



New Mexico

Teacher Assessments™

Study Guide

New Mexico Content Knowledge Assessments™

34 School Counselor



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An Overview of the Testing Program, How to Prepare for the Assessments, and the Day of the Test: Helpful Hints

The first three sections of the study guide are available in a separate PDF file. Click the link below to view or print these sections.

[An Overview of the Testing Program, How to Prepare for the Assessments, and the Day of the Test:
Helpful Hints](#)



An Introduction to the New Mexico Content Knowledge Assessment of School Counselor

The New Mexico Content Knowledge Assessments™ are designed to measure the subject matter knowledge and skills that are needed to teach effectively in New Mexico schools. The School Counselor test is intended for individuals seeking an initial license or an endorsement in School Counselor.

The School Counselor test consists of 100 selected-response questions.



Test Framework

Human Development and Learning
Counseling
School Counseling Programs and Professional Knowledge

SUBAREA I—HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

0001 Understand human growth and development from early childhood to adulthood.

For example:

- demonstrate knowledge of stages and characteristics of physical, motor, cognitive, language, social, and emotional development from early childhood to young adulthood
- identify principles and characteristics of various developmental theories, including theories of family development
- identify theories and principles of learning, including behavioral and cognitive aspects of learning
- demonstrate knowledge of the influence of social, cultural, physical, linguistic, cognitive, and economic circumstances on personal growth and development
- recognize ways in which developmental factors may affect counseling and assessment strategies

0002 Understand principles and methods for supporting academic development.

For example:

- demonstrate knowledge of factors that affect student motivation in educational contexts (e.g., culture, ethnicity, nationality, gender)
- recognize principles and methods for helping students develop problem-solving, decision-making, and goal-setting skills and for acquiring and applying efficient learning strategies
- apply knowledge of techniques for encouraging students to assess their own needs, interests, and strengths based on their experience and to direct their own learning behaviors

0003 Understand principles of and methods for promoting personal and social development.

For example:

- recognize theories of personal and social development and theories of human behavior
- apply knowledge of situational and environmental factors that affect behavior
- recognize strategies for assisting students, staff, and others in understanding personal and social development (e.g., managing personal interactions and conflicts, establishing positive peer and family relationships, understanding expectations in various social and cultural situations)
- identify methods for helping students develop self-awareness, positive self-concept, and emotional well-being
- demonstrate knowledge of techniques for helping students develop stress-management and coping skills

SUBAREA II—COUNSELING

0004 Understand principles of and procedures for individual and group counseling.

For example:

- demonstrate knowledge of principles of and techniques for selecting various counseling approaches (e.g., developmental, preventive) that are developmentally appropriate and that meet the needs of the individual
- apply knowledge of strategies and methods, including mediation and conflict resolution, for working with students, families, and staff
- identify ways to facilitate developmentally appropriate groups and to present information on pertinent issues (e.g., chemical dependency, teenage pregnancy, suicide, dropping out, various forms of abuse)
- recognize criteria and procedures for selecting members for group counseling
- apply knowledge of principles of group dynamics, including communication and negotiation skills
- identify strategies for providing effective counseling services to a diverse population

0005 Understand intervention and referral procedures.

For example:

- apply knowledge of appropriate interventions for situations that may be detrimental to individual well-being (e.g., abuse/neglect, learning/emotional disabilities, physical disabilities)
- demonstrate knowledge of appropriate crisis interventions in various contexts
- identify conditions and procedures for making referrals to other school or community resources

0006 Understand educational placement and planning in relation to career goals.

For example:

- identify methods for providing information to students and their families to aid in their understanding of the relationship between educational goals and career interests
- demonstrate knowledge of assessments and other procedures related to students' classroom placements and course selections
- recognize appropriate strategies for interpreting test results and communicating these results to students, families, and staff
- demonstrate knowledge of career counseling processes and techniques, including those applicable to special and diverse populations
- identify procedures for establishing and directing career education courses and information programs for students, families, and staff

0007 Understand career assessment and decision-making procedures.

For example:

- demonstrate knowledge of characteristics of various career assessment methods
- recognize methods of interpreting career assessment results
- identify techniques for helping students explore their abilities, interests, and personality characteristics in relation to career options
- apply knowledge of appropriate sources of educational and occupational information and of procedures for career-related decision making, including use of technological applications

0008 Understand postsecondary educational planning.

For example:

- recognize strategies for helping students research and choose postsecondary programs, including colleges, universities, and trade, technical, and apprenticeship programs
- identify methods for advising students about preparing for entrance exams, fulfilling admission requirements, and applying to postsecondary programs
- apply knowledge of procedures for gathering information about and applying for financial aid, loans, scholarships, and grants

SUBAREA III—SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAMS AND PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE

0009 Understand procedures for developing and implementing a comprehensive school counseling program based on ASCA National Standards that focuses on the academic, career, and personal/social development of all students.

