

Questions Employers Might Ask at a School Counseling Interview

- How do you see the word "leader" fitting in to your role as a counselor?
- What is the role of the school counselor in relation to teachers, parents, administrators and other counselors?
- What do you see as the main role of a school counselor?
- What influenced you to be a school counselor?
- What is the counseling theory or approach that you most closely follow?
- What is the most creative and innovative counseling technique you have used?
- What innovative and new ideas would you like to employ as a school counselor?
- How would you divide your time between meeting the immediate needs of students and keeping up with paperwork?
- How are school personnel affected by working in a rural county vs. urban city (where there are more or less resources)? Describe your personal experience?
- How will you evaluate your programs to meet (a) current state standards; (b) standards of best practice for a comprehensive guidance and counseling program; and (c) the ASCA National Model for School Counseling Programs?
- How would you handle an irate parent?
- How would you handle a passive (perhaps irresponsible) parent?
- How would you handle a large group of students having attendance problems?
- How do you see yourself fitting in with counselors who have many years of experience as veteran teachers?
- How would you fit in with a large staff?
- What is your strongest asset?
- What do you think is the most important characteristic of a counselor?
- What do you see as the role of a counselor in a school this large?
- What do you know about our school that you would consider a strength? a weakness?
- What makes you want to work at _____ School?
- What is it that you like about working with (grade level) school students?
- What is something new you could bring to our program?
- How do you handle criticism?
- How do you handle stress?
- Are you opposed to working above and beyond school hours to get the job done?
- Are you opposed to working at night for functions such as college night, senior night, etc.?
- What is your experience with 504 accommodation plans?
- What experiences have you had with transition plans?
- How would you deal with cultural differences in a school setting?
- Does your principal know you're applying for this job and how does he/she feel about it?
- What technology applications do you see being useful in your work?
- What might your professional development plan look like?
- What do you think the role of the counselor is in preventing school violence?
- What practical experiences have you had that make you feel capable of being a counselor?
- What experiences have you had in working with special education students?
- What can you provide that is different from a social worker, school psychologist, or mental health counselor?
- When considering ethical standards and school policies, how would you handle a conflict between the two?
- What do the most recent state standardized test results indicate about this school district and this school; and what is your role regarding standardized testing?
- How does a school counselor assist with the implementation of ESL in building programming?
- Describe how you would implement small group counseling/guidance lessons?
- Because time is a scarce resource in schools these days, and because of a strong push for improved standardized test scores, best educational practices suggest that in-class guidance lessons not take away from classroom instructional minutes. How will you address this issue as a school counselor?
- What has your experience been in working with students of color & GLBT students?
- What is the difference between a therapist and a school counselor?
- What is your view on collaborative consultation in the schools?
- Tell us about a successful (satisfying) case that you have handled? And, one that was not so successful; what would you have done differently?
- What is your experience with parenting programs?
- Describe past interactions with parents in home visits.
- What does your future comprehensive program look like? What is your plan for achieving this?
- How do you handle conflict with a colleague? parent? administrator?
- How do you feel about writing letters of recommendation (HS)?
- How do you keep yourself organized? Discuss how you multitask.
- Where do you see yourself in the next five years?
- Can we ask you a question in Spanish, and can you respond likewise?

- Would you be interested in heading any extracurricular activities (i.e., club advisor)?
- What does counseling mean to you?

What would you do if...

- One of your students told you she was pregnant?
- You suspected one of your students is being abused?
- One of your students tells you they are being abused?
- A student requests a teacher change because he/she doesn't like them?
- A parent requests you to switch their child's teacher?
- A student requests to be in the same lunch period as their friend?
- You suspect one of your students is abusing drugs/alcohol?
- One of your students admits to being sexually active?
- One of your student's parents is terminally ill?
- Your student does not get into their number one college choice?
- One of your students wants to drop out of high school?
- You overhear the makings of a fight that is about to happen?
- One of your seniors is not going to graduate?
- A parent asks to meet with you at 5:00 because that is the only time they can get off of work?
- You see one of your students (or parents) in town?
- One of your students continues to fail math (or any subject) each quarter?
- You have a faculty member's child in your caseload?
- One of your students talks to you about wanting to kill himself/herself?
- One of your students told you he/she is gay?

Questions to Ask an Employer at a School Counseling Interview

- What qualities or skills do you feel are most important for a counselor to possess?
- What are some things that you would like to see the person in this role accomplish?
- What would faculty, students, and parents say are the strengths of this district?
- What type of in-service training does your district provide to counselors?
- What are the greatest challenges that this district is currently facing?
- What are the prospects for future growth in this community and its schools?
- What committee work or extracurricular advising opportunities might be available?
- Do parents and the community actively support the schools in the district?
- What do you like best about your job?
- What do you like best about working for this district?

*Sources: American School Counselor Association
Illinois School Counselor Association
American Association for Employment in Education*

Skills/Qualities Employers Seek in School Counselors

Adaptability/Flexibility
Analytical Skills
Communication Skills
Creativity Skills
Critical Thinking Skills
Enthusiastic/Energetic
Interpersonal Skills
Listening Skills
Organizational Skills
Presentation Skills
Problem-Solving Skills
Service-Oriented
Social Perceptiveness
Teamwork Skills

*Sources: American School Counselor Association
Illinois School Counselor Association
American Association for Employment in Education*

Sample Thank You Letter

10325 S. State Street
Orland Park, IL 60462
708-555-1111
kdoe@mailbox.com

March 10, 20xx

Kimberly Smith
Assistant Superintendent
Fairview School District 123
123 S. Main Street
Fairview, IL 60404

Dear Ms. Smith:

Thank you very much for interviewing me for the Guidance Counselor position with your district today. You and your colleagues provided me with a very warm reception and informative discussion.

As mentioned during our conversation, my two years as a part-time intake specialist at a runaway youth shelter has helped me develop sound counseling abilities. In addition, my school counseling internship allowed me to work with a wide array of cultural backgrounds and ability levels, and it required me to present to students and parents on key current issues such as bullying, smoking, and applying for college. All of this experience has enhanced my communication, interpersonal, organizational, and problem-solving skills, all of which would enable me to make a positive impact as a guidance counselor.

Once again, I wish to reiterate my genuine interest in the position and enthusiasm in working for the district. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 708-555-1111 or at kdoe@mailbox.com. Thank you very much for your valuable time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kerry J. Doe

Kerry J. Doe