

**Marked Tree
Middle School &
High School
Student Services Plan
2018-2019**



**Marked Tree School District
Student Services Plan**

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- I. In accordance with ACT 908 of 1991 and Arkansas Department of Education Rules and Regulations for Public School, this document will serve as the required Student Services Plan of Action for Marked Tree High School.

MARKED TREE HIGH SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

As educators, we will assist students in developing skills in preparation for successful post secondary education, employment and life. Further, we will assist students in accepting responsibilities as adults in our society and reinforce the students' understanding of their potential to learn.

GUIDANCE MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Marked Tree Public Schools guidance department is to provide students and staff a safe environment where they can share feelings and concerns, can learn to communicate, and can make responsible decisions. While respecting individual uniqueness and multicultural diversity, opportunities will be provided to enhance the three domains of Academic, Career, and Professional/Social Development.

GUIDANCE PHILOSOPHY

The counseling program of Marked Tree High School is designed to recognize the potential and uniqueness of each student. The student's growth and learning are developmental; therefore, guidance must be comprehensive, developmental, and sequential. This process begins at birth and continues throughout life. All members of the school staff are part of the educational guidance team; therefore, guidance is the responsibility of the total school staff. The counselor serves as a consultant and resource person with specialized knowledge and expertise.

CORE BELIEFS

Acquiring Knowledge of Self And Others

- Each child needs to understand and accept him/herself.
- Each child needs to be able to identify problems and learn how to make good decisions.
- Each child needs to understand and get along with others.
- Each child needs to know how drugs and alcohol affect themselves and their friends.
- Each child needs to learn about family responsibilities.
- Each child needs to learn how to use leisure time now and in the future.
- Each child needs to learn safety and survival skills.

Developing Competencies In Career/Vocational Planning and Exploration

- Each child needs to explore, plan and develop a career.
- Each child needs to understand how being male or female relates to jobs and careers.
- Each child needs to prepare and find jobs that suit their interest and abilities.
- Each child needs the opportunity to learn from friends and others who have graduated.
- Each child needs to have a working knowledge of careers and how they relate to our society.

Achieve Educational Success

- Each child needs to improve basic skills and study/learning skills.
- Each child needs to make decisions about postsecondary training.
- Each child needs to know how to plan high school classes.

II. Guidance, Counseling and Career Education Services

A. The Role of the Marked Tree High School Counselor

The Marked Tree High School counselor helps all students by establishing individual, group and classroom contacts with them, collaborating with teachers, and coordinating with other school or community guidance resources. The clinical skills and knowledge base of the counselor are more effectively used if effort is directed in an organized way toward making Marked Tree High School, the teachers, and the curriculum sensitive to those aspects of personal development most associated with life success.

B. Goals and Objectives

Goal 1. To assist students in the process of growing in personal, social, educational, and career development.

Objectives:

- a. Personal Development – The counselor will assist students to:
 1. Establish and maintain a sense of personal worth and a positive self-image
 2. Develop and cultivate appropriate emotional responses to life experiences; and
 3. Understand their roles and responsibilities in school, family and community.
- b. Social Development – The counselor will assist students to:
 1. Develop and maintain effective interpersonal skills;
 2. Understand the roles and responsibilities of others in school, family and community; and
 3. Acquire knowledge of and respect for individual differences in abilities, interest, attitudes, and background.
- c. Educational Development -- The counselor will assist students to:
 1. Achieve at a level in keeping with their potential;
 2. Develop a sense of discovery about new knowledge; and
 3. Recognize their own academic strengths, weaknesses, and areas of need.
- d. Career Development: -- The counselor will assist students to:
 1. Discover the meaning of work and its relationship to the individual;
 2. Develop a positive attitude and a personal identity as a worker who contributes to self and to social needs; and
 3. Understand their own aptitudes and develop their own abilities as they pertain to the world of work.

Goal 2. To assist students to appropriately cope with crisis situations through the acquisition of effective problem-solving skills.

Objectives: The counselor will assist student to:

- a. Develop strategies for exploring alternatives that allow students to successfully deal with problem situations; and
- b. Evaluate, select, and implement the appropriate solutions to problems.

Goal 3. To assist the Marked Tree High School staff in its efforts to promote the developmental growth of students.

Objectives: The counselor will assist staff by:

- a. Promoting a positive learning atmosphere;
- b. Promoting an understanding of the role of school personnel in the guidance program;
- c. Enhancing their counseling skills through consultation and other staff development activities; and
- d. Encouraging the recognition and use of affective skills in the teaching-learning process.

Goal 4. To assist the family in its efforts to understand the developmental growth of children.

Objectives: The counselor will assist families by:

- a. Promoting effective communication among the parents, school staff, and children; and
- b. Enhancing parenting skills that will promote the positive personal, social, educational, and career development of children.

