

## CMP Procedures for the Comprehensive Guidance Counseling Program (CGCP)

### **General**

School counseling is available at CMP campuses in order to provide extra support in the three main areas of academic, career, and social/emotional guidance to our students and families. Counselors will offer a preventative, whole school guidance curriculum program which is aligned with Montessori philosophy and the character education program; designed to address many of the issues that our students face today. A variety of topics that the counseling program will cover include: bully prevention, emotion and stress management, goal setting, healthy lifestyles, and others. Counselors will also provide small group and individual counseling services as needed, largely based on teacher and/or parent referral. Counselors will begin providing individual student planning services to middle school students to aid in their transition to high school and foster a post-secondary mindset. Because the education and well-being of children involves a team approach, counselors will work with teachers, administrators, parents, and community members to create the best educational experience for children to help them on their journey to becoming life-long learners.

CMP counselors support the district's mission by:

- Accepting and embracing the uniqueness and individuality of each child
- Preparing all children for the "real-world" with strategies and goals to help them reach their full potential
- Engaging students, staff, and families in activities that will build and strengthen our community
- Demonstrating commitment to building a more peaceful society by implementing guidance activities which are consistent with Montessori philosophy
- Supporting and encouraging student creativity, passion, and service to others
- Fostering self-motivation, responsible choices, and respect in all students
- Supporting a safe school climate

### **Guidance Curriculum**

Counselors will implement guidance curriculum that promotes students' academic, career, and personal/social development and which is aligned with

Montessori philosophy. The guidance curriculum will consist of topics based on the Content Standards, CMP curriculum guide, and staff requests based on their observations. CMP will provide resources and support activities for implementation of a K-8 guidance curriculum. The guidance curriculum will be reviewed and evaluated by the team of counselors, and modifications to the guidance curriculum will be based on student data, school data, and needs assessment data collected each year.

### **Individual Planning**

Individual student planning will assist all students in planning, monitoring, and managing their academic, career, and personal/social development. The foundation for individual planning will be established during the lower and upper elementary years through guidance curriculum lessons and activities. Building on this foundation, CMP middle school students will meet with counseling staff for individual planning sessions to plan for their futures. During their eighth grade year at CMP, students will have completed a Personal Study Plan (PSP), which will include: strengths and interests, long and short term goals, high school planning, and post-secondary planning. Parents/guardians will be invited to collaborate with counseling staff and students for individual planning sessions.

### **Responsive Services**

Responsive services refer to actions taken by CMP staff members in response to student needs and concerns. Responsive services are included as part of the CGCP in order to work with students whose issues or problems are interfering with their academic, career, or personal/social development. Within the delivery system of CMP's CGCP, responsive services will be implemented through individual counseling, small group counseling, and consultative services.

### **System Support**

CMP recognizes that system support is an important component in a well-organized CGCP. The system support component of CMP's CGCP includes administration and management activities that support the program. Counselors and administration will work together to conduct routine evaluations of the CGCP, analyze school and needs assessment data, form a Guidance Advisory Committee (GAC), and decide which additional responsibilities counseling staff will take on. Administration will also support the program by participating in community outreach, and making professional development opportunities available to counseling staff.

## CMP Procedures for the Referral of Students

### **Identification of Students for Referral**

If either a staff member or a parent feels that their student could benefit from seeing the school counselor either in a group or individually, they should contact one of the administrators at their school site. If the request for counseling services comes from teaching staff, administration will usually direct the staff member to fill out a counseling questionnaire to justify the need for services. If the request is for counseling services for a specific issue which is not applicable to the questionnaire, administration will make a referral based on a discussion with teaching staff. If the request is from a parent, administration will meet with the teacher and make a decision to refer the student (or not) to counseling. Referrals will be checked in a timely manner considering the schedule of counseling services to the campus. Once a referral is submitted, counseling staff will set up a time via email with the teacher to meet the student for an initial check-in. The student and/or the teacher will then provide parents with a consent form in order to continue on-going services (please see **informed consent** procedures), if this is what counseling staff, teacher(s), and student feels will be beneficial.

The counseling referral form in Google Drive accessible only to administration contains the following items: student name, teacher name, campus, administrator name, RtI, 504, academic reason for referral, social/emotional reason for referral, when would be optimal for the student to see the counselor, and whether the student would best be seen individually or in a small group. The referral must contain all identifying information, however the reasons for the referral can vary in number or category.

If a student is having a personal crisis during the school day, then the referring staff member who first receives the information will take leadership with that student. If the staff member is of the mind that the student would benefit from seeing the school counselor, they should consult with their supervisor and make the referral either in person, by phone, or by email, or via the online referral system (site administrator).

Middle school students can request to see the school counselor (self-refer) during the school day. Hard copy student referral slips will be placed in middle school classrooms for students who would like to see the counselor during the 15 minutes before school, lunch/recess, or 15 minutes after school depending on which day the counselor is on campus.

## **Informed Consent**

Before students can see the school counselor in small group or individual sessions, they must be informed of what will happen during these sessions, and their parents must sign a consent form for them to receive services during the school day. Regarding consent forms: There will be hard copies of the consent forms at each campus in the school office. Counselors will also have copies when they serve each campus. Students may see a counselor for a check-in or a first visit without parental consent, however if the student requires on going sessions, a parental consent form must be signed and turned in for counselors to continue service. Consent is not needed for whole group guidance lessons, as this is part of school curriculum. Consent forms are not required if a student is in crisis and comes into counseling (parent(s) would be notified immediately). A consent form would be required if the student in crisis needs on-going sessions from the school counselor.

## **Confidentiality**

The school counselor will keep everything discussed in small group or individual sessions confidential. Exceptions to confidentiality include: student disclosure of being hurt by someone else, student desiring or intending to hurt someone, or student desiring or intending to hurt oneself. Students will be made aware of confidentiality and its exceptions at each meeting time, and if confidentiality must be broken due to the one of the above reasons, those will be explained (if appropriate) with respect for their feelings and in a manner that is developmentally appropriate. School counselors work to maintain the privacy of all students and families, and if confidential information must be shared it will be done only on a "need to know" basis and as respectfully as possible.