help stakeholders understand individual behavior and human relationships
 - D. organizing resources and activities in response to identified needs and priorities to support the total educational program

Answer _____

48. A middle school counselor regularly participates in grade-level planning teams. In this context, it would be most important for the counselor to take the lead in which of the following areas?

- A. providing resources related to current topics being discussed to facilitate the team's decision making
- B. negotiating a positive resolution of conflicts that arise between members of the team
- C. helping the team identify strategies for integrating guidance-related learning goals into the academic curriculum
- D. maintaining written notes of discussions as documentation of the team's processes and decisions

Answer _____

Clustered Questions

Use the information below to answer the two questions that follow.

A middle school counselor is determining topics to include as part of the guidance curriculum. The counselor surveyed students about the relevance of several potential topics. The survey results for sixth-grade students are shown below.

**Student Survey Results
(144 students responding)**

	4	3	2	1
1. Substance Abuse	30	38	44	32
2. Dealing with Stress	92	23	10	19
3. Study Skills	67	45	32	0
4. Making Friends	71	28	31	14
5. Career Decisions	24	85	20	15
6. Social Media	26	33	42	43
7. Understanding Myself	18	48	57	21
8. Getting Along with Parents/Guardians	43	29	34	38

4 = Very Important
3 = Somewhat Important
2 = Not Very Important
1 = Not Important

Competency 003—(Guidance): Understand instructional practices and strategies for facilitating students' educational, career, personal, and social growth and development as articulated in *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*.

49. The survey data suggest that sixth-grade students would benefit most from guidance lessons that focus on which of the following broad topics?

- A. adjusting to the middle school environment
- B. developing communication skills
- C. choosing appropriate middle school courses
- D. being safe in an online environment

Answer _____

Competency 007—(Program Management): Understand the foundational components of and procedures for developing, implementing, and evaluating the comprehensive school counseling program.

50. The school counselor is considering implementation of a grade-level program to address students' primary areas of need. Which of the following grade-level programs is most justified by these data?

- A. a drug education program to help students develop and practice strategies for resisting pressure to use drugs or alcohol
- B. a character education program to promote students' ability to make sound personal decisions
- C. an advisory program to help students form connections and develop strategies for managing academic responsibilities
- D. an after-school guest speaker program to introduce students to resources in the community

Answer _____

Preparation Manual

Section 4: Sample Selected-Response Answers and Rationales School Counselor (252)

This section presents some sample exam questions for you to review as part of your preparation for the exam. To demonstrate how each competency may be assessed, sample questions are accompanied by the competency that they measure. While studying, you may wish to read the competency before and after you consider each sample question. Please note that the competency statements do not appear on the actual exam.

For each sample exam question, there is a correct answer and a rationale for each answer option. The sample questions are included to illustrate the formats and types of questions you will see on the exam; however, your performance on the sample questions should not be viewed as a predictor of your performance on the actual exam.

Selected-Response Questions with Rationales

Each sample exam question here includes the correct answer and a rationale for each answer option.

Domain I—Knowledge of Learners

Competency 001—(Human Development and Learning): Understand theories and processes of human development and learning as well as factors that influence development and learning.

1. A middle school has identified a significant number of students who are at risk for academic failure and dropping out of school. In addition to academic supports for the students, the school counselor should advocate for programs that focus on which of the following goals?

- A. enhancing the development of the students' skills in the area of interpersonal communication
- B. providing opportunities for the students to mentor students at the elementary school level
- C. increasing the number of community-based enrichment experiences for the students
- D. helping the students develop a sense of connectedness and belonging within the school

Answer

Option D is correct because a sense of connectedness is associated with enhanced levels of emotional well-being and increases in academic performance. A sense of connectedness and belonging is also associated with lower dropout rates. **Option A is incorrect** because a program focusing on the goals of enhancing the development of the students' skills in the area of interpersonal communication could help students with their interpersonal skills but would not necessarily help prevent them from dropping out of school. **Option B is incorrect** because mentoring programs for younger students help give middle school students a sense of purpose but are not associated with reduced dropout rates. **Option C is incorrect** because increasing the number of community-based enrichment experiences would encourage students' greater participation in the community but would not address the social and emotional support students need to remain in school.

2. A middle school includes a significant number of students who are recent refugees from political unrest and violence in their home countries. The school counselors can meet the needs of these students most effectively by taking which of the following steps?

- A. designing activities to facilitate the students' acculturation to their new communities
- B. conducting research on the social systems in the students' various home countries
- C. scheduling individual counseling sessions with the students and adult family members
- D. obtaining a migration narrative of students' lives before, during, and after leaving their home countries

Answer

Option D is correct because obtaining a migration narrative of students' lives before, during, and after leaving their home countries would provide the school counselor with the insights needed to effectively meet the unique needs of students who are refugees by familiarizing themselves with the students' background information. Refugees often experience various traumas and basic needs being unmet. An understanding of students' unique experiences will help the school counselor effectively meet their needs. **Option A is incorrect** because acculturation is not a culturally responsive practice and does not address the needs of students who are new refugees. **Option B is incorrect** because this step provides background information on what students' lives might have been like generally, but it does not provide any individualized or specific information. **Option C is incorrect** because students and their families may or may not require individual counseling sessions. This could not be determined until the counselor is aware of the specific needs of individual students and their families.

Competency 002—(Diversity and Cultural Competence): Understand diversity issues and cultural competencies related to school counseling and environments that promote respect and affirmation for all students.

3. The demographics of a high school's population have changed over the past three years. In response to this trend, the school's achievement gap has widened. Which of the following schoolwide practices would best help the school counselor reverse this trend?

- A. ensuring equitable access for students to advanced learning opportunities through ongoing student readiness identification
- B. adopting a prescribed curriculum for students with pre-differentiated lessons and instructional sequences
- C. emphasizing homogeneous grouping practices to target skill needs related to grade-level standards
- D. incorporating social and emotional learning content into academic programs across grade levels

Answer

Option A is correct because ensuring equitable access for students to advanced learning opportunities through ongoing student readiness identification as a schoolwide practice will enable the school counselor to address potential achievement gaps and identify necessary supports and interventions. In an equitable learning environment, students of all backgrounds have the same opportunities to learn and develop their knowledge. Identifying student readiness for various learning opportunities helps ensure that all students have the prerequisite knowledge and support to succeed. **Option B is incorrect** because adopting a prescribed curriculum for students with pre-differentiated lessons and instructional sequences may be responsive to the needs of some students but not to the needs of other students. **Option C is incorrect** because homogeneous grouping is most effective for targeted skill instruction and not as a schoolwide practice for promoting student achievement. **Option D is incorrect** because this step implies that students in demographic groups that are increasing have needs in the social and emotional domain that students in other groups do not have. This practice is useful for all students and does not address potential changes as a result of demographic trends.

4. A middle school counselor works with teachers to implement community conferencing in their classrooms. Community conferences involve the participation of each person affected by an inappropriate or hurtful behavior and allow all stakeholders to contribute to the conflict resolution process. The counselor's efforts in this area are most likely to contribute to which of the following schoolwide outcomes?

- A. helping reduce disciplinary referrals by engaging students in righting wrongs and repairing harm done
- B. adopting consistent strategies for de-escalating highly charged conflict situations
- C. promoting students' ability to function effectively in educational and workplace settings
- D. refocusing staff and students' attention on learning and academic achievement

Answer

Option A is correct because the process of community conferencing allows students affected by the conflict to state their feelings and perspectives. This helps those students who have caused harm to acknowledge their actions and enables both parties to move forward in negotiating mutually agreeable outcomes or consequences. Community conferencing is one effective method of de-escalating conflicts. **Option B is incorrect** because strategies for de-escalation depend in large part on the nature of the charged situation. There is not a one-size-fits-all remedy to interpersonal conflicts. **Option C is incorrect** because effective functioning in educational and workplace settings requires a range of skills. Community conferencing focuses on skills for responding to a specific situation and its outcomes. **Option D is incorrect** because community conferencing focuses solely on interpersonal actions and conflict resolution, which by its nature directs attention to social issues rather than academic issues.

Domain II—The Comprehensive School Counseling Program

Competency 003—(Guidance): Understand instructional practices and strategies for facilitating students' educational, career, personal, and social growth and development as articulated in *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*.

5. An elementary school counselor works with teachers to provide explicit instruction and reinforcement of social skills such as cooperation, self-regulation, and social communication. The counselor and teachers can best promote students' ability to apply these skills effectively by taking which of the following steps?