For example:

- recognize methods for assessing local needs to determine priorities for the school counseling program
- demonstrate knowledge of ways to use data to formulate measurable program objectives and to identify specific tasks and strategies for achieving those objectives
- recognize the importance of designing a school counseling program that serves all students at the prevention level and provides services that are equitable and responsive to the cultural and socioeconomic differences of students
- identify appropriate ways to collaborate with administrators and others to develop and implement policies relevant to the school counseling program
- apply knowledge of program evaluation methods, including methods for coordinating continual, data-driven evaluation of the school counseling program
- identify ways to use technology in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the school counseling program
- recognize the importance of ongoing professional development, including reflecting on personal and professional limitations, and of keeping informed about developments within the profession at the local, state, and national levels

0010 Understand procedures for communicating and collaborating with the school community to support the school counseling program.

For example:

- identify effective methods for communicating with the school community about the school counseling program and for helping integrate the program into the total school program
- recognize procedures for collaborating with faculty and staff on issues that affect students and for encouraging the inclusion of a student-oriented philosophy in all school activities
- apply knowledge of appropriate ways to assist faculty and staff in developing rapport with students to maximize their learning potential and reduce the effects of learning barriers
- identify methods for assisting teachers in identifying students who might benefit from counseling and in providing teachers with feedback on those students as appropriate

0011 Understand procedures for communicating, consulting, and collaborating with students' families and the community with sensitivity to and respect for linguistic and cultural diversity.

For example:

- identify effective ways to communicate with students' families about services offered by the school counseling program and by community resources and organizations
- identify ways to establish and maintain contact with relevant community resources and to inform them about services available within the school counseling program
- recognize methods for working with school administrators to develop relationships with community resources to support the school counseling program
- identify appropriate ways to serve as a liaison between the school and the community regarding issues pertinent to the learning environment of the school

0012 Understand legal and ethical issues relevant to school counseling.

For example:

- demonstrate knowledge of federal and state laws, regulations, and procedures that affect schools and school counseling programs
- apply knowledge of the legal rights of students and families, including rights regarding assessment and student records
- identify legal and ethical issues related to confidentiality, including storage and transmission of student information



Sample Test Directions

A sample of the general directions for the New Mexico Content Knowledge Assessment of School Counselor is shown in the box below.

You should have in front of you:

- (1) a test booklet for the assessment for which you registered (check the assessment name on the front cover);
- (2) an Answer Sheet A; and
- (3) a No. 2 lead pencil.

IF YOU ARE MISSING ANY OF THESE MATERIALS, NOTIFY YOUR TEST ADMINISTRATOR. REMOVE ALL OTHER MATERIALS FROM YOUR DESK.

TEST DIRECTIONS

Each question in this booklet is a selected-response question with four answer choices. Read each question carefully and choose the ONE best answer. Record your answer on Answer Sheet A in the space that corresponds to the question number. Completely fill in the circle having the same letter as the answer you have chosen. *Use only a No. 2 lead pencil.*

- Sample Question: 1. What is the capital of New Mexico?
- A. Albuquerque
 - B. Las Cruces
 - C. Santa Fe
 - D. Silver City

The correct answer to this question is C. You would indicate that on Answer Sheet A as follows:

1. (A) (B) ● (D)

Try to answer all questions. Even if you are unsure of an answer, it is better to guess than not to answer a question at all. You will NOT be penalized for guessing.

You may use the margins of the test booklet for scratch paper, but all of your answers must be recorded on the answer sheet. Answers that are in the test booklet will not be scored.

The words "End of Test" indicate that you have completed the test. You may go back and review your work, and be sure you have answered all questions before raising your hand for dismissal. Your test materials must be returned to a test administrator when you finish the test.

FOR TEST SECURITY REASONS, YOU MAY NOT TAKE NOTES OR REMOVE ANY OF THE TEST MATERIALS FROM THE ROOM.

This testing session will last four hours. You may work at your own pace. If you have any questions, please ask them now before beginning the test.



DO NOT GO ON UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.



Sample Selected-Response Questions

This section presents sample selected-response questions for you to review as part of your preparation for the New Mexico Content Knowledge Assessment of School Counselor. To demonstrate how the test competencies may be assessed, each sample question is preceded by the competency that it measures. On an actual test, the competencies will not be given.

The sample selected-response questions are designed to illustrate the nature of the test questions. They should not be used as a diagnostic tool to determine your individual strengths and weaknesses. The selected-response questions require you to demonstrate more than the ability to recall factual information. They ask you to think critically about the information, to analyze it, to consider it carefully, or to apply it to a hypothetical situation.

Work through each question carefully before referring to the answer key, which is located at the end of the section.

Competency 0001

Understand human growth and development from early childhood to adulthood.

1. According to Vygotsky's theories of learning and development, students learn best when they are engaging in meaningful tasks and:
 - A. working with someone who is more knowledgeable about the topic.
 - B. exploring unfamiliar concepts through different modalities.
 - C. receiving tangible rewards for their efforts.
 - D. using their background knowledge to understand new content.

