

# Vernon Public Schools School Counseling Handbook



June 2021

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### Vernon Public Schools Board of Education

Mrs. Anne Fischer,	Chairperson
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Dr. Joseph Macary	Superintendent, Vernon Public Schools
Robert Testa	Assistant Superintendent, Vernon Public Schools
Melissa Iles	Director of Pupil Personnel, Vernon Public Schools
Jason Magao	Principal, Rockville High School
Daniel Pichette	Assistant Principal, Rockville High School
Allayne Sundt	Assistant Principal, Rockville High School
David Caruso	Principal, Vernon Center Middle School
Taysonn Haynes	Assistant Principal, Vernon Center Middle School
Melissa Luke	Assistant Principal, Vernon Center Middle School
Dr. Nicole DeRonck	Consultant, School Counseling Solutions

### School Counseling Framework/Curriculum Committee Members

Kimberly Marinan	School Counselor, Rockville High School
Peter Ettlinger	School Counselor, Rockville High School
Aisha Mobley	School Counselor, Rockville High School
Michael Mas	School Counselor, Rockville High School
David Rhoades	School Counselor, Rockville High School
Kim Sass	School Counselor, Vernon Center Middle School
Julie Bilyak	School Counselor, Vernon Center Middle School
Hillary Berard	School Counselor, Vernon Center Middle School

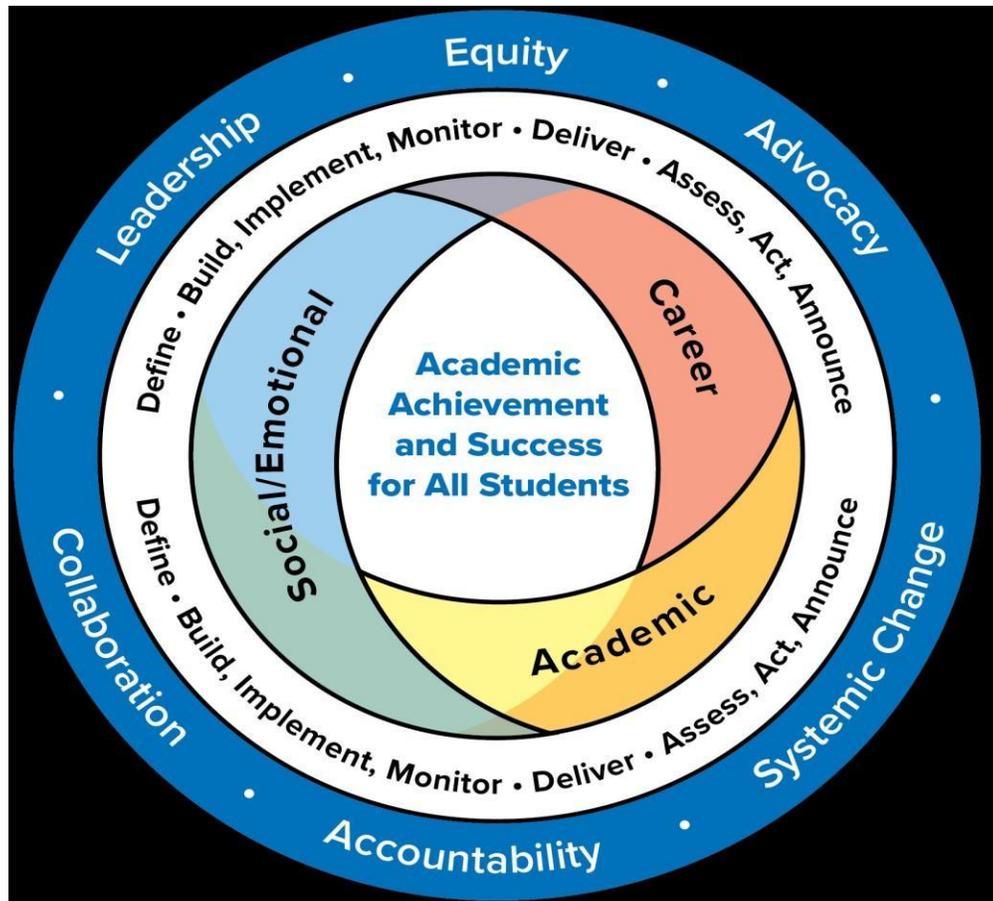
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## Introduction

The Vernon Public Schools School Counseling Framework developed by the school counseling staff, with the help of teachers, administrators, students, parents and community members, is an integral part of the educational process and addresses the academic, career, and social-emotional needs of all students at the secondary level. The framework is modeled after the 2020 Connecticut Comprehensive School Counseling Framework, which is aligned to student standards: ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors (2014), The 12 Career Ready Practices (National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education), Collaboration for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)'s five core competencies (2017), and the Next Generation Accountability System (Connecticut State Department of Education, 2015). The Vernon Public Schools framework is collaborative in nature and emphasizes a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) approach to delivering services to students and families in a systematic, equitable way.

