



CBA Policies and Protocols Instructions

Purpose of CBA Policies and Protocols

Policies are the rules that govern the school counseling program and its activities. Generally, policy is approved by a district’s school board/committee, but can also include rules created by state departments of education and/or the federal government. For example, a state-mandated policy can require all schools in the state to offer a comprehensive school counseling program to all students. The “Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act” (FERPA) regulations are an example of a Federal law that impacts the way school counselors do their job. It is important to identify and document policies that are integral to the successful implementation of a school counseling program.

Often policy statements are not available, but guidance has been developed with which districts are expected to comply. The policies and protocols template can be used to document protocols related to both approved policy statements/regulations and guidance issued by policy-making/enforcing agencies. Protocols are the step-by-step instructions for implementing policies/guidance.

An efficiently operated CBA requires participants to understand policies that govern the school counseling program and to follow standardized (where appropriate) instructions for completing critical tasks. This template gathers basic information about individual policies and associated protocols.

Header Row

This template documents the policy statement, relevant discussions and required protocols. The protocol table contains three columns in which users can enter information regarding who is primarily responsible for the successful completion of the activity, a description of the activity, and the names of any forms associated with the protocol.

Who	Action	Forms
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The data elements are described in the table below.

Data Element	Description
Who	The individual responsible for the successful completion of the action is entered in this column. This individual is not necessarily responsible for doing all the work, but is responsible for ensuring its successful completion.

Data Element	Description
Action	Specific action steps (one per row) are entered in this column.
Forms	The names of any forms associated with the action are identified. Forms are standardized whenever appropriate. An electronic copy of the forms should be attached.

Step-by-Step Instructions for Completing the Template

Step	Action Steps	Description
1	Establish a work group	Assemble a work group to complete this template.
2	Develop information	Gather, organize and document policy and protocol information.
3	Obtain approval	Obtain approval for the policies and protocols from the district.
4	Distribute the policies and protocols	Distribute the completed documentation to all constituent groups who need it to effectively do their job.
5	Use information in professional development	Incorporate the policies and protocols into the CBA professional development program.
6	Include information in a CBA Administrative Handbook	Include the policies and protocols in a CBA Administrative Handbook.

Sample Completed Template: Counseling Services Referral

Policy

Insert school district policy [if appropriate.]

Discussion

Students are referred for counseling by teachers, administration, parents, themselves or other students. Students who have behavior problems may be referred for counseling before becoming a discipline problem. If the child has an IEP or is involved with the Evaluation Team, the staff should consult with the Team regarding the behavior problems. A Referral Form is available from the Counseling Office and the school's main office.

Protocols

Who	Action	Form
Counselor	Keeps supply of forms in counseling office or school's main office. Communicates location and use of forms to faculty.	Referral Form
Authorized Individuals	Refers student to school counselors/social workers. Note: Individuals authorized to request a referral include teachers, administrators, nurses, counselors, social workers, parents, students.	Referral Form
Counselor	Reviews form and dates it. May require a review of information on form with person who submitted it to get clarification. Sees student and assesses situation. Confers with other departments in school, if appropriate (e.g., special education or nurse). Contacts parents. Maintains a log of students seen as well as personal case notes. Does not put notes in the permanent record folder. Follows up with submitter of form regarding recommendations. Continues counseling, if appropriate. Conferences with parent if agency referral seems appropriate. Gives parent contact information for two or more agencies. Counselor/social worker may make phone calls to help parents determine if agency can provide services in a timely fashion. Maintain file of completed forms and authorizations.	Parent Notification Letter