Competency 0002

Understand principles and methods for supporting academic development.

2. **Read the goal statement below; then answer the question that follows.**

I will raise my algebra average grade by 10% before the final exam.

A ninth-grade student knows that he has an algebra average grade of 75% and he wants to improve it before the end of the year. In a meeting with the school counselor, the student asks about ways to achieve this goal. As a first step, the counselor helps the student develop an overall goal shown above. Which of the following stages in the goal-setting process should the counselor help the student complete *next*?

- A. deciding on a reward for reaching the goal
- B. identifying short-term objectives for meeting the goal
- C. thinking about potential obstacles to accomplishing the goal
- D. finding resources for help in attaining the goal

Competency 0003

Understand principles of and methods for promoting personal and social development.

3. A tenth-grade student with a social phobia disorder would typically find it most difficult to participate in which of the following instructional activities?
 - A. writing a persuasive essay
 - B. completing a lengthy reading assignment
 - C. using a computer-assisted drawing program
 - D. performing in the school chorus

Competency 0004

Understand principles of and procedures for individual and group counseling.

4. A middle school counselor conducts an informal needs assessment and learns that a number of students need to know more about social skills. The counselor decides to create a counseling group to address this issue. When selecting members for the group, which of the following criteria is most important for the counselor to apply?
 - A. Each student needs to have a positive outlook and a capacity for empathy.
 - B. Each student must agree to follow the ground rules used for group work.
 - C. Each student must be willing to meet frequently throughout the school year.
 - D. Each student needs to be interested and ready to participate in a group process.

Competency 0005

Understand intervention and referral procedures.

5. The principal informs an elementary school counselor that the mother of a first-grade student was killed in an automobile accident the previous night. Which of the following would be the most appropriate *first* step for the counselor to take?
- A. Prepare a letter to be sent home to all students' families.
 - B. Visit the student's family and ask how the school can assist them.
 - C. Contact the student's teacher and offer to meet with the class.
 - D. Arrange for appropriate staff to attend funeral services.

Competency 0007

Understand career assessment and decision-making procedures.

6. One significant benefit of job shadowing as a source of occupational information for students is that, unlike most classroom-based guidance activities, it allows students an opportunity to:
- A. gain a realistic perspective of potential employment opportunities.
 - B. analyze current trends in the local labor market.
 - C. evaluate their educational goals in light of their career options.
 - D. improve their awareness of their own abilities.

Competency 0008

Understand postsecondary educational planning.

7. For high school students to make the most effective computerized search for colleges they might want to attend, which of the following actions should they take *first*?
 - A. taking one of the entrance examinations used by colleges for admission decisions
 - B. completing a self-assessment activity to understand their own interests and preferences
 - C. confirming with the school administration that their grades would qualify them for college
 - D. identifying career and personal goals that they would like to achieve after they finish high school

Competency 0010

Understand procedures for communicating and collaborating with the school community to support the school counseling program.

8. The principal of a large urban high school asks the school counselor to develop a program to ease racial and ethnic tensions among the students. In responding to the principal's request, which of the following steps should the school counselor take *first*?
 - A. Survey the faculty about strategies they have used in their classes to foster the acceptance of diversity.
 - B. Suggest the principal convene a task force of stakeholders from the school and community.
 - C. Recommend the use of a diversity-awareness program that has been effective in other schools.
 - D. Review the relevant research on the outcomes of various cultural sensitivity training programs for teachers.

Competency 0011

Understand procedures for communicating, consulting, and collaborating with students' families and the community with sensitivity to and respect for linguistic and cultural diversity.

9. A middle school is part of a school-business partnership in which volunteers from area businesses provide tutoring and job shadowing experiences to students. Although the partnership has been in existence for several years, some volunteers have left because they are overextended. If this trend continues, there are concerns that the program may be abandoned. To address this problem most effectively, which of the following courses of action could the school counselor recommend to the school administration?
- A. Reduce demands on individual volunteers' time by recruiting a larger pool of volunteers.
 - B. Promote recognition of volunteers' efforts through regular award ceremonies and media events.
 - C. Ensure that a large number of the volunteers are parents/guardians of students in the school.
 - D. Ask participating businesses to provide economic incentives to their employees who volunteer.

Competency 0012

Understand legal and ethical issues relevant to school counseling.

10. A school counselor is contacted by a good friend whose daughter is a student at the counselor's school. The friend, who is divorced, is planning to remarry, and she asks the counselor to work with her daughter in order to help the child cope with this change. To avoid a dual relationship, it would be most appropriate for the counselor to respond to this request by:
- A. agreeing to counsel the student if the meetings are kept confidential.
 - B. offering to refer the student to another counselor who is not acquainted with the family.
 - C. agreeing to speak with the student outside of school, but not in an official capacity.
 - D. offering to counsel the student, but only if her mother is also present.



Answer Key for the Sample Selected-Response Questions

1. A
2. B
3. D
4. D
5. C
6. A
7. B
8. B
9. A
10. B