- A. focusing on one skill until students demonstrate mastery in varied contexts
- B. implementing peer evaluation of students' use of the targeted skills
- C. identifying ways to embed the targeted skills into daily classroom activities
- D. introducing skills through guidance lessons before implementing in the classroom

Answer

Option C is correct because embedding the targeted skills into daily classroom activities gives students an opportunity to practice the skills in different contexts. This step also allows the teacher to provide immediate feedback on students' application of the skills. **Option A is incorrect** because many of the identified skills are interrelated. Learning skills in isolation is not considered best practice. **Option B is incorrect** because students who have not yet mastered the skills themselves are not in a position to evaluate their peers' use of the skills. **Option D is incorrect** because the school counselor is already working with teachers to provide explicit instruction and reinforcement of skills.

6. Use the information below to answer the question that follows.

Middle School Curriculum Survey
(Percentage of students rating each topic as very important)

Topic	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Managing multiple deadlines	77	65	62
Study skills	75	58	55
Time-management skills	79	63	66
Organizational strategies	80	70	68
Attendance	60	52	48
Bully prevention	56	53	50
Friendship skills	52	48	46
Conflict resolution	49	47	43
Substance abuse	37	39	45
Career exploration	35	48	69

A middle school counselor reviews the results of a student survey to guide guidance curriculum planning. Based on these data, the counselor should plan to incorporate instruction across grade levels to build skills in which of the following areas?

- A. relationship formation
- B. stress management
- C. interpersonal communication
- D. executive functioning

Answer

Option D is correct because a high percentage (60% or more) of students across all grade levels rated managing multiple deadlines, time management, and organizational strategies as high priorities. These skills are all components of executive functioning. **Option A is incorrect** because students did not rate either friendship skills or conflict resolution as high priorities. These are the only two options on the survey related to relationships. **Option B is incorrect** because stress management was not an area rated by students on the survey. **Option C is incorrect** because friendship skills, which involve interpersonal communication, was indicated as an area of interest or need by slightly more than half or less than half of students across grade levels.

Competency 004—(Responsive Services): Understand techniques for designing supports and interventions to address the needs, concerns, and challenges affecting students' continued educational, career, personal, and social development.

7. In response to an increase in the number of students demonstrating social and emotional challenges, an elementary school implements a schoolwide program to promote students' skills in these domains. The school counselor and teachers gather baseline data and then work together to identify student activities to help students develop targeted

social and emotional skills. Near the end of the first year of implementation, the counselor would like to evaluate the effectiveness of the program in achieving its goals. The counselor can most effectively accomplish this task by including which of the following data-collection tools in the evaluation process?

- A. documentation of teachers' use of the program's activities in their classes
- B. assessments of students' academic performance across school settings
- C. records of disciplinary actions in classrooms and other school environments
- D. checklists of students' mindsets and behaviors with regard to the targeted skills

Answer

Option D is correct because checklists of students' mindsets and behaviors with regard to targeted skills is an effective approach for assessing students' progress and growth. Areas in which students demonstrate progress or growth indicate that the program is working while areas in which students' development remained static indicate a need for modification of one or more aspects of the program. **Option A is incorrect** because documentation of teachers' use of the program's activities provides participation data rather than effectiveness data. **Options B and C are incorrect** because academic and disciplinary actions may be influenced by a multitude of factors beyond the program's activities. Additionally, the program's focus is on social and emotional skills, not specifically on academics or behavior.

8. A fourth-grade student is referred to the school counselor due to weekly behavioral referrals. The student has had altercations with classmates on the playground and states, "I want to be friends with classmates, but I don't know how to get their attention without making them mad." The counselor asks the student to imagine that a magic wand waves over the student and the actions that make classmates angry would be gone. The counselor then asks what would be the first change the classmates would observe. The counselor's technique is most clearly aligned with which of the following counseling approaches?

- A. reality therapy
- B. rational emotive behavior therapy
- C. systems therapy
- D. solution-focused brief therapy

Answer

Option D is correct because solution-focused brief therapy is a short-term goal-oriented approach that helps individuals change by constructing solutions rather than dwelling on problems. The magic wand strategy is one technique associated with solution-focused brief therapy. **Option A is incorrect** because reality therapy is a form of cognitive behavioral psychotherapy that focuses on improving present relationships and circumstances while avoiding discussion of past events. **Option B is incorrect** because rational emotive behavior therapy is a short-term form of psychotherapy that helps individuals identify self-defeating behaviors and thoughts and feelings, challenge the rationality of those feelings, and replace them with healthier, more productive beliefs. **Option C is incorrect** because systems therapy seeks to address how negative behavior is a component of the family system including interactional patterns and dynamics.

Competency 005—(Individual Planning): Understand techniques and strategies for guiding students in planning, monitoring, and managing their individual educational, career, personal, and social development.

9. High school counselors encourage students to consult the College Navigator Web site when applying for postsecondary programs. The counselors' advisement is appropriate because this resource enables students to:
- A. locate loans, scholarships, and grants to finance the cost of various programs.
 - B. submit documents required by multiple programs through a single clearinghouse.
 - C. compare similar programs in terms of cost, resources, and measures of quality.
 - D. contact representatives of different programs directly for questions and support.

Answer

Option C is correct because the College Navigator Web site is a consumer tool created by the U.S. Department of Education and its National Center for Education statistics that includes institutional data on programs offered, retention and graduation rates, prices, degrees awarded, and campus safety. Teaching students to use the College Navigator Web site is beneficial to high school students because they will be able to explore and compare the characteristics of a range of institutions at a time and point of need as they make decisions about postsecondary paths. **Option A is incorrect** because the College Navigator Web site is not a database of financial aid sources. **Option B is incorrect** because the College Navigator Web site does not provide the option of submitting applications through its site. **Option D is incorrect** because the College Navigator Web site does not include links or contact information for representatives of postsecondary programs.

10. A school counselor is working on individual planning with a student who has expressed a strong interest in earning a health science certificate offered at the high school. The counselor and the student work together to complete a four-year plan that includes graduation requirements as well as the required coursework to obtain the desired certification. The counselor's approach is likely to be most effective in helping the student build which of the following skills?
- A. understanding how to develop academic potential
 - B. enhancing the ability to manage responsibility
 - C. connecting educational goals and academic achievement
 - D. establishing long-term goals for career development

Answer

Option D is correct because the process of creating a four-year plan to accomplish a specific outcome is part of the student's long-term plan to earn the health science certificate. This approach prompts the student to think beyond the immediate school year. **Option A is incorrect** because the four-year plan and course selections do not focus on the student's academic potential, but on ensuring the student has the appropriate qualifications to earn the health science certificate. **Option B is incorrect** because the school counselor is guiding the student in the development of the four-year plan and course selection. The student is not assuming specific responsibilities in this process. **Option C is incorrect** because there is no interaction between the student and the school counselor on the topic of academic achievement.

11. A school counselor is a member of the school improvement committee focused on school safety. The counselor wants to integrate guidance and classroom lessons on strategies related to conflict resolution, personal safety, and problem solving as part of the plan, but the committee is hesitant about giving up instructional time for these lessons. Which of the following statements provides the best rationale for integrating the lessons?

- A. Students' school attendance will increase as a result of the integrated lessons.
- B. Many parents/guardians are not teaching these strategies in the home.
- C. Discipline referrals will decrease as a result of the integrated lessons.
- D. More students will have the opportunity to learn and apply these strategies.

Answer

Option D is correct because classroom guidance lessons are one of the most effective ways for the school counselor to implement instruction on specific topics. Students in all classes would be introduced to the same skills and would be able to apply them in various classroom scenarios. **Option A is incorrect** because there is no research linking students' school attendance to the development of skills related to conflict resolution, personal safety, and problem solving. **Option B is incorrect** because it is not the parents'/guardians' responsibility to provide primary instruction on topics related to school safety. **Option C is incorrect** because even though there may be some effects from the integrated lessons on student behavior, reducing discipline referrals is not the primary goal of the integrated lessons.

12. An elementary school has identified the need for a schoolwide antiviolence program based on a significant increase in discipline referrals for fighting. The school counselor will be involved in this effort. During the initial planning phase of the program, the counselor should take which of the following steps?