C. Principles of Comprehensive School Counseling Programs

ACT 908 of 1991, Section 6. states: School counselors shall spend at least seventy-five percent (75%) of work time providing direct counseling related to students, and shall devote no more than twenty-five percent (25%) of work time to administrative activities, provided that such activities relate to the provision of guidance services.

School counseling services are comprehensive in the range of activities and services provided. These include:

1. Preventive classroom guidance activities;
2. Individual and group counseling;

3. Referrals to community agencies;
4. Consultation with teachers, administrators, parents, and community leaders;
5. Crisis intervention; and
6. Assessment, placement, and follow-up services.

A team approach is essential to comprehensive school counseling programs the team refers to teachers, parents, school counselors, administrators, psychologists, and social workers. Referrals are made when necessary for extended services, such as mental health.

Guidance describes an instructional process or structured learning activities, which attempt to prevent problems. Such activities assist students in developing greater understanding of themselves and others and emphasize the needs of a group of students rather than those of any student.

Counseling is a process in which a trained professional forms a trusting relationship with a person who needs assistance. This relationship focuses on personal meaning of experiences, feelings, behaviors, alternatives, consequences, and goals. Counseling provides a unique opportunity for individuals to explore and express their ideas and feelings in a non-evaluative, non-threatening environment.

D. School Counselors Are Involved In The Following:

1. Classroom Guidance

A comprehensive school counseling program involves planned guidance activities for all students. These age-related exercises foster students' academic, personal, social, and career development skills. Counselors and teachers implement such activities through a collaborative effort.

The classroom guidance curriculum focuses on topics such as:

- a. Self-understanding;
- b. Effective interpersonal and communication skills;
- c. Problem-solving, decision making, and conflict resolution skills;
- d. Effective study skills and positive attitudes toward school;
- e. Career awareness and the world of work;
- f. Substance abuse prevention;
- g. Comprehension and acceptance of differences in people (i.e. racial, gender-based, cultural, religious, physical); and
- h. College planning
- I. Responsible budgeting

School counselors take the lead in the development and organization of the guidance activities; however, this requires the support and assistance of teachers, parents, and administrators. Counselors can train teachers to conduct many

activities during their classes. Other team members may deliver other guidance procedures most effectively. Regardless of who conducts the exercises, the whole team must be aware of their goals so that they can be reinforced.

2. Individual and Small Group Counseling

In many situations, counselors work with students when they experience problems. However, counseling must be more than the provision of remediation and crisis intervention. It is our belief at Marked Tree High School that school counselors are always putting out fires, there is little time to prevent those fires from starting. Developmental counseling provides students with coping strategies before a crisis occurs. This may involve seeing students individually or in small groups to help them develop and use their resources. Counseling can also be provided for parents to address specific problems that may interfere with their student's success in school.

Marked Tree High School recognizes group counseling has become an invaluable part of most school counselors' work. Working with students in groups acknowledges that peer influence is an extremely powerful factor in students' development. Groups provide them with an opportunity to give and receive feedback, which contributes to their understanding of themselves and others. It also allows them to practice interpersonal and personal skills in a safe, reinforcing environment. In addition, a group approach enables counselors to have an impact on a greater number of students, making the most efficient use of the professional's time.

Of course, a group approach is not best suited for every student. There are students who benefit most from individual counseling, or a combination of individual and group work. For some students, the nature of the problem requires more confidentiality. Others may have extreme difficulty in relating to their peers, be overwhelmed in group situations, be personally dysfunctional, or need individual attention.

Students are referred for counseling by: teachers, parents, school psychologists, school administrators, and/or by themselves.

3. Consultation

Consultation in school counseling programs focuses on the total learning environment of the school. At Marked Tree High School, teachers use the counselor as a resource, seeking consultation on specific student's problems and on general issues. Many teachers can benefit from a counselor's assistance in developing new ways of responding and relating to students.

A major part of the counselor's role is to collaborate with teachers and parents, not to criticize them. In fact, school counselors can provide support and encouragement to teachers and parents who may be feeling frustrated, discouraged, overwhelmed, and unappreciated.

The counselor works with teachers, staff, and administrators at Marked Tree High School to help create the kind of school environments that stimulate growth and learning. The emphasis is on making the educational process more personal and increasing teachers' and administrators' understanding of the importance of fostering acceptance of and valuing individual differences in learning styles and rates of learning; how adults' expectations, biases, and behaviors affect students; and ways of helping students cope with success and failure.

