



National Evaluation Series™

NES

PROFILE

School Counselor (501)

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NES Profile: School Counselor (501)

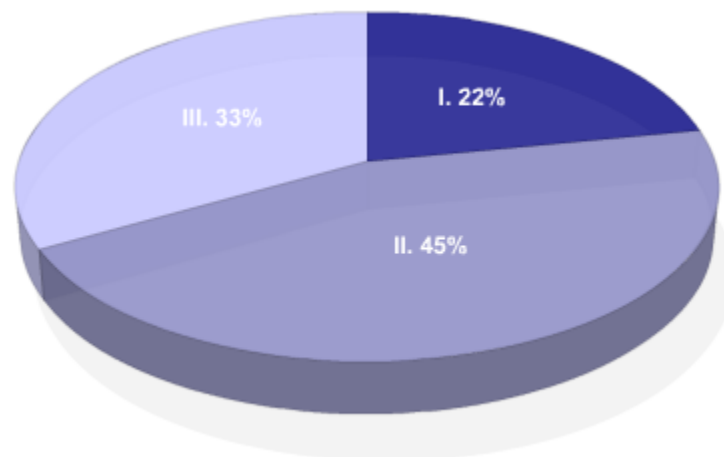
Overview

This *NES Profile* provides information about the test, including the approximate percentage of the total test score derived from each content domain. The complete set of the content domains, the test framework, is provided here and contains all of the competencies and descriptive statements that define the content of the test.

This *NES Profile* includes the following materials:

- » the test competencies associated with each content domain
- » a set of descriptive statements that further explain each competency
- » sample test questions aligned to the competencies
- » any applicable reference materials, as noted below

Test Field	School Counselor (501)
Test Format	Multiple-choice questions
Number of Questions	Approximately 150
Test Duration	Up to 3 hours
Reference Materials	None required



Key	Approximate Percentage of Test	Content Domain	Range of Competencies
I.	22%	I. Student Development and Learning	0001–0002
II.	45%	II. Comprehensive School Counseling Program	0003–0006
III.	33%	III. Professional Knowledge and Practice	0007–0009

Content Domain I: Student Development and Learning

Competencies:

0001 Understand human development from early childhood to young adulthood.

Descriptive Statements:

- » Demonstrate knowledge of various theories of development and the characteristics, processes, and variations of physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and language development from early childhood throughout young adulthood.
- » Recognize environmental factors that influence children's development, the effects of these factors on children's attitudes and behavior, and ways in which development in any one domain may affect children's development and performance in other domains.
- » Apply knowledge of various exceptionalities and health conditions and their implications for students' development and learning.
- » Apply knowledge of behaviors that help enhance the physical and emotional health of students at different stages of development, and strategies for promoting growth and development throughout the life span.

Sample Item:

According to Erik Erikson's theory of human development, which of the following is the primary psychosocial task for children between the ages of 6 and 12?

- A. establishing a sense of identity
- B. trusting that adults will meet their basic needs
- C. controlling their own behavior
- D. gaining a sense of competence and accomplishment

Correct Response and Explanation

D. This question requires the examinee to demonstrate knowledge of various theories of development from early childhood through young adulthood. Erik Erikson viewed psychosocial development as a sequence of stages, each characterized by specific goals, concerns, and accomplishments. According to Erikson, for children between the ages of 6 and 12, the major psychosocial task is to resolve the conflict between industry versus inferiority. Children do this by becoming competent in a variety of tasks through their own efforts and persistence.

0002 Understand the learning process and factors that affect learning.

Descriptive Statements:

- » Demonstrate knowledge of theories of learning, the instructional implications of students' varied learning modalities, and the characteristics of different types of learning environments.
- » Demonstrate knowledge of the effects of culture, language, and family on students' development and learning.

- » Recognize sources of stress or anxiety that affect the learning of children and young adults.
- » Recognize factors that may affect academic, personal/social, and career development.
- » Recognize the relationship of academic development and performance to family, work, and community.

Sample Item:

A child's cultural background is likely to have the greatest influence on the child's:

- A. rate of cognitive development.
- B. perceptions about self and others.
- C. desire for acceptance by peers.
- D. ability to learn through observation.