- A. meeting with classroom teachers to gather ideas about the potential root causes of students' use of violence
- B. consulting with colleagues in other schools about the methods that they have employed to address students' use of violence
- C. reviewing current research in violence prevention to identify strategies that have proven effective with similar student populations
- D. seeking guidance from local law enforcement agencies on techniques for preventing violence between students

Answer

Option C is correct because school programs should be research-based. Reviewing current research about violence-prevention strategies that have been effective with similar student populations would enable the school counselor to determine and provide school staff with information about which strategies are likely to be most effective for the school's student population. **Option A is incorrect** because hypothesizing about root causes of students' discipline issues, though an important part of program development, would most appropriately occur following collection and analysis of data related to increased fighting across grade levels and school settings. It is in this program development phase that prevention programs are matched to the school's specific needs. **Option B is incorrect** because strategies included in the program will be most effective if they are tailored to the needs of the school's student population. Consulting with colleagues in other schools may or may not provide appropriate information. **Option D is incorrect** because law enforcement agencies do not have expertise in how to prevent violence in educational settings. Agencies address community-wide violence prevention.

Competency 007—(Program Management): Understand the foundational components of and procedures for developing, implementing, and evaluating the comprehensive school counseling program.

13. Use the school district's mission statement below to answer the question that follows.

Our purpose, in partnership with families and the community, is to provide a safe and equitable educational environment that supports all students in developing essential academic skills, practicing lifelong learning and complex thinking, and becoming contributing citizens locally and globally.

Which of the following mission statements for a school counseling program most closely aligns with the school district's mission statement?

- A. The purpose of the school counseling program is to create an inclusive learning environment that helps students reach high levels of achievement and academic competence.
- B. The purpose of the school counseling program is to improve academic outcomes across all grade levels, enhance well-being for students and staff, and promote continuous learning for the school community.
- C. The purpose of the school counseling program is to respond to students' needs in the academic, college and career, and personal and social domains at time and point of need.
- D. The purpose of the school counseling program is to provide equitable access to curricula and services that support and empower all students to achieve their full academic and developmental potential.

Answer

Option D is correct because this statement includes all elements of an appropriate mission statement—the reason for the program's existence, its core purpose, who is served by the program, and desired outcomes. This statement aligns with the school's mission in the areas of equity, environment, and student potential. **Option A is incorrect** because this statement supports only high levels of academic achievement and competence and does not address students' total developmental needs. **Option B is incorrect** because this statement does not address the educational environment. **Option C is incorrect** because this statement does not address equity or lifelong learning and does not provide the goal of the program.

14. A school counselor is meeting with the principal to discuss reassigning noncounseling duties to other staff as appropriate. The counselor can best make the case for the reassignment of duties by using which of the following approaches?

- A. offering to make a presentation at a staff meeting on the distinction between noncounseling and counseling duties
- B. identifying counseling activities that would replace the noncounseling duties and the expected benefits for students
- C. providing weekly and monthly counseling calendars showing the amount of time spent on noncounseling duties
- D. sharing state and national standards for school counseling along with descriptions of what constitutes noncounseling duties

Answer

Option B is correct because this approach provides the principal with information that directly links changes in the school counselor's duties to improved outcomes for the school and for students. **Option A is incorrect** because offering to make a presentation at a staff meeting on the distinction between noncounseling and counseling duties would not be effective since other staff members do not have authority to change the school counselor's duties. **Option C is incorrect** because the calendars would document the amount of time spent on noncounseling duties but offer no rationale for making any changes to the school counselor's duties. **Option D is incorrect** because, while providing useful information to the principal, this approach does not provide any reasoning for change or describe how changes would support the students and the school.

15. Use the information below to answer the question that follows.

Program Assessment			
Conditions	Yes	No	Somewhat
Professionally certified school counselor	✓		
Access to the program by all students, teachers, and families	✓		
Parents/guardians as full educational partners			✓
Administrative commitment and support			✓
Positive work environment	✓		

Resources	Yes	No	Somewhat
Time and opportunity for designing and evaluating the program		✓	
Adequate budget	✓		
Adequate materials, supplies, and equipment			✓
Sufficient and appropriate facilities	✓		

A new school counselor recently completed an informal assessment of the current programmatic conditions and resources for the school counseling program. Based on the data provided, the counselor should make which of the following issues the program's *first* priority?

- A. informing members of the school community about the school counseling program's goals and objectives
- B. reallocating funding for ancillary materials to support the school counseling program's guidance curriculum and instruction
- C. improving communication with students' families about available school counseling resources and support
- D. establishing an understanding with the school principal regarding the integral role of the school counseling program

Answer

Option D is correct because the commitment and support of the school principal provides the foundation for how the school counseling program will function within the school. Without this support, the school counselor is likely to find it difficult to allocate time and resources appropriately. **Option A is incorrect** because informing the school community about the school counseling program's goals and objectives is not one of the areas assessed by the school counselor. **Option B is incorrect** because the data in the assessment do not indicate that there is a need to reallocate funding. This would not be the school counselor's first priority. **Option C is incorrect** because working in partnership with parents/guardians was rated as "Somewhat" by the school counselor and areas rated as "No" would be higher priorities.

Domain III—The Professional School Counselor

Competency 008—(Communication, Consultation, and Collaboration): Understand practices and strategies for effective communication, consultation, and collaboration within the school and community.

16. A teacher consults the school counselor about a student whose behavior is causing the teacher to lose patience. The teacher asks the counselor for ideas about how to help the student, explaining that the student is very active and is causing problems by disrupting quiet work times in the classroom. Which of the following responses by the counselor best illustrates the appropriate consultant role?

- A. "Maybe you can stop the behavior by turning the student's desk away from peers' desks."
- B. "Yes, I can sympathize with that. I used to have students who behaved like that when I was a teacher."
- C. "Have you contacted the student's parents? They can often make sure that their child behaves at school."
- D. "You seem really bothered by this student's actions. Can you give me a specific example of this behavior?"

Answer

Option D is correct because in the behavioral consultation model, the first step for the school counselor and the teacher to take is define the behavior in question as specifically and concretely as possible. Another feature of effective consultation is to take a collaborative approach to solving a problem. **Option A is incorrect** because the school counselor is providing a recommendation for addressing a situation without being fully informed. **Option B is incorrect** because expressing sympathy is not a feature of effective consultation and does not promote a solution to the problem at hand. **Option C is incorrect** because this response puts the responsibility for addressing the student's behavior at school on the parents/guardians when the teacher, with the support of the school counselor, should address the problem at school.

17. A school counselor can best ensure that the developmental school counseling program is responsive to the needs of all students by taking which of the following actions?

- A. encouraging the principal to meet with teachers to discuss current ineffective instructional practices
- B. providing regular classroom instruction to students on explicit test-taking strategies to use on assessments
- C. arranging for school specialist staff to participate with teachers in instructional planning meetings
- D. providing professional development on strategies for promoting school success for diverse groups of students

Answer

Option D is correct because the school counselor has extensive knowledge of strategies for meeting the needs of many students. Providing professional development enables the school counselor to share this knowledge with school staff, which will ultimately help ensure that the school is able to meet the diverse needs of its students.

Option A is incorrect because it is not the school counselor's role to evaluate teachers' instructional practices or to suggest to the principal how to perform administrative duties. **Option B is incorrect** because this action supports students in only a very focused area—test taking strategies—and provides the same support to all students rather than meeting individual needs. **Option C is incorrect** because this action is not within the school counselor's authority to implement.

18. When coordinating out-of-school referrals for students, school counselors have which of the following obligations?

- A. providing the referral agency or individual with an informal diagnosis of the student's key issues and needs
- B. making formal introductions of the student, the student's parents/guardians, and parties who will be providing outside services
- C. assembling data related to the student's functioning and the interventions that have been implemented to date
- D. conducting an exit interview with the student and the student's parents/guardians for the referral agency or individual

Answer

Option C is correct because referrals are generally made only after in-school interventions have been tried. It will be important to the providing agency or individual to know the student's current level of functioning and what strategies have already been implemented. This enables the agency or individual to determine where to start when addressing the student's needs. **Option A is incorrect** because school counselors do not make diagnoses, either informally or formally, of student's issues and needs. Diagnoses are beyond the scope of the school counselor's role. **Option B is incorrect** because, though it is a good way to facilitate the transition to a provider, the school counselor is not obligated to take this step. **Option D is incorrect** because an exit interview is not required or recommended. The providing agency or individual will conduct intake interviews as needed.

Competency 009—(Professional Practice): Understand the roles, responsibilities, and orientation of the professional school counselor and legal and ethical standards of practice in school counseling.

19. A high school counselor who is analyzing enrollment data for advanced courses offered by the school notes that students who are members of minority populations are significantly underrepresented in these courses. The counselor can best advocate for educational equity for these students by taking which of the following initial approaches?