### 2020 Connecticut Framework Model



<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/School-Counseling/SchoolCounselingFramework.pdf>

# **Vernon Public Schools**

## **School Counseling Framework Foundation**

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the School Counseling Department is to proactively collaborate with school personnel, families, and our diverse community to deliver a comprehensive program to all students. As a result, students will be provided opportunities to explore their college/career interests and develop essential academic and social/emotional skills to support their journey in becoming productive citizens.

### **Vision Statement**

Vernon Public School graduates are:

- Aware of their personal academic, social/emotional, and career abilities and interests
- Resourceful and resilient when facing challenges
- Independent and have a sense of direction in pursuit of their future goals
- Able to effectively communicate in a professional manner in an ever-changing global society

### **Belief Statements**

The School Counselors of Vernon Public Schools believe the following:

- School counselors are student-centered professionals who advocate for all students.
- School counselors collaborate with families, school personnel, and community resources.
- Student data informs school counseling programming.
- As a result of participating in a comprehensive school counseling program, all students will develop academic, social-emotional, college and career readiness skills.

## Connecticut Student Standards

Academic Development	Career Development	Social-Emotional Development
<p>Student Standard A1 Demonstrate skills for effective learning and achieving school success</p> <p>Student Standard A2 Demonstrate ability to plan a challenging program of studies to prepare for a variety of options after graduation.</p> <p>Student Standard A3 Demonstrate an understanding of the habits of mind of an engaged student in relation to all aspects of their lives.</p> <p>Student Standard A4 Demonstrate the ability to integrate technology to enhance learning and to solve problems.</p> <p>Student Standard A5 Demonstrate the ability to use creativity and outside experiences to enrich the learning process</p> <p>Student Standard A6 Demonstrate the ability to set goals based on reflective evaluation of current performance.</p>	<p>Student Standard C1 Identify personal values, personality, abilities, and interests in relation to career options and the world of work.</p> <p>Student Standard C2 Demonstrate the skills and abilities to research, identify career options, and make the necessary steps to obtain employment.</p> <p>Student Standard C3 Demonstrate effective workplace habits and the ability to transfer employability skills to future career success and from job-to-job across the lifespan.</p> <p>Student Standard C4 Demonstrate an understanding of work/life balance and how it impacts quality of life, personal and financial well-being, and lifestyle choices.</p> <p>Student Standard C5 Identify a plan to make a successful transition from school to postsecondary education and/or the world of work.</p> <p>Student Standard C6 Demonstrate an understanding of technology in the workplace.</p>	<p>Student Standard S/E 1 Demonstrate an understanding of how individual actions can impact relationships, environments, and influence other people.</p> <p>Student Standard S/E 2 Demonstrate cultural awareness when collaborating with others and taking steps to be inclusive.</p> <p>Student Standard S/E 3 Demonstrate the ability to make decisions, think divergently, and take steps to achieve desired outcomes. Able to overcome challenges and obstacles and develop positive coping strategies and build resilience.</p> <p>Student Standard S/E 4 Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between practicing self-care, healthy sense of self, and personal well-being.</p> <p>Student Standard S/E 5 Demonstrate understanding and practice of personal safety skills.</p> <p><i>Student Standard S/E 6</i> Demonstrate an understanding of the risks and responsible use of technology.</p>

# Comprehensive Service Delivery Framework

## **Direct Student Services**

Direct student services are provided by our school counselors while working directly with students. This face to face time includes individual student planning, delivering the school counseling curriculum, and responsive services. These services are data driven and meant to help promote healthy development, a positive attitude toward work and learning and help students achieve success in school as well as effectively identify post-secondary choices. Direct services can be proactive and reactive.

**Individual Student Planning:** Session results in the development of a Student Success Plan for each student that is focused on career/education/social-emotional goals and postsecondary options. The plan is revised and modified annually throughout the student's school career beginning in middle school and continuing throughout high school.

