

Martin Sarkar

Reflective Journals

1. July 7th, 2013:

The Ethical Questions: Guidance:

I reflect upon the OSCA Ethical Guidelines for Ontario counselors focusing on the roles, expectations for professional competence and conduct.

2. July 11th, 2013

I reflect upon the Chapter #2, "Diverse Students, Community and Schools" from the Schmidt textbook and on the cultural lens that can affect the decisions of a school.

3. July 18th, 2013

I reflect upon the Ministry's Ontario Curriculum Exemplars for Guidance and Career Education (Grade 10) as I worked to complete my Culminating Project

4. July 25th, 2013

I attempt to provide an answer to Schmidt's Question #4 posed at the end of Chapter One and the goal setting lesson as it applies to counselors.

5. July 29th, 2013

Five Actions For New Counselors:

(From what I've learned thus far):

1. Stock your counseling office, counseling room with current research, reading materials applicable for students, teachers and parents.
2. Remain pro-active and follow through with program goals.
3. Secure consistent meetings with the principal with a clear agenda.
4. Network with other counselors to share ideas, collaborate.
5. Be aware of what is happening in the school and realize you can't do it all on your own!

What action do you think individual counselors and their professional associations should take to help clarify the identity and role of school counselors?



Finding a balance. And, you are not the principal.

Been spending time reviewing my assignments and see that becoming more than program leader for a counselor will be a demanding job. School counseling is an action, proactive profession and requires counselors to not only be an integral part of the school setting, but maintain a unique role within it. In a way, it's kind of like being a principal - minus the management part. One has to keep a distance from the rest of the staff to be able to continue to see the big picture (i.e., how programs run and influence/affect students) and ensure that staff, students and community members feel supportive. The question above was kept in mind when I designed my goal setting lesson: while all teachers teach or reinforce the need for goal-setting, the counselor can take more ownership over this piece to help align classroom goals with those of the school. For instance, S.M.A.R.T. goals are not only applicable to classroom teachers and their students, but the entire school. Wouldn't it be prudent to follow the same process at the school level to ensure (and empower) teachers to use and to share the same language of goal setting? A counselor, being attuned to the needs and specific goals created in classes around the school, would then be in a strategic position to encourage teachers, adept at goal setting, to share their best practices with others or to provide resources to teachers to go beyond what is being presented to students. Imagine if the counselor holding a meeting with the admin team to share goals set by the school community! It's only one small part of a role that counselors could play, but counselors, wondering how to be a leader in a school, could easily serve in this capacity without being seen as an admin (as in the case in some schools I've worked in). What was interested to read was the survey that was shared by Schmidt on p.113 that asked teachers to identify topics of interest for possible in-service sessions. The topics ranged from special education support to peer helper programs. Even this is a chance for counselors to show leadership (and to apply their researching skills, as this is critical in establishing credibility within a school) as the counselor can pre-select topics that they feel are important for a school to explore that year and beyond.