- A. conducting focus groups with students who are members of minority populations to identify reasons for their disinterest in selecting advanced courses
- B. presenting the data at a faculty meeting and providing suggestions for expanding the criteria for admission to advanced courses
- C. surveying members of the faculty to understand their perceptions of students from minority populations with regard to advanced courses
- D. providing the data to school administrators and developing outreach strategies targeting specific students for enrollment in advanced courses

Answer

Option B is correct because faculty may not be aware of the underrepresentation, and expanding criteria for admission to advanced courses will give more students the opportunity to participate in advanced learning opportunities. Advanced course requirements often focus on students' grades in prerequisite courses to the exclusion of other qualifying abilities such as creativity, problem solving, and critical thinking. **Option A is incorrect** because this approach assumes that students who are members of minority populations lack interest in pursuing advanced coursework. **Option C is incorrect** because students' admission to advanced courses is usually not a subjective decision on the part of teachers; rather, schools or districts have specific policies related to enrollment in advanced courses. **Option D is incorrect** because, even though it is important for the administrator to be aware of the data, this approach is very narrow in targeting only certain students rather than broadening opportunities for all students.

20. An emerging issue of importance in the field of school counseling is developing ways to enhance services in which of the following areas?

- A. supporting school administrators in formulating school improvement plans
- B. evaluating the effectiveness of various instructional strategies in classrooms
- C. promoting the ethical use of information and technologies within the educational environment
- D. providing preventive and responsive programs that address mental health needs

Answer

Option D is correct because today's students and families experience a wide range of challenges. The provision of school mental health services is essential to safe schools. Increasing issues such as anxiety, depression, bullying, school violence, abuse, and poverty present barriers to students' and families' effective functioning. Building resilience and promoting social and emotional learning as part of addressing mental health needs provides students and families with the skills they need to meet challenges in many areas. **Option A is incorrect** because school counselors are only one group that participates in formulating school improvement plans by providing input related to the school counseling program. **Option B is incorrect** because this area is beyond the scope of the school counselor's professional role. **Option C is incorrect** because, though a worthy service area, promoting the ethical use of information and technologies in the educational environment is an issue that should be addressed by all school professionals.

21. An exemplary comprehensive school counseling program is most appropriately described in which of the following ways?

- A. developmental, systematic, and sequential in nature
- B. process oriented in the provision of services
- C. defined, organized, and implemented independently
- D. reactive in addressing challenges as they arise

Answer

Option A is correct because, according to the *Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*, exemplary programs are developmentally appropriate for students at different grade levels and follow a systematic and sequential service model designed to ensure that students achieve their full academic, personal, social, and career potential. **Option B is incorrect** because exemplary school counseling programs are outcome-oriented and student-centered in their focus. **Option C is incorrect** because exemplary school counseling programs are implemented as a core element of the overall school program. Exemplary programs are flexible in meeting the needs of students and families. **Option D is incorrect** because exemplary comprehensive school counseling programs strive to be proactive by providing preventive programs and building resilience in students, families, and the community.

Clustered Questions

Use the information below to answer the four questions that follow.

A high school counselor's use-of-time tracking table for the first six months of the school year is shown below as well as a summary of a midyear evaluation of the counselor by the school principal.

**School Counselor Use of Time
(Percentage of time)**

Month	Guidance Curriculum	Individual Planning	Responsive Services	Support System	Non-Counseling Duties
September	30	25	20	7	18
October	26	24	30	9	11
November	22	25	33	10	10
December	23	20	29	13	15
January	26	20	31	10	13
February	30	19	29	10	12
Average	26	22	29	8.2	13

School Counselor Evaluation Summary

Domain	Rating
Program Management	2
Guidance	2
Counseling	3
Consultation	5
Coordination	4
Student Assessment	5
Advocacy	2
Leadership	2
Professional Behavior	4
Professional Standards	5

Key:

- 5 = Clearly outstanding
- 4 = Exceeds standard
- 3 = Meets standard
- 2 = Below expectation
- 1 = Unsatisfactory

Competency 007—(Program Management): Understand the foundational components of and procedures for developing, implementing, and evaluating the comprehensive school counseling program.

22. Analysis of the data provided suggests that the school counselor can bring the school counseling program into better alignment with recommendations for program balance in *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs* by taking which of the following actions?

- A. providing additional support to school administrators in the area of student assessment
- B. increasing collaborative activities with instructional staff on defining classroom guidance topics and needs
- C. dedicating a larger number of weekly slots for teacher and parent/guardian consultation
- D. reevaluating the time spent on non-counseling duties to identify tasks that could be performed by other available school staff

Answer

Option D is correct because *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs* recommends minimizing noncounseling duties to the greatest extent possible in order to free more time for school counseling services in the primary domains. According to the data provided, the school counselor is spending a disproportionate amount of time on noncounseling duties. **Option A is incorrect** because *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs* makes recommendations related to systems support, but this component does not include support to school administrators in the area of student assessment. **Option B is incorrect** because the data show that the school counselor is devoting an appropriate amount of time to guidance activities and is rated as clearly outstanding in the area of consultation. **Option C is incorrect** because the school counselor is already engaged in responsive services at a level that is aligned with *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*.

23. These data suggest that the school counselor should primarily focus on which of the following goals for improving the services offered by the school counseling program?

- A. implementing small-group counseling sessions in response to student needs
- B. increasing emphasis on the individual planning component of the program
- C. taking a more active role in the creation of the school's mission and vision
- D. meeting regularly with the principal to discuss ongoing school needs

Answer

Option B is correct because, at the high school level, a greater proportion of the school counselor's time should be devoted to individual planning and advisement of students than to other components. **Option A is incorrect** because small-group counseling sessions fall under the domain of responsive services, an area in which the school counselor is devoting an appropriate proportion of time. **Option C is incorrect** because the school's mission and vision do not directly influence the quality of the services offered by the school counseling program. The school's mission and vision serve as a broad framework for the school counseling program. **Option D is incorrect** because meeting with the principal to discuss school needs is part of system support and would not necessarily improve the quality of services offered by the school counseling program.

Competency 009—(Professional Practice): Understand the roles, responsibilities, and orientation of the professional school counselor and legal and ethical standards of practice in school counseling.

24. Which of the following professional development topics would best support the school counselor in addressing identified areas of need?

- A. Giving Students a Voice—Advocacy Strategies for School Counselors
- B. New Applications for Counseling Theory in Public Schools
- C. Integrating Service Learning and School Counseling Programs
- D. Emerging Roles for School Counselors in the School Organization

Answer

Option A is correct because advocacy is one of the areas in which the school counselor is rated lowest and below expectations. Advocacy is necessary to assure students' needs are addressed and the counseling program is a priority. **Option B is incorrect** because the school counselor is currently meeting standards in the area of counseling. **Option C is incorrect** because the school counselor is currently meeting or exceeding standards in areas related to service learning, such as counseling and coordination. **Option D is incorrect** because the school counselor appears to have a good understanding of the counselor's role in the school organization, given high ratings in professional standards, coordination, and consultation.

25. The school counselor has identified two professional development workshops to address areas of need revealed by the data. Which of the following additional strategies would best help the counselor improve professional practice in the second half of the school year?

- A. making video recordings of counseling sessions with individual students given appropriate permissions
- B. subscribing to one or more peer-reviewed journals on school counseling techniques and practices
- C. engaging in ongoing reflection and self-assessment of performance in relation to school counseling standards
- D. surveying teachers and other school staff periodically to determine levels of satisfaction

Answer

Option C is correct because reflection and self-assessment will allow the school counselor to focus on developing existing strengths or addressing gaps in skills to enhance future professional practice. Using professional, legal, and ethical standards as a guide for this reflection and self-assessment helps ensure that the school counselor is focusing on best practice. **Option A is incorrect** because this strategy is inappropriate. It places confidentiality of the counseling relationship at risk, jeopardizes parental permission for counseling, and may be in violation of district policy. **Option B is incorrect** because journals provide high-quality information, but there is no guarantee that the journals and their articles will address the school counselor's specific professional needs. **Option D is incorrect** because perception data gathered from teachers and other school staff do not provide information about the school counselor's skills and professional expertise in different areas.

Additional Selected-Response Questions

This section includes additional sample selected-response questions for you to review in preparation for the exam. The correct answer is provided for each question below.

