

1 **Related Entries:** ACA, COA, COA-RA, IGN, IGO-RA, IHC-RA,  
2 IJA-RA, IOE-RA, IOE-RB, IOI-RA, IOH-RA  
3 **Responsible Offices:** Deputy Superintendent; Office of School  
4 Support and Well-being; Office of  
5 District Operations  
6

7 **Social-Emotional and Mental Health**  
8 **Programming and Services for Students**  
9

10 **A. PURPOSE**  
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12 To affirm the Board of Education's commitment to the social-  
13 emotional well-being and mental health of students as  
14 essential components of learning and academic achievement,  
15 school attendance and school completion  
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17 To set forth a framework for a multi-tiered system of  
18 universal, targeted, and intensive student services that  
19 support the educational mission of Montgomery County Public  
20 Schools (MCPS)  
21

22 **B. ISSUE**  
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24 Student learning and academic achievement, school attendance,  
25 and school completion all have strong social-emotional and  
26 mental health components: cognitive demands for learning;  
27 social and emotional and mental health demands for behaving  
28 according to school rules, norms, and expectations; and  
29 physical demands to be active throughout the school day.  
30 School communities thrive when the student body is engaged in

31 school life, healthy, and makes positive decisions that  
32 promote their own well-being and the well-being of others.

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34 C. POSITION

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36 1. The Board seeks to support students' academic success  
37 with a multi-tiered system of supports that -

38  
39 a) appropriately leverages the skills and resources of  
40 MCPS professionals, as well as community partner  
41 agencies through appropriate memoranda of  
42 understanding; and

43  
44 b) aligns with Policy COA, *Student Well-being and*  
45 *School Safety*, and the Be Well 365 Initiative that  
46 support the development of positive and safe school  
47 climates.

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49 2. A multi-tiered system should include, but is not limited  
50 to, the following key components:

51  
52 a) Universal programming available to all students -  
53 grade-specific and age-appropriate classroom  
54 instruction through the Maryland State Department  
55 of Education (MSDE) curricula for social-emotional  
56 learning, health education and mental health  
57 literacy; school-wide programs such as bullying  
58 prevention; and drop-in support from school-based  
59 mental health professionals.

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61 b) Targeted student supports - consultation through  
62 school-level Student Well-being Teams (SWBT) and

63 Educational Management Teams (EMTs) to consider  
64 specific student needs and strengths and develop  
65 behavior support and interventions that address  
66 identified concerns through short-term individual  
67 and group counseling; referrals to community  
68 partners; small group skills training; and case  
69 management.

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71 c) Intensive support - referral to community partner  
72 agencies for individual or group therapy; home  
73 visits/interventions for absenteeism; behavior  
74 threat assessment; suicide assessment; and crisis  
75 intervention.

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77 a)d) Strong and supportive leadership teams at each  
78 school that analyze and organize all available  
79 resources and professionals including school  
80 counselors, school psychologists, school social  
81 workers (SSWs), and direct outreach professionals  
82 such as pupil personnel workers (PPWs), emergent  
83 multilingual learner therapeutic counselors  
84 (ETCs), and parent community coordinators (PCC).

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87 2-3. The Board affirms the importance of educators and  
88 trusted adults in every school setting, in addition to  
89 social-emotional and mental health professionals, who  
90 interact with students daily, show empathy to students  
91 and whom students and families may view as reliable and  
92 caring sources of support in a-times of worry, concern,  
93 or crisis. MCPS will establish learning objectives and  
94 supporting resources for MCPS staff and, as appropriate,

95 volunteers who regularly interact with students, so that  
96 they are knowledgeable about the functions of the school  
97 SWBTs and EMTs, and may facilitate appropriate and  
98 timely connections with social-emotional and mental  
99 health programming and services for students.

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101 43. Consistent with Policy ABC, *Family-School Partnerships*,  
102 the Board promotes student and family access to social-  
103 emotional well-being and mental health supports,  
104 programming and services, either provided directly by  
105 MCPS staff or through community partners.