Correct Response and Explanation

B. This question requires the examinee to demonstrate knowledge of the effects of culture on students' development and learning. Although culture has a pervasive influence on many aspects of development, some traits are considered to be largely universal. Of the response options provided, only an individual's perceptions about self and others is generally acknowledged to be shaped in substantial ways by interactions characteristic of the specific culture within which one is raised.

Content Domain II: Comprehensive School Counseling Program

Competencies:

0003 Understand the development and implementation of a guidance curriculum.

Descriptive Statements:

- » Apply knowledge of how to create and implement a schoolwide needs assessment to develop a comprehensive guidance curriculum that covers academic, career, and personal/social competencies.
- » Demonstrate knowledge of content that is developmentally appropriate for classroom guidance and approaches for creating and presenting developmental guidance lessons that align with the school curriculum, the needs of all students, and the goals of the school.
- » Demonstrate knowledge of ways technology can be used to plan, organize, deliver, promote, and research the comprehensive school counseling program and strategies for collaborating with other school professionals.
- » Recognize multicultural and pluralistic trends to address when developing or selecting curricula that promote positive images of people from diverse backgrounds (e.g., ways to use diversity to create a rich academic community, meaningful career education programs, and successful social interactions; strategies for educating the school community about diversity and commonalities within the school; and criteria for selecting research-based instructional materials).
- » Apply knowledge of major characteristics of effective prevention and intervention activities and ways in which these activities can address a range of needs in the school community.
- » Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for engaging students in active learning, developing instructional units with sequential activities to achieve specific goals, and managing the classroom environment.
- » Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for promoting staff involvement in guidance lessons and collaborating with teachers to deliver the guidance curriculum through classroom and schoolwide activities.

Sample Item:

Which of the following tasks could school counselors accomplish most effectively by using a database program?

- A. organizing information about community agencies
- B. creating conference materials for participants
- C. sharing information with peers about the school counseling program
- D. researching the treatment for eating disorders in adolescents

Correct Response and Explanation

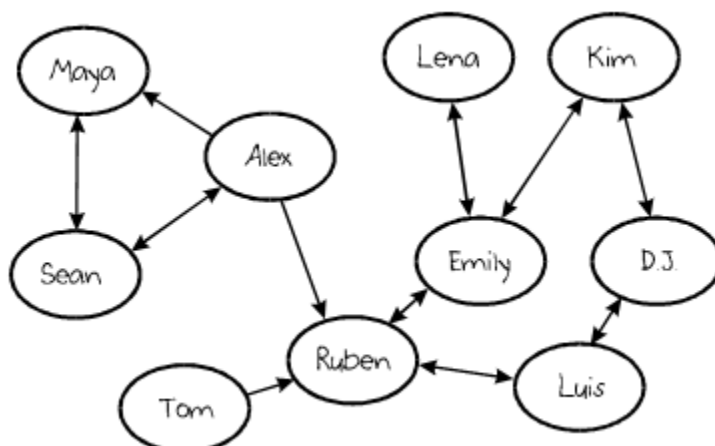
A. This question requires the examinee to demonstrate knowledge of ways technology can be used to organize the comprehensive school counseling program. A database is a collection of records stored in a computer system. Data such as name, address, and services provided can each be stored in a separate field in the record for a community agency. This allows the information in the database to be sorted and selected according to various criteria. This would enhance a school counselor's ability to make appropriate referrals to community programs.

0004 Understand methods for individual planning to help students establish goals and develop future plans.

Descriptive Statements:

- » Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for teaching awareness, development, and application of academic study skills; and strategies for guiding students as they plan, monitor, and direct their own learning.
- » Demonstrate knowledge of ways technology can be used to assist students in choosing and achieving academic, career, and personal/social goals.
- » Apply knowledge of methods for helping students identify and pursue post-secondary options by analyzing their own strengths and needs; using resources for determining aptitudes, knowledge, and interests; and creating a plan of study to maximize their academic abilities.
- » Recognize strategies for enhancing students' career awareness, providing developmentally appropriate career guidance to students, and facilitating students' development of career plans using information about career opportunities, labor-market trends, and local and global economics.
- » Recognize strategies for facilitating students' post-secondary planning, including students' understanding of the costs of post-secondary options and resources for meeting those costs.
- » Demonstrate knowledge of methods for assessing and encouraging individual students' social development and communication skills.
- » Identify developmentally effective strategies for teaching students to interact effectively with others, make sound judgments and decisions, solve problems, take responsibility for themselves and their own behavior, accept consequences for their actions, and respect the existence and rights of others in society.