Domain I—Knowledge of Learners

Competency 001—(Human Development and Learning): Understand theories and processes of human development and learning as well as factors that influence development and learning.

26. A four-year-old student is attending prekindergarten for the first time. During the first two weeks of school, the student cries to go home upon arrival at school. The student also throws or stomps on blocks. Which of the following responses by the school counselor to the student's parent/guardian would be most helpful?

- A. expressing concern that the student may be too young and should perhaps wait until the following year for school
- B. suggesting that the student see an outside therapist to address issues related to separation anxiety
- C. providing reassurance that the student's behaviors are age appropriate and will likely diminish over time
- D. recommending several alternate educational settings that might be more suitable for the student

Answer

Option C is correct.

27. A school counselor is working with a student who has above-average intelligence but consistently underachieves and feels discouraged. The counselor can work most effectively with this student to improve learning outcomes by engaging the student in which of the following tasks *first*?

- A. developing concrete plans for the future
- B. articulating needs and wants clearly
- C. improving communication with peers
- D. identifying personal strengths and abilities

Answer

Option D is correct.

Competency 002—(Diversity and Cultural Competence): Understand diversity issues and cultural competencies related to school counseling and environments that promote respect and affirmation for all students.

28. A high school counselor is concerned that a very competent senior is not pursuing college. The English teacher reports that the student refuses to write a college admissions essay for a class assignment. In a meeting with the counselor, the student explains that it is necessary for the student to work since the father has been deported and the family needs immediate income. The student states that there is no point in planning for college. The counselor can best help the student by:

- A. advising the student to join a peer support group and checking in with the student on a regular basis.
- B. explaining that this mindset toward college is likely to have a significant negative effect on the student's long-term success.
- C. putting the student in contact with an immigration lawyer who can provide assistance to the family.
- D. discussing how going to college could benefit the family in the long run and facilitating access to needed resources.

Answer

Option D is correct.

29. A school counselor can most effectively promote appreciation among school staff for students' diverse characteristics by consistently communicating which of the following concepts?

- A. Teachers are in the best position to uncover students' talents and abilities.
- B. Each student has unique strengths and assets that they bring to the educational process.
- C. Every student is capable of the highest level of academic achievement.
- D. Educators have an obligation to take whatever steps needed to ensure student success.

Answer

Option B is correct.

Domain II—The Comprehensive School Counseling Program

Competency 003—(Guidance): Understand instructional practices and strategies for facilitating students' educational, career, personal, and social growth and development as articulated in *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*.

30. A student is working to achieve behavioral goals. Which of the following approaches to providing feedback is likely to be most effective in promoting the student's continued progress?

- A. acknowledging specific positive actions the student has taken related to targeted behaviors
- B. sending the student occasional notes recognizing an overall improvement in behavior
- C. commenting on general behavior traits, such as persistence, that the student has demonstrated
- D. inviting the student to a lunch to discuss ongoing challenges and successes in improving behavior

Answer

Option A is correct.

31. According to *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*, which of the following competency indicators in the area of postsecondary and career readiness would be most appropriate to introduce at the primary level?

- A. Define the steps in the goal-setting process related to college and careers.
- B. Identify personal skills, interests, and abilities that may affect career choice.
- C. Evaluate the importance of setting realistic career goals and striving toward them.
- D. Distinguish between short-, intermediate-, and long-term career goals.

Answer

Option B is correct.

32. A school counselor is presenting a guidance lesson on wellness to a class of seventh-grade students who are gifted and talented. The students describe their average days as beginning early with school, transitioning to school-related extracurricular activities, participating in volunteering or language/music lessons, and finally having dinner and studying before bedtime. Which of the following student learning objectives would most appropriately address wellness for these students?

- A. Evaluate current ability to manage multiple responsibilities.
- B. Identify personal limits and boundaries necessary for effective self-care.
- C. Evaluate the benefits derived from self-care practices.
- D. Identify methods for controlling internal and external factors that create stress.

Answer

Option B is correct.

33. Which of the following scenarios best illustrates effective integration of guidance and academic curricula for elementary school students?

- A. The school counselor and classroom teacher co-teach a lesson on classroom rules and behavior expectations.
- B. Students who are studying a current event survey others about their opinions of the event and present the information to the class.
- C. The school counselor leads a guidance lesson on cooperation to help prepare students for an upcoming small-group project in social studies.
- D. Students use a variety of art materials to create individual vision boards that include at least one learning goal.

Answer

Option C is correct.

Competency 004—(Responsive Services): Understand techniques for designing supports and interventions to address the needs, concerns, and challenges affecting students' continued educational, career, personal, and social development.

34. Which of the following scenarios best illustrates an elementary school counselor providing responsive services at the remedial level?

- A. A school counselor meets with a student who has begun having temper outbursts in the classroom to determine what may be causing the behavior.
- B. A school counselor works with a student whose grades have recently declined to develop a study plan.
- C. A school counselor contacts Child Protective Services to report suspicions of physical abuse and neglect.
- D. A school counselor presents lessons on making friends to primary students at the beginning of the school year.

Answer

Option A is correct.

35. A school counselor is working with a sixth-grade student who becomes easily aggravated and verbally and physically aggressive when things do not go the student's way. The counselor and the student are working on a plan to develop the student's interpersonal effectiveness across settings. An effective plan for this purpose should focus on which of the following goals?

- A. assisting the student in identifying strategies to apply when interacting with others in the school
- B. working with the student and family to locate an outside behavioral therapist
- C. asking the student to reflect on personal values and beliefs
- D. helping the student develop awareness of how to generalize behaviors to different settings

Answer

Option A is correct.

Competency 005—(Individual Planning): Understand techniques and strategies for guiding students in planning, monitoring, and managing their individual educational, career, personal, and social development.

36. A high school junior expresses interest in a career in architectural engineering or computer programming. The student's grade point average is 3.2, with As in drafting, mathematics, and science and mostly Cs in English, history, and Spanish. Which of the following suggestions by the school counselor would best help the student in determining which of the following career paths would be most suitable?

- A. conducting research on postsecondary options in the selected careers
- B. participating in a job-shadowing program
- C. taking a personality assessment and career interest inventory
- D. completing a generic college application

Answer

Option C is correct.

37. Not long after course selections have been made, a student comes to the school counselor requesting to drop one elective and add a construction course in its place. Which of the following questions would be most important for the counselor to consider before placing the student in the construction course?

- A. Does the course match the student's interests and desired endorsement?
- B. What is the number of requests for the course schoolwide?
- C. Are there peers already taking the course with whom the student is familiar?
- D. Is the course taught by an engaging and flexible teacher?

Answer

Option A is correct.

38. A high school student meets with the school counselor to select courses for the upcoming school year. The student plans to attend college to become a biologist after graduation. The student has excelled in all of the science courses taken at the high school while maintaining a B average in other courses. Given this information, which of the following actions by the counselor would best support the student?

- A. working with the student and nearby colleges to arrange dual enrollment in science courses
- B. registering the student for the next administration of college entrance exams
- C. helping the student research summer enrichment programs in the sciences offered by colleges in the area
- D. exploring options with the student for early graduation and college entrance

Answer

Option A is correct.

Competency 006—(Systems Support): Understand procedures, processes, and strategies for providing systems support.

39. In which of the following situations is a school counselor most clearly providing systems support?

- A. To address a teacher's concerns about negative interactions between students, a school counselor provides a guidance lesson on effective communication.
- B. Following a serious flooding event in the community, a school counselor provides small-group counseling to students who are having trouble coping.
- C. As part of the postsecondary planning process, a school counselor instructs high school students in the use of various online career exploration tools.
- D. A school counselor participates as a member of the school's data-analysis team to identify achievement gaps and develop plans for addressing the gaps.

Answer

Option D is correct.

40. A school counselor has designed a program of professional growth activities for staff on strategies for creating caring and supportive learning communities. The counselor can most effectively promote use of the strategies presented by including which of the following elements in the program?

- A. research supporting the strategies highlighted during the training
- B. techniques that teachers can apply immediately in their classrooms
- C. instructions for creating materials needed to implement the strategies
- D. lists of resources on related topics that teachers can investigate as needed

Answer

Option B is correct.

41. A school counselor will be leading a new collaboration with a team of teachers, parents/guardians, and community members to support students' academic success. The counselor can best promote effective teamwork among group members by taking which of the following actions?

- A. rotating responsibility for facilitating discussions among group members
- B. helping the group select one team member to be a final authority when decision making has reached a stalemate
- C. requesting that team members submit topics to be included on the meeting agenda
- D. working with team members to establish group norms for communication and interaction that enable each member to provide input

Answer

Option D is correct.