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107 a) Students will have regular opportunities to meet in  
108 person with school-based MCPS social-emotional and  
109 mental health professionals, who will help them  
110 understand, as appropriate, the programming and  
111 services available to students, including each  
112 school's SWBT.

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114 b) MCPS will effectively communicate school-level  
115 information to families and students about the  
116 social-emotional well-being, mental health  
117 professionals, and programming and services at each  
118 school, either through direct provision by MCPS  
119 staff or through referrals to community partner  
120 agencies.

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122 5. Consent for the disclosure of confidential student  
123 information by MCPS staff is subject to the Federal  
124 Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and  
125 community partner agencies may be subject to the Health  
126 Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

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6. MCPS will establish memoranda of understanding with community partner agencies that specify, as appropriate, partnership roles and responsibilities, referral processes, safety planning, decision making rules, and confidentiality and data-sharing protocols in alignment with the FERPA which governs MCPS staff and programming, and HIPAA which governs health providers.

D. DESIRED OUTCOMES

- 1. All students will thrive and become healthy, resilient, self-confident, and successful young people, who are engaged in school life and make positive decisions that promote their own well-being and the well-being of others.
- 2. Students and families will access, when needed, the appropriate supports students may need and understand the purposes of social-emotional and mental health programming.
- 2-3. The educational mission of MCPS will be supported by an effective and efficient system of universal, targeted, and intensive student services to foster positive, respectful, orderly, and safe learning environments necessary for effective learning.

E. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The superintendent of schools will -

- 159 1. implement school counseling, social-emotional learning,  
160 and health education curricula that assist students to  
161 gain the social-emotional knowledge and skills  
162 appropriate for their level of development;  
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- 164 2. provide students and families with school-level and  
165 topic-specific information needed to effectively access  
166 each social-emotional and mental health program and  
167 practice area, provided through MCPS resources and/or  
168 community partners;  
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- 170 3. collect regular feedback on stakeholder access to  
171 social-emotional and mental health programming and  
172 services; and  
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- 174 4. establish regulations or other administrative procedures  
175 necessary for carrying out the commitments and  
176 priorities outlined in this policy, and consistent with  
177 developing a positive school climate as set forth in  
178 Policy COA, *Student Well-being and School Safety*.  
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180 **F. REVIEW AND REPORTING**  
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- 182 1. The Board will regularly review the staffing and  
183 capacity of social-emotional and mental health  
184 programming and services for elementary, middle, and  
185 high schools and alternative programs to promote  
186 equitable and effective staffing of social-emotional  
187 well-being and mental health programming and services.  
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- 189 2. The superintendent of schools shall recommend to the  
190 Board through the budget process funding to implement

191 the goals of this policy and strategically deploy such  
192 professionals in an effective and equitable manner.

193  
194 3. This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in  
195 accordance with the Board of Education's review process.

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198 **Related Sources:** MD Educ Code § 7-1501 (2018); Code of Maryland  
199 Regulations, sections 13a.07.11.03;  
200 13a.05.05.02; 13a.12.03.02; 13a.12.03.07;  
201 13a.12.03.11; 13a.12.03.08.08;  
202 13a.12.04.08.08

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204 **Policy history:** Formerly Policy IJA, *School Counseling*  
205 (2004); amended by Resolution No. ,  
206 adopted .

