



# Understanding the Work of Professional School Counselors

[www.txca.org](http://www.txca.org)

Professional School Counselors are required by Texas statutes to hold a 48-hour master's degree in counseling, pass rigorous certification exams, complete hours of practicum or internship under supervision, and pursue continuing education.

The primary duty of Professional School Counselors is to “counsel students to fully develop each student’s academic, career, personal, and social abilities” (2 TEC §33.006). A school counselor works with the school faculty and staff, students, parents, and the community to plan, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive school counseling program that conforms to the most recent edition of the Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs developed by the Texas Counseling Association (2 TEC §33.005).



## Did you know?

- Decreasing the number of students on a counselor’s caseload reduces the number of disruptive behavior incidents by as much as 29%. (Collins, 2017)
- Effective counseling strategies tend to have positive effects on classroom attendance, discipline, and overall achievement. (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012)
- 83% of failing elementary students who participated in small group counseling improved in their grades.
- Students of color who are assigned to counselors of color see a 3.8 percentage point increase in graduating from high school and attending college. (Barnum, 2019)
- Juniors who meet with a school counselor are 7x more likely to complete a FAFSA, 3x more likely to attend college, and 2x more likely to attend a bachelor’s degree program. (NACAC, 2019)

Professional school counselors play a critical role in campus safety, in students’ mental health, and in their academic success. Approximately 50 percent of students with a mental health condition drop out of school (NAMI, 2018), indicating a need for school-based and school-connected supports. As legislators consider proposals related to student safety and well-being, it is important to recognize the value of investing in professional school counselors, who are uniquely qualified to serve students in the campus setting.

There are 34,000 Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC and LPC-Associates) and more than 13,000 Certified School Counselors in Texas. Combined, these 47,000 Professional Counselors make up the largest group of behavioral health professionals in the state.

## Who is TCA?

Founded in 1947, the Texas Counseling Association (TCA) represents more than 7,500 Professional Counselors who work in a variety of settings to empower individuals, families, students, and groups to accomplish their mental health, education, and career goals.

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