Competency 007—(Program Management): Understand the foundational components of and procedures for developing, implementing, and evaluating the comprehensive school counseling program.

42. Use the excerpt below from a needs assessment survey for elementary school teachers to answer the question that follows.

Needs Assessment Survey
Please indicate how important it is to address the following topics with students.

Topic	Very	Somewhat	Not at All
1. Getting along with others	78%	12%	10%
2. Teasing and bullying	70%	15%	15%
3. Dealing with change	38%	34%	28%
4. Stress	30%	25%	45%
5. Inattention	25%	35%	40%
6. Not accepting people's differences	68%	15%	17%
7. Understanding personal abilities	32%	20%	48%

Based on the survey, the data most clearly suggest that the school counseling program should make which of the following overarching goals for students a priority?

- A. developing positive social skills
- B. understanding self
- C. learning effective coping strategies
- D. self-regulating behavior

Answer

Option A is correct.

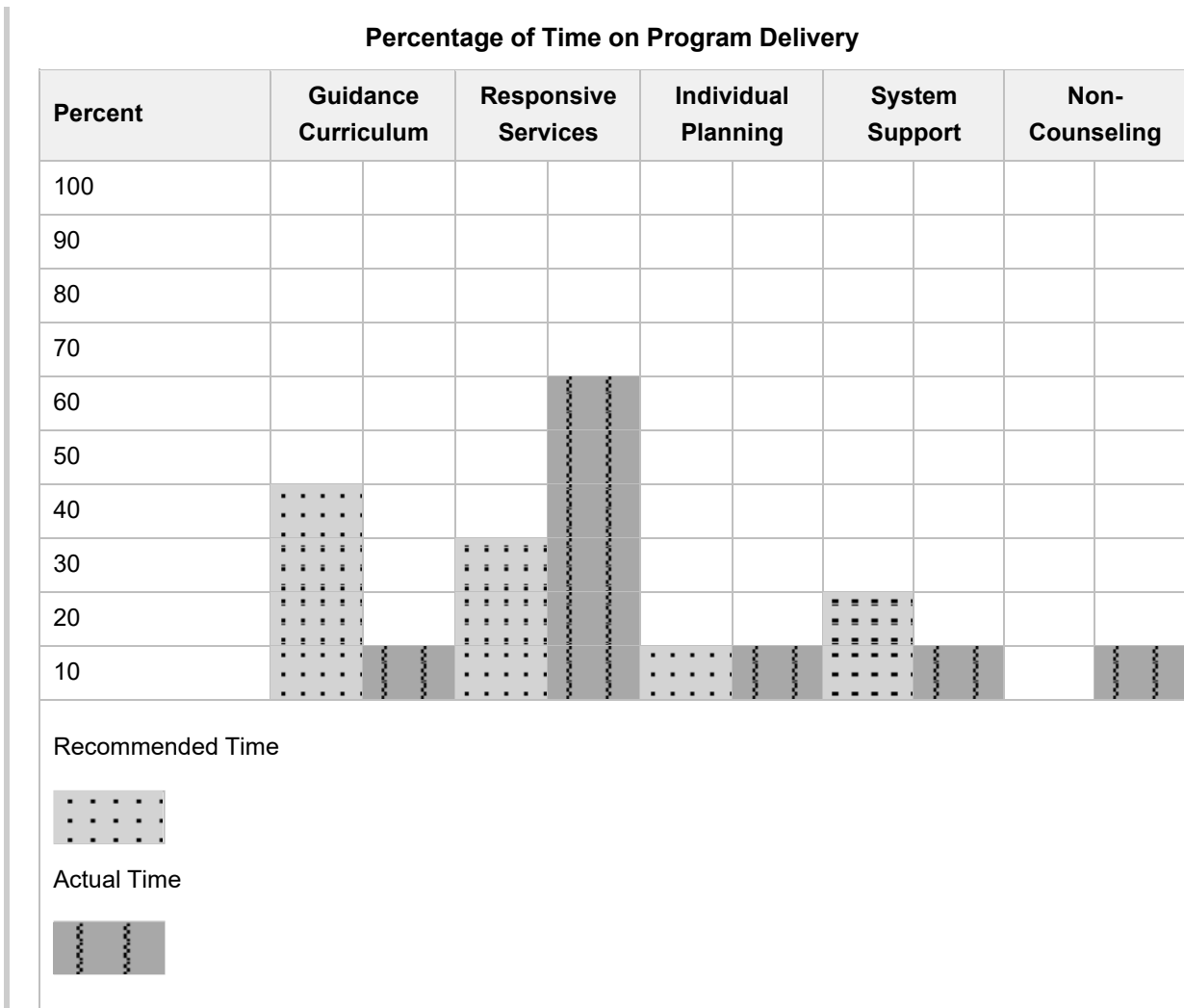
43. Within the context of *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*, the primary purpose of the responsive services component of a school counseling program is to:

- A. guide students as they manage their individual educational, career, personal, and social development.
- B. intervene on behalf of students whose immediate concerns or circumstances put them at risk.
- C. use differentiated instructional approaches and lessons to teach students transferrable skills.
- D. coordinate resources and activities on campus and in the community that indirectly benefit students.

Answer

Option B is correct.

44. Use the information below to answer the question that follows.



An elementary school counselor recently gathered data related to time spent in the four service delivery components for the previous school year. Based on these data, a decrease in the amount of time dedicated to responsive services would be appropriately redirected toward which of the following components of the comprehensive school counseling program?

- A. Guidance Curriculum
- B. Individual Planning
- C. System Support
- D. Noncounseling

Answer

Option B is correct.

Domain III—The Professional School Counselor

Competency 008—(Communication, Consultation, and Collaboration): Understand practices and strategies for effective communication, consultation, and collaboration within the school and community.

45. At the beginning of each school year, a school counselor works with the school principal to arrange brief presentations to teachers, families, and community partners about the school counseling program. In tailoring these presentations for each stakeholder audience, the counselor should emphasize which of the following approaches?
- A. distributing handouts that outline how to access counseling services at the school and district levels
 - B. reassuring stakeholders of the school counselor's expertise in providing effective counseling services
 - C. using an open format that allows individual stakeholders to pose questions about needed counseling services
 - D. describing the integral role of various counseling services in helping students achieve school success

Answer

Option D is correct.

46. An elementary school counselor who has been working with a student on self-regulation in the classroom setting wants to bring the student's parents/guardians into the process. Which of the following approaches by the counselor would best facilitate the parents'/guardians' involvement?

- A. arranging for the parents/guardians to observe how the strategies are being implemented in the classroom
- B. sharing with the parents/guardians specific strategies that are being used at school that are applicable to the home environment
- C. asking the parents/guardians to provide feedback on any changes in the student's behavior outside of school
- D. holding a meeting with the parents/guardians to discuss the relationship between the student's behavior and school success

Answer

Option B is correct.

Competency 009—(Professional Practice): Understand the roles, responsibilities, and orientation of the professional school counselor and legal and ethical standards of practice in school counseling.

47. According to *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*, a school counselor's activities within the Program Management Domain should primarily focus on which of the following goals?

- A. promoting understanding and application of professional rules, policies, regulations, and guidelines in programs
- B. providing proactive guidance to assist students in developing and applying skills for optimal growth during the school years and beyond
- C. using professional expertise to help stakeholders understand individual behavior and human relationships
- D. organizing resources and activities in response to identified needs and priorities to support the total educational program

Answer

Option D is correct.

48. A middle school counselor regularly participates in grade-level planning teams. In this context, it would be most important for the counselor to take the lead in which of the following areas?

- A. providing resources related to current topics being discussed to facilitate the team's decision making
- B. negotiating a positive resolution of conflicts that arise between members of the team
- C. helping the team identify strategies for integrating guidance-related learning goals into the academic curriculum
- D. maintaining written notes of discussions as documentation of the team's processes and decisions

Answer

Option C is correct.

Clustered Questions

Use the information below to answer the two questions that follow.

A middle school counselor is determining topics to include as part of the guidance curriculum. The counselor surveyed students about the relevance of several potential topics. The survey results for sixth-grade students are shown below.

