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ABSTRACT

The counselor must identify measurable objectives in terms of what he does or in terms of the student's behavior to be changed. To implement the concept of evaluation, the counselor must identify his goals, specify the objectives, and determine ways to evaluate accomplishment of his goals and objectives. The important evaluative criterion in the procedure is the translation of the goals into behavioral terms. First, the counselor must identify areas that the guidance program must serve. The major areas are educational, social, and vocational. Within these areas, the services provided include counseling, evaluation, follow-up, group guidance, information, orientation, personal data, placement, referral, and research. Finally, the counselor must identify specific guidance objectives which state what the counselor or client must do to accomplish the task and must describe the specific criteria for measurement of achievement of the objectives. (Author/LAA)

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EVALUATION OF GUIDANCE OBJECTIVES

By

Richard Mitchell

Schools have historically measured educational goals in terms of x numbers of dollars and x numbers of students per teacher. This is the procedure for measurement of educational returns. When a student fails in school we blame his lack of motivation, retardedness, parents, etc . . . Yet, the one variable all students have who fail in school is that they are products of prior educational systems which fail the child.

Since former U. S. Commissioner of Education, Leon M. Lessinger, announced one student in four were dropping out of school, communities have become concerned about these social and economic fatalities. The questions about cost and effectiveness of the public schools have stimulated the emergence of the concept of accountability in education. The request for additional funds for salaries, professional travel, and materials has become especially important to school guidance programs and counselors. Expenditures for guidance in the public schools have been challenged. One school board has granted minimum salary increases between 1968 and 1971 in the amount of nine hundred dollars for teachers and fifteen hundred dollars for principals. Counselors received a one hundred dollar increase for the same period of time. Another school board indicated counselors didn't teach and didn't have the same important responsibilities as teachers; evidence of the work of the school counselor in the educational system has not emerged.

Evaluation means to the counselor that he produce evidence of achievement of his stated objectives using specific and clearly identified populations and procedures. No longer can the counselor justify his role by stating "I counsel many children" or "I am available to the teachers whenever they want to see me." After he is able to write guidance program objectives, the counselor must identify an evaluation procedure or standard for determination of how successfully the objectives are realized.

The counselor must identify measurable objectives in terms of what he does or in terms of the student's behavior to be changed. To implement the concept of evaluation the counselor must identify his goals, specify the objectives and determine ways to evaluate accomplishment of his goals and objectives. The important evaluative criterion in the procedure is the translation of the goals into behavioral terms. That is, goals which can be observed and reported by others; however, the effectiveness is determined by precise organization and focus on the total guidance program so no one service is overlooked.

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Many federal programs together with guidance personnel in the public schools and colleges are developing elaborate classification scheme and taxonomies for use in the evaluation of guidance programs. These classifications have yet to provide help to the counselor in evaluation of his guidance services. If the taxonomies of instructional objectives for the classroom teacher are an example, those developed for guidance will have little impact on program development. However, counselors must devise a systematic procedure for verification of the priorities of the major areas and services of guidance. The procedure must also include a process which defines guidance goals in measurable terms.

When objectives are written, they are no guarantee for provision of quality guidance programs. During the past couple of years standardized testing programs have been criticized and in some instances the quality of testing programs have been challenged by guidance groups. It seems appropriate for guidance groups to investigate the lack of objectives in guidance programs related to interpretation and proper use of the test scores and possibly not be so critical of the test. It may be the lack of purpose and sophistication on the part of the counselor and not the fault of the test. A systematic procedure does not imply a standardized method for attainment of goals and objectives. It does imply a standardized procedure for verification or evaluation of attainment of goals and objectives.

Major Areas of Guidance

First, the counselor must identify for classification purposes the major areas the guidance program serves. The purpose of this identification is not to separate the organization of guidance areas which are integral components of all the services; but to identify for purposes of classification, so the services can be held accountable to each of the major areas. The major areas are:

Educational
Social
Vocational

Guidance Services

Counselors have between five and ten major classifications of the services their programs offer. This seems to depend on whose book you read. These services are offered for each of the major areas of guidance and guidance programs must provide evidence of the existence and performance of the services in relationship to the major areas of guidance. The guidance services are:

Counseling
Evaluation
Follow-up
Group Guidance
Information
Orientation
Personal Data
Placement
Referral
Research

Guidance Goals

To this point the concern has been a scheme for classification of goals and objectives so the counselor may verify the priorities of the areas and services of guidance. That is, a comprehensive guidance program would include all ten of the major services for each of the three areas of guidance. The next step is to begin to frame performance criteria for each of the areas and services in terms of guidance goals. A guidance goal is broad in nature and omits the criteria for judgment of acceptable performance. It is an overall or general statement of what is to be accomplished.

A guidance goal for a secondary counselor might be as follows: To assist the student to develop an accurate concept of self in relationship to the educational setting. This goal would be classified as educational placement service in the area of education.

Guidance Objectives

To adequately measure attainment of goals, a specific statement of what the counselor or student must do is identified. Guidance goals will most likely have a number of objectives. There are a number of different tasks for the counselor if he is to assist the student to develop a realistic concept of self in the educational setting. One objective might be for the student (s) to declare a choice of curriculum, A guidance objective is a specific statement of what the counselor or student must do to accomplish the task.

Standard

Finally, the counselor must develop a means by which to measure attainment of the objective. A standard is a statement which describes the criteria to help to establish if the objective was accomplished. A standard to measure if the student did declare a choice of curriculum might be as follows: To have on record a declaration of choice of curriculum for all students.

To classify this guidance objective, it could be identified as follows:

Area: Educational
 Service: Educational Placement
 Goal: (Secondary) To develop an accurate concept of self in relationship to the educational setting.
 Objective: For the student to declare a choice of curriculum.
 Standard: To have on record a declaration of choice of curriculum for all students.

Examples of other goals and objectives are:

Area: Educational
 Service: Counseling
 Goal: To provide maximum educational opportunities for all students.
 Objective: To counsel 62 students who made D's and F's during the previous semester.
 Standard: Sixty-two students were counseled.

Area: Vocational
 Service; Placement
 Goal: To place all students on the job.
 Objective: To assist all graduating seniors to find employment.
 Standard: To send questionnaire seeking employment information
 (Name of company, name of boss, and job-classification)
 on each graduate and identify number who are employed.

Area: Vocational
 Service: Information (educational)
 Goal: (Primary) To become aware of the world of work.
 Objective: To know what a principal, fireman, policeman, and school
 maintenance worker do, earn, and where they live.
 Standard: For the student to be able to role-play and discuss what
 the worker does, earns, and how he lives.

Area: Social
 Service: Orientation
 Goal: (Elementary) To create awareness of the school physical
 plant
 Objective: For the student to know the school's floor plan (rooms
 numbered 100 on the first floor, 200 on the second, etc. . .)
 administrative and student service offices, and classrooms
 he will use.
 Standard: The student will demonstrate ability to find his classroom(s),
 administrative offices, and student service offices.

Summary

There is an increasing demand for tangible evidence of what the school guidance programs are accomplishing. The lack of success of many students, combined with dissatisfaction on the part of many citizens regarding the results of public education, contribute to the growing feeling that school personnel should be held responsible for what they do. Guidance programs are not identified with specific classroom educational programs and have been pointed out as lacking in performance commensurate with other educational services. The counselor must define the objective of the guidance services; determine the means of measuring success in meeting these objectives; and finally, evaluate and interpret the results of the guidance program to their colleagues and the community.