## **School Counseling Curriculum:**

*Classroom Lessons:* School counselors, in collaboration with teachers, deliver a learning activity or unit in the classroom. The curriculum provides developmental and sequential lessons and activities in classroom and/or group settings, which address student development in academic, career and social-emotional domains. Lessons are approximately 45 minutes in length.

*Small Groups:* Counselors conduct groups outside the classroom to respond to students' identified interests or needs. School counselors plan and lead structured activities that are designed to increase the skills and knowledge of student participants. Small group membership will be determined by data analysis of grades, as well as student feedback after lessons are delivered, and from collaboration with staff and the community. Groups may also be formed as a need arises.

*School-wide Events and Activities:* Designed to reinforce the concepts being taught in the classroom by school counselors. Collaborations within and outside the school community are used to address specific information relevant to students and families. Examples: academic presentations, guest speakers, career fair, financial aid night, middle/high school transitioning.

**Responsive Services:** School counselors are trained and prepared to react to a crisis or immediate need experienced by a student or school community. School counselors provide supportive individual and group counseling, referral, collaboration, and consultation to help students and families overcome academic, personal-family, and socio-emotional barriers to healthy development. (CT Comprehensive K-12 School Counseling Framework Guide, November 2020)

Direct Student Service	Grade Level	Frequency/ Duration	Data Monitoring
Individual Student Planning	6 - 8	1 x per school year	Tracking participation, Goal-setting
	9-12	2 x per school year	Tracking participation, Goal-setting
Classrooms Lessons	6 - 8	3 - 5 x per year	Pre-/post-assessment
	9-12	2 x per year	Pre-/post-assessment
Small Groups (Based on identified student needs/interests)	6 - 12	Groups typically meet for 4-6 weeks	Feedback survey, Anecdotal feedback
School-wide Events and Activities	9 - 12	2 x per year per school	Feedback survey

### Indirect Student Services

Indirect student services are provided by our school counselors on behalf of students. School counselors take a team approach when working on behalf of students. As part of this team approach, *consultation* with staff, administration, and families in regards to the challenges and barriers that students face, is an important part of our school counseling framework.

Through *collaboration* within the school and with outside agencies, school counselors develop programming as part of the comprehensive school counseling framework that fits the needs of students, parents and community members. Collaboration also allows for the school counseling department to make connections with outside agencies to provide students and parents with a number of resources that are available to them to help with issues that are not otherwise within the scope of the school day. School counselors often become a point of contact for families within the school. By providing *referrals*, families are able to connect with needed services not only within the school system, but outside in the community as well. (CT Comprehensive K-12 School Counseling Framework Guide, November 2020)

### Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS)

The Vernon Comprehensive School Counseling Framework provides services and programming in an organized and systematic way using a three tiered model. This culturally responsive model helps assure that all students get the level of support and skills they need to be successful academically, develop social-emotional health, and be career ready. Tier 1 provides support for all students through the delivery of school counseling curriculum and assessments. Tier 2 provides support to a specific group of students who need additional assistance on a skill or with an issue. Tier 3 provides more intensive assistance which may involve one-to-one support from a school counselor or a referral to an outside agency. Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions are delivered on an as needed basis and are determined using data and assessment.

# School Counseling Curriculum

Our school counseling curriculum was developed using a needs assessment conducted throughout our school community in Spring 2019. The student lessons are aligned to the 2020 Connecticut School Counseling Standards (pg. 6) and are based on what students should be able to understand, know, and be able to do in the academic, career, and social-emotional domains.

## Middle School Curriculum

Grade 6 Theme: Developing Good Habits	Grade 7 Theme: Skill Building for Success	Grade 8 Theme: Practicing Good Habits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Counselor Introduction Lesson (Sept)</li> <li>• 4 Classroom Lessons               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Skills for School Success (Oct)</li> <li>- Understanding Emotions (Nov)</li> <li>- Managing Emotions (Dec)</li> <li>- Career Cluster Lesson (April)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Small Groups (Tier 2 intervention determined by needs)</li> <li>• 1 Individual Planning Meeting (Jan - March)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Classroom Lessons               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Academic Success - Time Management (Oct)</li> <li>- Emotion Management (Mar)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• All students will receive the Second Step Curriculum in a Unified Arts rotation</li> <li>• Small Groups ( Tier 2 intervention determined by needs)</li> <li>• 1 Individual Planning Meeting (Nov - Jan)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Individual Planning Meeting (Dec. – Jan.)</li> <li>• 5 Classroom Lessons               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Academic Success (Sept)</li> <li>- Introduction to High School (Oct)</li> <li>- Stress (Nov)</li> <li>- Career Interest Inventory (Dec)</li> <li>- High School Course Selection (Jan)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Small Groups (Tier 2 intervention determined by needs)</li> </ul>