**Student Survey Results
(144 students responding)**

	4	3	2	1
1. Substance Abuse	30	38	44	32
2. Dealing with Stress	92	23	10	19
3. Study Skills	67	45	32	0
4. Making Friends	71	28	31	14
5. Career Decisions	24	85	20	15
6. Social Media	26	33	42	43
7. Understanding Myself	18	48	57	21
8. Getting Along with Parents/Guardians	43	29	34	38

4 = Very Important
3 = Somewhat Important
2 = Not Very Important
1 = Not Important

Competency 003—(Guidance): Understand instructional practices and strategies for facilitating students' educational, career, personal, and social growth and development as articulated in *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*.

49. The survey data suggest that sixth-grade students would benefit most from guidance lessons that focus on which of the following broad topics?

- A. adjusting to the middle school environment
- B. developing communication skills
- C. choosing appropriate middle school courses
- D. being safe in an online environment

Answer

Option A is correct.

Competency 007—(Program Management): Understand the foundational components of and procedures for developing, implementing, and evaluating the comprehensive school counseling program.

50. The school counselor is considering implementation of a grade-level program to address students' primary areas of need. Which of the following grade-level programs is most justified by these data?

- A. a drug education program to help students develop and practice strategies for resisting pressure to use drugs or alcohol
- B. a character education program to promote students' ability to make sound personal decisions
- C. an advisory program to help students form connections and develop strategies for managing academic responsibilities
- D. an after-school guest speaker program to introduce students to resources in the community

Answer

Option C is correct.

Preparation Manual

Section 5: Sample Constructed-Response Question School Counselor (252)

General Directions

This question requires you to demonstrate your knowledge of the subject area by providing an in-depth written response. Read the question carefully before you begin to write your response to ensure that you address all components. Think about how you will organize what you plan to write.

The final version of your response should conform to the conventions of standard English. Your written response should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work. You may, however, use citations when appropriate.

Exhibits for the constructed-response question will be presented in a tabbed format on the computer-administered test. You will have the ability to move between exhibits by clicking on the tab labels at the top of the screen.

An on-screen answer box will be provided on the computer-administered test. The answer box includes a white response area for typing your response, as well as tools along the top of the box for editing your response. A word counter that counts the number of words entered for the response is also provided in the lower left corner of the box. Note that the size, shape, and placement of the answer box will depend on the content of the assignment.

Sample Assignment

Use the information in the exhibits to complete the assignment that follows.

Analyze the information provided in the exhibits and, citing specific evidence from the exhibits, write a response of approximately 400–600 words in which you:

- identify one important need to address in individual school counseling for Jimmy;
- describe one developmentally appropriate counseling strategy a school counselor could implement to address the need you identified;
- explain why the strategy you described would be effective in addressing the identified need;
- identify one step the counselor could take to involve others, as appropriate, in implementing the strategy you described;
- explain one method the counselor could use to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy you described in addressing the identified need; and
- explain how your response is supported by relevant counseling theory.

Description of Student

A school counselor receives a referral for Jimmy, a sixth-grade student who has been exhibiting increased behavioral issues at school. Concerns related to Jimmy's social skills and work habits have also been noted by school staff members. In preparation for individual counseling with Jimmy, the counselor reviews additional information.

School Counseling Referral Form

Student Name: Jimmy T.

Grade: 6

Referred by: S. Nickels, homeroom teacher

Reason for Referral

- Change in behavior
- Change in social skills
- Change in work habits
- Personal/family concern

Additional concerns or information related to this referral:

Jimmy has exhibited increasing difficulties at school. He has engaged in verbal and physical altercations with other students. He typically does not complete or hand in homework assignments or projects, which impacts his grades. Jimmy also does not participate in classroom discussions and often puts his head down on his desk or draws pictures. He has several friends in his classes but has issues getting along with some students. Jimmy scores very high on quizzes and tests in all classes. It should be noted that Jimmy enrolled as a new student this year after living in another state.

Steps taken to address concern (check all that apply)

- Student conference
- Parent/guardian conference
- Discipline referral
- Behavior contract
- Academic support

Have these concerns been discussed with the student's parents/guardians?

Yes, these concerns have been discussed with Jimmy's parents.

Outcome of the discussion:

A conference was held with Jimmy's parents during the first month of school. Jimmy's parents stated that his father was relocated to the area several months ago due to a job opportunity. They reported changes in Jimmy's behavior and social skills at home. His parents mentioned that they have spoken with Jimmy about his behaviors in school and he states, "I am fine." Jimmy has also stated that he misses his previous school and friends and wants to move back. Jimmy has not established any close friends in the neighborhood.

Please rate the severity of this referral on the scale below.

Less Serious			Moderately Serious				Very Serious		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Student Interest Inventory Excerpt

Excerpt from Student Interest Inventory
<p>Name: Jimmy T. Grade: 6 Date: September 26</p>
<p>1. What is your favorite class in school and why? My favorite class is gym because I enjoy playing games and sports.</p> <p>2. What is your least favorite class in school and why? My least favorite class is science because I do not really like some of my classmates and I am usually really bored. My teacher also calls on me sometimes to answer questions and I don't like being put on the spot to speak out loud in front of all my classmates.</p> <p>3. If you could change anything about school what would it be? I wish I could pick out people I want to have class with. Some students in my classes are really annoying. I also wish my friends from my other school went to school with me. I really miss them. I would also get rid of homework assignments.</p> <p>4. What do you want to be when you grow up? I want to become an electrical engineer or a pharmacist.</p> <p>5. What are your hobbies outside of school? I enjoy playing computer games and watching movies.</p> <p>6. What is a past accomplishment that made you feel proud of yourself? I felt proud of myself when I won a computer game this week.</p>

Excerpt from Classroom Incident Reports

Excerpts from Jimmy's Classroom Incident Reports (from the assistant principal's notes)

Wednesday, September 12

Jimmy had difficulty completing the English language arts assignment today. The assignment involved working in groups to brainstorm potential solutions to a problem described in an assigned homework article. Jimmy stated that he preferred to work alone. When Jimmy was asked to try working with his group he stated, "No" and walked out of the classroom. After I spoke with Jimmy, he apologized and said that he did not read the article for homework.

- *English Language Arts Teacher*

Tuesday, September 18

Jimmy demonstrated a strong understanding of math concepts being taught today. I asked him to assist several other students who were having difficulties with the math concepts after he finished the assignment and he agreed. Jimmy worked with the other students until almost the end of class. At the end of class, one student made an inappropriate comment to one of the students that Jimmy was assisting. I intervened and informed the student that his comment was extremely inappropriate, but Jimmy went up to the other student and verbally threatened harm. Both Jimmy and the other student were written up. They agreed not to speak to each other.

- *Math Teacher*

Friday, September 21

Jimmy received a 98 on today's science test. He was the first person in the class to complete the test and I was able to correct it before the end of class. I allowed Jimmy to read a book of his choice while other students finished their tests. Another student made a rude comment to Jimmy in passing. The student got out of his seat and verbally threatened to assault Jimmy. Jimmy lunged at the other student and a physical altercation ensued. The principal was called. Jimmy and the other student each received a three-day in-school suspension.

- *Science Teacher*

Tuesday, September 25

Jimmy was written up today for refusing to complete an assignment in Spanish class. He stated that he was tired, did not feel like completing the assignment, and put his head on his desk throughout the entire class.

- *Spanish Teacher*

Tuesday, October 2

Jimmy refused to work with another student during science class. He stated that he did not like the other student because the student was rude to other classmates. Jimmy walked out of class for several minutes without permission before returning.

- *Science Teacher*

Sample Responses and Rationales

Score Point 4

Jimmy is a student who has experienced many changes in his life with his family relocating to a new city. Being a new student in school, there may be struggles related to his adjustment to such a change and the possibility that this move was sudden for him. In addition, as a 6th grader, there is the possibility that he is also struggling with the now increased demands of being enrolled in multiple classes while also trying to adjust to being a new student. In the initial session, it will be important for me to first assess Jimmy's feelings surrounding the move and his new surroundings. An important need to address in session will be establishing the reasons why he is behaving as he is and what social-emotional challenges he may be grappling with (e.g., management of anxiety-like behaviors, social skills, possible depressive-like behaviors due to the move).

I would first aim to establish rapport with Jimmy by discussing his favorite hobbies and his interests by conducting a preference assessment (e.g., What is Jimmy willing to work for? What motivates him? What does he enjoy in terms of a reinforcement?). After establishing rapport, I would then attempt to have him articulate his feelings through his art (as it is noted he enjoys drawing), which research suggest is an appropriate counseling strategy for students who may have difficulties verbally articulating their feelings. By looking for themes and/or having him explain his art, I would then be able to further understand what is causing him to be withdrawn and resistant. Another tool that could be used if rapport is built is the "Guess Why?" game, which is a projective measure where students answer hypothetical questions about why a fictional child feels/acts the way that they do (e.g., "Roy doesn't like to go to school. Why? Roy feels scared. Why?"). By using measures that require little-to-no verbal response, this may allow Jimmy to feel more comfortable communicating his needs and wants.