Sample Item:



A school counselor could best use the sociogram shown above to assess which of the following elements of fifth-grade students' social development?

- A. moral reasoning
- B. peer acceptance
- C. self-regulation
- D. perspective taking

Correct Response and Explanation

B. This question requires the examinee to demonstrate knowledge of methods for assessing individual students' social development. Sociograms illustrate interactions and relationship preferences within a group of people. For example, this sociogram shows that Tom has only one connection, which is unreciprocated, while Emily enjoys mutual relationships with three of her peers.

0005 Understand methods for providing responsive services to meet students' needs.

Descriptive Statements:

- » Demonstrate knowledge of common problems that students face, interviewing skills for various situations, counseling theories and techniques, factors that affect a school counselor's decision to provide individual counseling, and appropriate strategies for individual counseling.
- » Recognize methods for counseling students from diverse backgrounds, ways in which the counselor's personal characteristics and behaviors can benefit or hinder the helping process, and the importance of self-awareness for effective school counseling.
- » Demonstrate knowledge of diagnostic and remediation activities, criteria for referring a student to another professional, and activities and skills associated with consultation and referral.
- » Demonstrate knowledge of group counseling, including group dynamics, criteria for selecting counseling group members, potential topics for small-group counseling, strategies for facilitating group counseling, and developmentally appropriate methods for presenting information to students about various issues.
- » Demonstrate knowledge of crisis counseling methods and intervention strategies for students, families, schools, and communities facing emergency situations.

Sample Item:

Five middle school students and a teacher have been injured in a bus accident midway through the school day. As a member of the school's crisis response team, which of the following steps should the school counselor take *first*?

- A. verifying that any information available about the event is accurate
- B. responding to questions from the local media as the school's spokesperson
- C. suggesting language for teachers to use when discussing the event with students
- D. arranging for phone calls to be made to the parents/guardians of each student at school

Correct Response and Explanation

A. This question requires the examinee to demonstrate knowledge of crisis interventions for students, families, schools, and communities facing emergency situations. In the situation described, all members of the school's crisis response team, including the school counselor, need to be sure that any information they have obtained about the event is verified before it is communicated to others in the school community.

0006 Understand principles of leadership to support the educational system.

Descriptive Statements:

- » Demonstrate knowledge of methods for managing and coordinating the services of the school counseling program, distinguishing between appropriate and inappropriate counseling and non-counseling-related activities, and organizing and managing time to implement an effective program.
- » Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for collaborating with all stakeholders to ensure that the school's physical and emotional climate is safe and inviting, developing and conducting in-service activities for promoting a positive school environment, and influencing the creation and development of school safety initiatives, crisis-management plans, and violence-prevention programs.
- » Demonstrate knowledge of the principles, competencies, and benefits of advocacy used by school counselors and effective methods of community outreach and public relations to support the educational system.
- » Identify ways in which school counselors can model fairness, lead proactively in issues of equity, and advocate for school policies and practices that provide equitable and fair access to opportunities that allow each student to succeed.

Sample Item:

Which of the following activities would be the most professionally appropriate for a school counselor to perform?

- A. supervising study halls when a teacher is absent or otherwise unavailable
- B. reviewing and signing excuses for students who are absent or tardy
- C. collaborating with teachers to present lessons on study skills
- D. administering achievement or aptitude tests to individual students

Correct Response and Explanation

C. This question requires the examinee to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate counseling and non-counseling-related activities. A key component of the job of a school counselor is to partner with classroom teachers to develop and implement guidance lessons. Study skills are a typical focus for such lessons.

Content Domain III: Professional Knowledge and Practice

Competencies:

0007 Understand applications of testing and assessment.

Descriptive Statements:

- » Apply knowledge of measurement and statistical principles of assessment; factors to consider when selecting assessments for individual and group use; and the uses, benefits, and limitations of a range of formal and informal assessment instruments.
- » Apply knowledge of the different types of scores that various assessments can yield; the conclusions that can and cannot be drawn from given assessment data; and methods for analyzing, synthesizing, and disaggregating data to examine student outcomes and identify necessary interventions.
- » Demonstrate knowledge of legal guidelines and key issues in student assessment, the advantages of using multiple assessments, and methods for using diverse approaches to assess the needs of students.
- » Demonstrate knowledge of research methods used to identify information and opportunity gaps between different groups of students, the appropriate uses of data collection to improve school performance, and the use of program audits to address the accountability goals of the school counseling program.