Note: All services listed are minimum expectations

## High School Curriculum

Grade 9	Grade 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Individual Planning Meetings (Quarter 1/Feb.)</li> <li>• 2 Classroom Lessons               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Academic Resilience (October)</li> <li>- Standardized Testing (December)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Small Groups (Tier 2 intervention determined by needs)</li> <li>• Student/Parent Event (Dec.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Individual Planning Meetings (Jan.-Mar.)</li> <li>• 2 Classroom Lessons               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do What You Are (November)</li> <li>- Mental Health (January)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Small Groups (Tier 2 intervention determined by needs)</li> <li>• Student/Parent Event (Dec.)</li> </ul>
Grade 11	Grade 12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Individual Planning Meetings (Mar.-May)</li> <li>• 2 Classroom Lessons               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Postsecondary Planning Workshops (March)</li> <li>- Resume Writing (May)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Small Groups (Tier 2 intervention determined by needs)</li> <li>• Student/Parent Event (Dec.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Individual Planning Meetings (Sept.-Nov.)</li> <li>• 2 Classroom Lessons               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Employability Skills (September)</li> <li>- Circles of My Multicultural Self (April)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Small Groups (Tier 2 intervention determined by needs)</li> <li>• Student/Parent Event (Oct.)</li> </ul>

Note: All services listed are minimum expectations

## School Counselor Assignments

Students are assigned to a school counselor at the time they enroll in Vernon Center Middle School and again in Rockville High School. The school counselor will follow the student throughout the time they remain enrolled in the school. Information about how students are assigned to a counselor is listed below. The breakdown of specific counselor assignments can be found on each school's website.

### Vernon Center Middle School

A school counselor will be assigned to each incoming 6th grade class. The same school counselor will stay with the students throughout their time at Vernon Center Middle School. There is one school counselor assigned per grade level. Specific information can be found on the School Counseling Department website.

### Rockville High School

Students are assigned to a school counselor upon entry to Rockville High School. These assignments are based alphabetically around the student's last name. School counselors will work with students throughout their time at Rockville High School. Specific school counselor assignments can be found on the [School Counseling Department website](#).

## School Counseling Office Contact Information

### Vernon Center Middle School

School Counseling Office

777 Hartford Turnpike

Vernon, CT 06066

860-870-6072

[Click here for website](#)

### Rockville High School

School Counseling Office

70 Loveland Hill Rd

Vernon, CT 06066

860-870-4065

[Click here for website](#)

## Student Success Plans

A Student Success Plan (SSP) is an individualized student-driven portfolio that addresses a students' needs and interests through activities, with a focus on post-secondary and life planning starting in grade 6 and progressing through grade 12. These electronic plans are developed, monitored, and maintained in Naviance. Effective SSPs take the collaboration of teachers, support staff, and administration to provide the curriculum, assessment, and exploration needed to help students develop the skills and habits of mind to be career ready at graduation. School Counselors in Vernon Public Schools contribute to the delivery of SSPs through the implementation and services included in the Comprehensive School Counseling Framework.

<b>Alignment Between Vernon Public Schools Comprehensive School Counseling Program and Student Success Plan Components</b>				
	<i>Grade level</i>	<i>Social-Emotional Wellbeing</i>	<i>Academic Wellbeing</i>	<i>Career Readiness</i>
<b>Vernon Center Middle School</b>	Grade 6	Classroom lessons on understanding & managing emotions	Classroom lessons on skills for school success	Classroom lessons on career clusters
	Grade 7	Classroom lessons on time management, emotion management, and Second Step Curriculum	Classroom lessons on time management for academic success	Career Interest Inventory assessment and classroom lesson
	Grade 8	Classroom lesson on Stress Management	Classroom lessons on transition to high school and academic success skills	
<b>Rockville High School</b>	Grade 9		Classroom lessons on academic resilience and standardized testing	
	Grade 10	Classroom lessons on mental health hygiene		Do What You Are personality assessment and classroom lesson
	Grade 11			Classroom lessons on resume writing and post-secondary planning
	Grade 12	Classroom lessons on mulit-culturalism		Classroom lessons on employability skills
<b>Across Schools</b>	Grades 6-12	Individual Planning Meetings	Individual Planning Meetings	Individual Planning Meetings