207  
208 *A. PURPOSE*

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210 ~~The Board of Education is committed to ensuring high quality school counseling programs~~  
211 ~~that are comprehensive, developmentally appropriate, foster academic achievement and~~  
212 ~~personal growth, and are provided to all Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)~~  
213 ~~students in an equitable manner.~~

214  
215 *B. ISSUE*

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217 ~~Comprehensive, developmentally appropriate, school counseling programs and services~~  
218 ~~provided by credentialed school counselors are essential to achieving the MCPS mission~~  
219 ~~of academic excellence and success for all students. School counselors are critical partners~~  
220 ~~in the delivery of a high quality education and contribute significantly to the removal of~~  
221 ~~barriers to learning. In partnership with school staff, school counselors teach the~~  
222 ~~knowledge and skills necessary for success in a rigorous instructional program and promote~~  
223 ~~healthy social and emotional development as it pertains to academic achievement.~~  
224 ~~Counselors collaborate with staff, parents, and community members to mobilize resources~~  
225 ~~needed to support student success. Counselors support students in attaining their full~~  
226 ~~potential and achieving their academic and personal aspirations.~~

228 C. ~~POSITION~~

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230 1. ~~In all schools:~~

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232 a) ~~Counselors provide a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate school~~  
233 ~~counseling program to all students~~

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235 b) ~~The school counseling program aligns with the MCPS educational mission~~

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237 c) ~~Counselors provide information and support to students and families about~~  
238 ~~academic programming, community supports, and other relevant information~~

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240 d) ~~School counselors are essential to the articulation process and communicate~~  
241 ~~information needed to ensure a student's continued success~~

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243 e) ~~The school counseling program is based on national standards and includes~~  
244 ~~prevention, intervention, and crisis response services~~

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246 f) ~~School counselors promote personal, interpersonal, health, academic, and career~~  
247 ~~development for all students through proactive classroom programs and other~~  
248 ~~services~~

249 g) ~~School counselors address the unique needs of individual students through~~  
250 ~~interventions which are culturally appropriate~~

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252 h) ~~School counselors communicate the role and goals of the school counseling~~  
253 ~~program with all stakeholders including students, parents, staff, administrators,~~  
254 ~~and community~~

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256 i) ~~The school counseling program and school counselors address equitably the needs~~  
257 ~~of the diverse school population and advocate for educational excellence for all~~  
258 ~~students~~

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260 j) ~~School counselors collect and analyze both qualitative and quantitative data to~~  
261 ~~identify and address student needs and to develop, implement, evaluate, and~~  
262 ~~continuously improve the counseling program~~

263

264 2. ~~The school counseling program is implemented in grades preK-12. Because the academic~~  
265 ~~and developmental needs of students change as they mature, the counseling program~~  
266 ~~addresses the unique academic and developmental needs of students at each school level~~  
267 ~~in collaboration with staff, parents, and community.~~

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269 a. ~~At the elementary level:~~

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271 (1) ~~The school counseling program promotes school success by assisting~~  
272 ~~students in acquiring the skills and attitudes necessary for academic~~  
273 ~~achievement~~

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275 (2) ~~The school counseling program teaches decision making, problem solving,~~  
276 ~~and resiliency skills~~

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278 (3) ~~School counselors foster the development of positive self concept and~~  
279 ~~interpersonal skills~~

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b. ~~At the middle school level:~~

- ~~(1) The school counseling program focuses on building academic and social competence and career awareness~~
- ~~(2) School counselors coordinate, monitor, and manage the process by which students develop a rigorous, appropriate comprehensive plan that meets high school graduation requirements and reflects post secondary goal setting~~

e. ~~At the high school level:~~

- ~~(1) School counselors meet with students regularly to review, guide, and support them through the academic and career planning process. School counselors plan and manage the process for students reviewing and updating rigorous comprehensive plans to support students' post-secondary educational and career goals~~
- ~~(2) The school counseling program equips students to develop competence in decision making, career planning, interpersonal relationships, personal responsibility, and other skills essential to being a productive citizen~~

~~D. DESIRED OUTCOMES~~

~~Throughout MCPS, all students will have access to comprehensive, developmentally appropriate school counseling programs and services which support academic achievement and personal growth. At all school levels, school counselors collaborate with parents, students, staff, and community to remove barriers to learning and provide opportunities and supports to empower students to embrace their full potential and achieve their academic and personal aspirations.~~