From this step, a meeting with all stakeholders (parents, teachers, admin., etc.) will be necessary so everyone can be on the same page with regard to the possible roots of Jimmy's behaviors and framing said behavioral outbursts as not reflective of him being defiant, but rather, trying to communicate to us adults that he is needs our empathy. By seeing behavior as a form of communication, we shouldn't punish Jimmy due to the nature of his social-emotional struggles but should celebrate his strengths which include art, the ability to score high on academic assessments (even when seemingly withdrawn), and so forth. Opportunities for the team to be strategic in who they have him work with and gauging his willingness to join a counseling group (possibly with other students who are new and/or have interests similar to him) should be developed after said meeting. If Jimmy prefers one-to-one, that should be considered with measurable goals centered on adjustment to change, self-esteem, and resiliency.

A method to check the effectiveness of such work can be in measuring Jimmy's emotional state via self-ratings (e.g., "On a scale of 1–5, how do you feel?"), teacher reports, observations (in-class and in-session), and then over a 6–8 week timeline, determine whether or not further interventions should be implemented. Teacher reports and observations would be useful as a monitoring tool to assess changes, positive or negative, in Jimmy's behavior and demeanor. Documenting these changes provides data for making decisions about how to support Jimmy going forward. When considering counseling theory, the idea of a client/strength-based approach is shown to be effective for students demonstrating social-emotional challenges (as they are reminded that they are important and do matter). A strength-based approach which also considers Jimmy's feelings may lead to more successful outcomes via his buy-in.

Rationale for the Score of 4

The "4" response reflects a thorough understanding of the relevant content knowledge and skills. The response fully addresses all parts of the assignment and demonstrates an accurate, highly effective application of the relevant content knowledge and skills. The response provides strong, relevant evidence, specific examples, and well-reasoned explanations.

Completion: Each task is answered in a sequence that begins with meeting the student, then stakeholders, and then implementation of a plan. The response focuses on the needs of the student and cites known strategies used in school-based counseling today. The candidate is completely student-centered in their approach, offering many different pathways toward helping the student. The candidate describes how long they will observe the interventions and how they will measure if they are effective.

Application of Content: The candidate mentions many strategies that are currently used in school-based counseling. The candidate takes time to explain the need to develop rapport and to use the knowledge gained from the session with Jimmy to educate the team on Jimmy's needs. The candidate describes a developmentally appropriate approach to counseling sessions with young children. In each section, the candidate uses possible first-hand as well as second-hand knowledge in terms of working with students who appear to be withdrawn and having difficulty adjusting to change. The candidate develops a working hypothesis in regard to Jimmy and discusses ways to measure that effectiveness.

Support: The response discusses monitoring Jimmy's progress via self-ratings, observations, and additional data points. Each step of the candidate's process is rooted in establishing rapport with the student and then building a consistent plan for the adults in his life to follow. The candidate supports their argument by consistently returning back to Jimmy and giving him his undivided attention via counseling (individual or group), observations, goal work, and so forth.

Score Point 2

Jimmy is facing many challenges in his life outside of school that may be difficult for a young child. He needs extra counseling support because he is dealing with possible depression and anxiety. Because he is fighting students, he also may need anger management training to help him avoid conflicts with his peers. A strategy I would try to use with Jimmy is the empty chair technique, which would feature Jimmy imagining that he is talking to someone who is causing him anger and conflict. From there, I would help Jimmy engage in more positive talking with the person through this role play and then monitor how he uses these skills in the classroom setting. I would have teachers continue to track data on how often he fights with other kids or withdraws during class. I also want to be sure that Jimmy's parents are also using some form of a behavior contract for Jimmy in the home when he is attempting to do what is needed in order to receive a reward for that week.

I would also continue to use his behavior contract which should stipulate certain behavior milestones that he is working towards (e.g., three days without fighting=activity of his choice). This will guide me in terms of how effective this strategy is and counseling is about monitoring a student's behavior and having them monitor themselves. Jimmy should

take pride in his new opportunities to be at a new school and I want Jimmy to consider the things that have gone right for him since his move. This may require sessions where different characters sit down in the empty chair and Jimmy is required to talk through his feelings. Jimmy may need to have his behavior contract improved to reflect the academic demands of our school and clear consequences for such behavior. Such behavior should not be tolerated in our school and I want Jimmy to know this before his behaviors lead to possible retention and/or expulsion.

It is my hope that Jimmy will come to terms with his feelings and lead his classmates towards making better decisions. Jimmy needs our help and I am hopeful that the skills that I will teach him will do just that! I also would like to see if Jimmy has a history of depression and/or anxiety and to determine if medication may also help him in controlling his emotional outbursts. If this isn't an option, a class for students who have emotional disabilities may also be considered through the special education process.

Rationale for the Score of 2

Completion: The candidate reaches the 400-word count and appears to discuss the major sections of the prompt. Even so, identification of steps for involving others in addressing Jimmy's needs as well as an explanation of the counseling theory that applies to their response is lacking and seems to be only given a glancing mention. The candidate does not fully explain the counseling theory being applied in Jimmy's case. As well, it appears as if the candidate begins to ramble in some parts, possibly in an attempt to reach the minimum 400-word count.

Application of Content: The candidate shows some understanding of counseling techniques such as the "Empty Chair" method. An issue with this technique is that the counselor does not indicate how this would be appropriate for this particular student who may already feel like an "outsider" in this new school. By having the student practice such a technique as well as continuing a behavior contract possibly rooted in disciplinary consequences rather than strengths, the candidate shows a lack of understanding and knowledge of how putting the student on the spot without learning about him could backfire. The candidate takes a counselor-centered rather than a student-centered approach, acting as a disciplinarian instead offering a helping relationship and is already considering actions such as placement in special education for emotional disturbance.

Support: The response lacks evidence on how this will be effective outside of referring to an unknown behavior plan. There is no evidence of application of counseling theory and most of the response focuses on behavior management rather than the student's specific emotional needs. The candidate does not demonstrate significant knowledge on working with students who are withdrawn and makes wide assumptions about medical diagnoses (which they are not certified to make) and the need for medication (inappropriate within the public-school setting). The candidate shows little understanding of rapport building and does not reference evidence (whether professionally or personally) as to how identified strategies can improve Jimmy's well-being.

Performance Characteristics

The rubric created to evaluate your response to the constructed-response question is based on the following criteria:

Completion	The degree to which the candidate completes the assignment by responding to each specific task in the assignment.
Application of Content	The degree to which the candidate applies the relevant knowledge and skills to the response accurately and effectively.
Support	The degree to which the candidate supports the response with appropriate evidence, examples, and explanations based on the relevant content knowledge and skills.

Score Scale

The four points of the scoring scale correspond to varying degrees of performance.

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	<p>The "4" response reflects a thorough understanding of the relevant content knowledge and skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response fully addresses all parts of the assignment. • The response demonstrates an accurate, highly effective application of the relevant content knowledge and skills. • The response provides strong, relevant evidence, specific examples, and well-reasoned explanations.
3	<p>The "3" response reflects a general understanding of the relevant content knowledge and skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response addresses most or all parts of the assignment. • The response demonstrates a generally accurate, effective application of the relevant content knowledge and skills. • The response provides sufficient evidence, some examples, and generally sound explanations.
2	<p>The "2" response reflects a limited understanding of the relevant content knowledge and skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response addresses at least some of the parts of the assignment. • The response demonstrates a partially accurate, partially effective application of the relevant content knowledge and skills. • The response provides limited evidence, and examples or explanations, when provided, may be only partially appropriate.
1	<p>The "1" response reflects little or no understanding of the relevant content knowledge and skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response addresses, few, if any, parts of the assignment. • The response demonstrates a largely inaccurate, ineffective application of the relevant content knowledge and skills. • The response provides little to no evidence, and if provided, examples or explanations are weak or inappropriate.
U	<p>The response is unscorable because it is unreadable, not written to the assigned topic, written in a language other than English, or does not contain a sufficient amount of original work to score.</p>
B	<p>There is no response to the assignment.</p>

Note: Your written response should be your original work, written in your own words and not copied or paraphrased from some other work.