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## Individual Planning Meetings

Individual Planning (IP) meetings are held annually between a student and their assigned counselor beginning in grade six throughout high school graduation. The meetings are designed to help a student monitor and direct their own learning, personal development, and plan for the future through their Student Success Plans. IP's are documented in Naviance by Counselor & Student. Student data is used to inform these meetings and includes but is not limited to the following: standardized test scores, academic records, Student Success Plans, Naviance, in-house assessments and student surveys. *In addition to the annual Individual Planning Meeting, students can meet with their school counselor as needed.*

### Grade 6 Student and Counselor will:

- Self-introduce and discuss how to access school counseling services
- Review student's 6th Grade school survey results
- Review academic performance to date
- Explore the relationship between academic performance and work
- Set SMART Goals

### Grade 7 Student and Counselor will:

- Review 7th Grade survey results
- Review academic performance to date
- Review assessment results and how to maximize academic success
- Review and update personal goals

### Grade 8 Student and Counselor will:

- Review 8th Grade survey results (including high school options)
- Review academic performance to date
- Review course selection
- Review assessment results and how to maximize academic success
- Identify at least 2 possible extra-curricular activities that match the student's career interests

### Grade 9 Student and Counselor will:

- Self-introduce and discuss how to access school counseling services
- Review 9th Grade survey results
- Review academic performance to date
- Explore relationship between academic performance and work
- Identify at least 3 possible extra-curricular activities that match the student's interest

### Grade 10 Student and Counselor will:

- Review 10th Grade survey results
- Review academic performance to date
- Review transcript and discuss concept of 10th Grade being an academically pivotal year
- Discuss tentative educational/career goals
- Review career development resources (assessments, community service, resume, Student Success Plan)
- Discuss course selection for junior year

Grade 11 Student and Counselor will:

- Review academic performance to date including transcript
- Review graduation requirements including progress on community service
- Review tentative educational/career goals
- Discuss selection of courses for senior year
- Discuss standardized testing (how to register and interpretation of any standardized test score)
- Discuss college and career readiness resources and develop concrete plan for post-secondary goals
- Families are invited to participate in session

Grade 12 Student and Counselor will:

- Review academic performance to date including transcript
- Review progress toward graduation requirements and courses required for graduation
- Discuss the importance and impact of having a strong academic finish
- Update post-secondary plan and outline steps for completion
- Discuss and create a plan for FAFSA and scholarships (if applicable)
- Discuss standardized testing (how to register and interpret any standardized testing scores)
- Families are invited to participate in session

# School Counseling Resources

Key: S = Students | F = Families

## VCMS & RHS School Counseling Department Websites

[Vernon Center Middle School- School Counseling Department Website](#) (S&F)

[Rockville High School- School Counseling Department Website](#) (S&F)

## Resources for Academic Success

[Ed.ted.com](#) (S)

TED Lessons on organization & time management

[Ed.gov](#) (F)

Homework Help

[Khanacademy.org](#) (S, F)

To get personalized help with what you're studying or to learn something completely new.

## Resources for College and Career Exploration

[Naviance Log-In \(via Clever\)](#) (S, F)

College, career, and life readiness tool (inventories, school search, scholarships, resume template)

[12 Career Ready Practices](#) (S, F)

Framework for the developmental experiences necessary to becoming

career ready

[College Board: For Parents](#) (F)

Find out how you can help your child prepare for college, explore majors and careers, pay for college, and more

## Resources for Social-Emotional Learning

[Edutopia.org](#) (F)

Transition Resources for Parents, Teachers, and Administrators: Help students make the transition into elementary, middle, high school, and beyond

[Casel.org](#) (F)

Resources for both educators and parents, and for educators to share with parents, about ways that families can promote social emotional learning.

## Local Community Resources

[211ct.org](#) (S, F)

2-1-1 is a free, confidential information and referral service that connects people to essential health and human services 24 hours a day, seven days a week online and over the phone.

[Rockville Public Library](#)(S, F)

A list of widely used resources by the Vernon Public Schools for students and families.

[Hockanum Valley Community Council](#) (S, F)

Hockanum Valley Community Council, Inc. (HVCC) is a private nonprofit human services agency located in Vernon, Connecticut. It is dedicated to meeting the needs of the residents of Vernon and the Tolland County area.

[Vernon Youth Services Bureau](#) (S, F)

Through coordination with local, regional and state services, Vernon Youth Services Bureau will guide youth and their families to needed services.