



LSCA Position

The Louisiana School Counselor Association (LSCA) acknowledges the collective impact that all school employees have on each and every student's academic achievement, attendance, and behavior within their specific roles. Teachers, administrators, school counselors, support personnel, transportation staff, facilities personnel, and district leaders all contribute to creating learning environments where students can be successful. Investing in school districts and the systems within them provides the foundation for students to achieve academically, attend regularly, and develop the social-emotional skills needed for lifelong success. By diverting Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) funds to provide a one-time classroom teacher stipend, districts may be forced to reduce investments in other critical programs, services, and personnel that support students.

The Rationale:

- Reduced access to comprehensive school counseling services that address social-emotional and college and career development needs.
- Decreased availability of individual and small group interventions for students experiencing academic difficulties, attendance concerns, or behavioral challenges.
- Fewer opportunities for proactive prevention services that help students develop coping skills, self-regulation strategies, conflict-resolution skills, and positive decision-making habits.
- Reduced support for improving student attendance and enhancing school engagement through relationship building, family outreach, and individualized tiered student supports.
- Limited access to college and career readiness programming, including academic planning, career exploration, financial aid assistance, workforce readiness preparation, and post-secondary transition support.
- Reduced capacity to identify and address barriers to learning, resulting in unmet student needs and widening achievement gaps.
- Fewer opportunities for collaboration with parents/guardians, teachers, and other stakeholders to support student success.
- Diminished support for creating positive school climates where students feel safe, connected, and engaged in learning.

The School Counselor's Role

- Certified personnel who serve each and every student by delivering comprehensive school counseling programs that play an integral role in student success within the classroom, focusing on improved attendance, positive behavior, and academic achievement (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012).
- Facilitate meaningful relationships between school personnel and parents/guardians to create a support system for students between school and home
- Foster a positive and inclusive school culture where students have a sense of belonging and a feeling of connectedness that encourages improved attendance and ownership in the learning process
- Teach, model, and role-play adaptive regulation skills with students to reduce disruptive behaviors in the classroom, support a safe learning environment, and increase student engagement and social-emotional development (Savitz-Romer & Nicola, 2022).
- Advocate for the diverse needs of students, ensuring that systemic barriers are decreased and eliminated, leading to equitable access to opportunities
- Provide students with support in both group and individual settings to enhance their decision-making and goal-setting skills, ultimately improving their overall well-being and academic success (Rawat et al., 2024).
- Promote exposure to post-secondary options, such as college/career readiness, military, and workforce opportunities, to encourage engagement and academic achievement (American School Counselor Association, 2026).
- School counselors contribute to higher graduation rates and increased college attendance (RAND Corporation, 2024).

Summary

All school personnel, both inside and outside the classroom, play a vital role in student outcomes, which is how school systems are evaluated. School counselors are uniquely positioned to deliver school counseling programs that target academic, college and career, and social-emotional growth in student development. The LSCA recognizes the voters' rejection of Louisiana's Constitutional Amendment 3. The LSCA encourages policymakers to pursue sustainable solutions for educator compensation that do not compromise the support systems that contribute to student success. Many districts are already navigating school closures, consolidations, and ongoing staffing shortages as temporary federal funding sources, including CARES and ESSA funds, have been depleted; further diverting MFP funds could intensify these challenges and weaken the support students need to succeed. Each and every Louisiana student benefits when schools are adequately staffed and funded to address their academic, college and career, and social-emotional needs.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2026). *Empirical research studies supporting the value of school counseling*. American School Counselor Association.

Savitz-Romer, M., & Nicola, T. (2022). *Building high-quality school counseling programs to ensure student success*. Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Carey, J., & Dimmitt, C. (2012). School counseling and student outcomes: Summary of six statewide studies. *Professional School Counseling, 16*(2), 146–153.

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Rawat, D., Malik, P., Simran, & Aarti. (2024). Guidance and counseling in school education: A comprehensive review. *International Journal of Novel Research and Development*.