Sample Item:

When the results of a standardized assessment are reported as percentiles, the scores will indicate the:

- A. relative performance of an individual within the population being tested.
- B. percentage of correct answers given by an individual who took the test.
- C. grade equivalence of the score attained by an individual taking the test.
- D. level of achievement required for an individual to pass the test.

Correct Response and Explanation

A. This question requires the examinee to apply knowledge of the different types of scores that various assessments can yield. For scores that are reported as percentiles, each student's raw score is compared with the raw scores of students in the norming sample. A particular student's percentile rank indicates the percentage of students in the norming sample that scored at or below the student's raw score. In this way, percentiles provide information about an individual's relative performance on the test.

0008 Understand strategies for developing effective relationships with students, their families, professionals, and the community.

Descriptive Statements:

- » Apply knowledge of methods for creating respectful, productive relationships with families; facilitating communication between school and home; providing families with information and support; and working collaboratively with the adults in students' lives to remove obstacles to school success.

- » Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for encouraging and maintaining parents'/guardians' involvement with school life; the comprehensive school counseling program; and the process of planning for their child's academic, career, and social/personal development.
- » Demonstrate knowledge of the school counselor's role within advisory councils, multidisciplinary teams, and multi-agency teams; and as liaison between the school and other service providers.
- » Recognize the roles of other professionals, community agencies, and service providers in relation to students and families, and strategies for consulting with and making appropriate referrals to such individuals and entities.

Sample Item:

Which of the following is a typical role of a school counselor in regard to a student who has been diagnosed with a social or emotional disability?

- A. providing the student's parents or guardians with information about the school curriculum
- B. reporting to the multidisciplinary team on the student's academic progress
- C. consulting with the student's outside therapist on the student's progress in school
- D. identifying alternative instructional materials for the student

Correct Response and Explanation

C. This question requires the examinee to demonstrate knowledge of the school counselor's role as liaison between the school and other service providers. Students who are diagnosed with social or emotional disabilities often receive services from professional therapists outside the school system. For such students, it would be common for the counselor to periodically share with the outside provider information and insight regarding relevant aspects of the student's school performance.

0009 Understand roles, responsibilities, and professional standards of school counselors.

Descriptive Statements:

- » Demonstrate knowledge of the foundations of the school counseling program, its mission, its support of the school's mission, and its role in accountability.
- » Demonstrate knowledge of the school counselor's roles as a change agent; a supporter of every student through program development and educational reform; and an advocate for the counseling profession.
- » Identify the school counselor's role in the development, implementation, and management of the school counseling program and in working with administrators to develop school counseling management systems that align with the school's goals.
- » Recognize the elements of and purposes for professional development, the importance of staying abreast of current research, and the value of participation in professional organizations to advance the knowledge and skills of school counselors.

- » Analyze applications of the ethical principles of the school counseling profession in accordance with professional guidelines, including the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors, and ways in which consultation and supervision from appropriate colleagues can be used to guide the school counselor's recognition of ethical dilemmas and appropriate ways to resolve them.
- » Demonstrate knowledge of legal and ethical issues related to students, parents/guardians, and school personnel.
- » Recognize the need to continually reevaluate the school counseling program and goals based on changing demographics, societal issues, and cultural trends.

Sample Item:

A school counselor overhears another counselor openly discussing confidential information about a student in the presence of teachers who have no relationship with the student. According to the ethical standards of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), the school counselor's first response should be to:

- A. submit a formal report on the colleague's behavior to the local school board.
- B. inform the school administration about the colleague's problematic behavior.
- C. report the colleague's behavior to the state school counselor association.
- D. approach the colleague privately to discuss the inappropriate behavior.

Correct Response and Explanation

D. This question requires the examinee to analyze applications of the ethical principles of the school counseling profession in accordance with the ASCA Ethical Standards of School Counselors. Protecting student confidentiality should be a top priority of all school counselors. The ASCA standards specify that in the type of situation described, the counselor's first response should be to "directly approach the colleague whose behavior is in question to discuss the complaint and seek resolution."

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