

**Chapter 61. School Districts****Subchapter GG. Commissioner's Rules Concerning Counseling Public School Students****§61.1071. Counseling Public School Students Regarding Higher Education.**

- (a) In accordance with Texas Education Code (TEC), §33.007, a counselor shall provide certain information about higher education to a student and a student's parent or guardian during the first year the student is enrolled in a high school or at the high school level in an open-enrollment charter school and again during the student's senior year.
- (b) The information that counselors provide in accordance with subsection (a) of this section must include information regarding all of the following:
  - (1) the importance of higher education, which:
    - (A) includes workforce education, liberal arts studies, science education, graduate education, and professional education to provide broad educational opportunities for all students;
    - (B) furthers students' intellectual and academic development; and
    - (C) offers students more career choices and a greater potential earning power;
  - (2) the advantages of completing the recommended high school curriculum or higher, including, at a minimum, curriculum programs which:
    - (A) provide students with opportunities to complete higher-level course work, particularly in mathematics, science, social studies, and languages other than English, thereby:
      - (i) increasing students' readiness for higher education and reducing the need for additional preparation for college-level work;
      - (ii) preparing students for additional advanced work and research in both career and educational settings;
      - (iii) allowing students, in certain instances, to receive college credit for their high school course work; and
      - (iv) enabling students to be eligible for certain financial aid programs for which they would otherwise be ineligible (e.g., the TEXAS grant program);
    - (B) enable students to receive an academic achievement record noting the completion of either the recommended program or higher; and
    - (C) provide students who elect to complete the distinguished achievement program with an opportunity to demonstrate student performance at the college or career level by demonstrating certain advanced measures of achievement;
  - (3) the advantages of taking courses leading to a high school diploma relative to the disadvantages of preparing for a high school equivalency examination, including:
    - (A) the progressive relationship between education and income; and
    - (B) the greater possibility for post-secondary opportunities (including higher education and military service) that are available to students with a high school diploma;
  - (4) financial aid eligibility, including:
    - (A) the types of available aid, not limited to need-based aid, and including grants, scholarships, loans, tuition and/or fee exemptions, and work-study;
    - (B) the types of organizations that offer financial aid, such as federal and state government, civic or church groups, foundations, nonprofit organizations, parents' employers, and institutions of higher education; and

- (C) the importance of meeting financial aid deadlines;
- (5) instruction on how to apply for financial aid, including guidance and assistance in:
  - (A) determining when is the most appropriate time to complete financial aid forms; and
  - (B) completing and submitting the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or any new version of this form as adopted by the U.S. Department of Education;
- (6) the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's Center for Financial Aid Information, including its toll-free telephone line, its Internet website address, and the various publications available to students and their parents;
- (7) the Automatic Admissions policy, which provides certain students who graduate in the top 10% of their high school class with automatic admission into Texas public universities; and
- (8) the general eligibility and academic performance requirements for the TEXAS grant program, which allows students meeting the academic standards set by their college or university to receive awards for up to 150 credit hours or for six years or until they receive their bachelor's degree, whichever occurs first. The specific eligibility and academic performance requirements, along with certain exemptions to these requirements, are specified in Chapter 22, Subchapter L, of this title (relating to Toward Excellence, Access and Success (TEXAS) Grant Program). The general requirements include:
  - (A) Texas residency;
  - (B) financial need;
  - (C) registration for the Selective Service or exemption from this requirement;
  - (D) completion of the recommended high school program or higher or, in the case of a public high school that did not offer all of the courses necessary to complete the recommended or higher curriculum, a certification from the district that certifies that the student completed all courses toward such a curriculum that the high school had to offer;
  - (E) enrollment of at least three-quarters time in an undergraduate degree or certificate program within 16 months of high school graduation, unless an allowable exemption is satisfied; and
  - (F) no conviction of a felony or crime involving a controlled substance, unless certain conditions are met.

*Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §61.1071 issued under the Texas Education Code, §33.007.*

*Source: The provisions of this §61.1071 adopted to be effective July 14, 2002, 27 TexReg 6027.*

### **§61.1073. Annual Assessment of School District Compliance.**

- (a) The following words and terms, when used in this section, have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.
  - (1) Comprehensive school counseling program--provision of a guidance curriculum, responsive services, individual planning, and system support as described in Texas Education Code (TEC), §33.005(b).
  - (2) Duties that are components of a counseling program--work activities related to the development, implementation, and evaluation of a comprehensive school counseling program as described in TEC, §33.005(b).
  - (3) School counselor--the position described by TEC, §21.003, and Chapter 239, Subchapter A, of this title (relating to School Counselor Certificate).
  - (4) School counselor's total work time--the amount of time, reported in hours, that a school counselor is contracted to work as a school counselor for a school district during a school year.

- (b) School districts shall require each district school counselor to track and document, using a standardized tracking tool, as established by each district, the time spent on work duties performed by the school counselor throughout a school year. This tracking tool shall:
- (1) include the following components:
    - (A) the total work time worked by the school counselor for the year;
    - (B) the total time spent on the following duties that are components of a counseling program developed under TEC, §33.005:
      - (i) provision of a guidance curriculum;
      - (ii) responsive services for students;
      - (iii) individual planning for students; and
      - (iv) system support; and
    - (C) the total time spent on duties that are not components of a counseling program developed under TEC, §33.005, including time spent in administering assessment instruments or providing other assistance in connection with assessment instruments (except time spent in interpreting data from assessment instruments); and
  - (2) be maintained by the district in a format that can be made available to Texas Education Agency (TEA) upon request.
- (c) School districts shall annually assess the district's compliance with the policy adopted under TEC, §33.006(d). The assessment shall include:
- (1) work time tracking documentation as described in subsection (b) of this section for each school counselor in the district;
  - (2) the number of school counselors whose work was in compliance with the district policy adopted under TEC, §33.006(d); and
  - (3) the number of school counselors in the district whose work was not in compliance with the district policy adopted under TEC, §33.006(d).
- (d) The assessment described in subsection (c) of this section shall be maintained by the school district in a format that can be made available to TEA upon request.
- (e) Not later than October 15 of each year, TEA will request the following information from a randomly selected sample of school districts, with district responses required to be submitted to TEA not later than November 15 of each year in the format requested by TEA:
- (1) a copy of the district policy adopted under TEC, §33.006(d);
  - (2) a copy of the district annual assessment as required by subsection (c) of this section;
  - (3) the number of school counselors in the district from the previous school year;
  - (4) the number of school counselors in the district whose work is determined by the district to be out of compliance with the district policy adopted under TEC, §33.006(d); and
  - (5) any other findings, conclusions, or analysis included in the annual assessment required by subsection (c) of this section, including proposed strategies to address any lack of compliance with the district policy adopted under TEC, §33.006(d).

*Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §61.1073 issued under Texas Education Code, §33.005 and §33.006.*

*Source: The provisions of this §61.1073 adopted to be effective May 21, 2023, 48 TexReg 2501.*