Typically, consultation involves:

- a. Conducting professional development workshops and discussions with teachers and other school personnel on subjects such as substance and/or child abuse;
- b. Assisting teachers to work with individual students or groups of students;
- c. Providing relevant materials and resources to teachers, especially relating to classroom guidance curriculum;
- d. Assisting in the identification and development of programs for students with special needs;
- e. Participating in school committees that address substance abuse, human growth and development, school climate, and other guidance-related areas;
- f. Designing and conducting parent education classes;
- g. Interpreting student information, such as results of standardized tests for students and team members; and
- h. Consulting regularly with other specialist (i.e. social workers, psychologist, representatives from community agencies)

4. Coordination

Before guidance and counseling activities can take place, much planning, thinking, and coordinating are required. Systematic coordination of guidance programs is essential for effective delivery of services.

- a. Coordinate the use of school and community resources in collaboration with other team agencies;
- b. Assist parents in gaining access to services their children need;
- c. Serve as liaison between school, home, and community agencies so that efforts to help students are success and reinforced rather than duplicated;
- d. Plan, coordinate, and evaluate the guidance program's effectiveness; and
- e. Coordinate the school's test interpretation program, which usually includes interpreting test results to parents, students, and school personnel.

5. Education

The Marked Tree High School counselor conduct workshops on specific issues for parents as requested by the parents, administrators, community, and/or students. (i.e. preventing substance abuse, financial aid, career awareness, development of study habits, etc.) The counselor also put out newsletters and/or news articles via the school's Facebook page letting parents know what is happening at Marked Tree High School. Parents are encouraged to participate in volunteer opportunities within Marked Tree High School.

6. Peer Facilitation

Students often share their problems with peers rather than adults. The school counselor will provide structured opportunities for students to serve as peer helpers. Marked Tree High School realizes the power of peer influence cannot be minimized and, in fact, should be capitalized upon. Peer helpers can be selected by school staff and trained by the counselor in communication and basic counseling skills through a carefully planned program. The counselor also continually monitor and evaluate the training and impact of the peer facilitation program.

7. Making Appropriate Referrals

The school counselor establishes and maintains close working relationships with staff of a variety of school and community agencies. These agencies include, but are not limited to the Poinsett County Departments of Health and Human Services, Families Inc., Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, and area juvenile court systems. To better help Marked Tree High School students and their families cope with an array of problems, the counselor identifies school and community resources and establishes policies and procedures for interagency communications.

Typical tasks school counselors may be involved with while helping students and their families gain access to the services they need include:

- a. Identifying and assisting students and their parents with special needs by referring them to resources in and outside Marked Tree High School;
- b. Maintaining contacts with outside resources;
- c. Developing, publishing, and distributing a list of community resources, referral agencies, and hotlines for parents, students and colleagues;
- d. Developing a student self referral system; and

- e. Following up on referrals.

8. Assessment and Testing

The school counselor helps students identify their skills, abilities, achievements, and interests through counseling activities and guidance curriculum. The counselor also interprets standardized test results for parents, students, and faculty; relates the results to strengths and limitations in the Marked Tree High School's curriculum; and assists in planning and implementing changes in the curriculum and school's procedures.

A variety of assessment instruments are used by the school counselor to identify the needs of students and make recommendations to teachers based on these assessments.

9. Specialized Populations and Needs

Working with students from culturally diverse populations and students with disabilities requires special attention. The school counselor's activities can promote:

- a. Student's and school personnel's acceptance of differences;
- b. Policies, procedures, and behaviors that reflect freedom from stereotypes;
- c. Examination of Marked Tree High School's testing programs to ensure that they reflect equitable standards for all students; and
- d. Outreach to parents and families of students from culturally diverse populations.

10. Orientation

At Marked Tree High School, orientation is a process for students, teachers and parents to learn about the guidance, counseling, and other student services offered to assist in the adjustment of new students to our school. Orientation is designed to help students make effective transition adjustments from one school setting to another. Formal programs may be used in the classroom setting for groups entering Marked Tree High School from Marked Tree Elementary School. As new students enter throughout the school year, orientation is conducted by the counselor, other school personnel, and designated students.

11. Class Scheduling

The proper placement of students into the correct academic setting is essential. The school counselor acts in a consulting capacity at all levels in guiding students toward short and long-term educational and career objectives.

12. Utilization of Student Reports

The Marked Tree High School counselor is authorized to access any files kept by the Marked Tree School District. This data is utilized to professionally assist parents, faculty, students, administrators, and other counselors in helping each individual student reach their potential.

E. Career Awareness and Planning In School Counseling Programs

Career development is a lifelong process integrating the roles, settings, and events of a person's life. The word career encompasses all the roles in which individuals are involved (i.e. student, parent, worker, family member, citizen). For this reason, Marked Tree High School considers career education as an integral part of students' school experiences as they grow and develop.

Marked Tree High School guidance curriculum focuses on facilitating interpersonal relationships, decision-making, and problem-solving skills and teamwork – all of which can increase a student's future effectiveness in the workplace.

Guidance and general classroom activities focus on the world-of-work. Numerous opportunities exist for students to relate school subject matter to their future careers. Marked Tree High School teachers link all subject areas to lessons for the working world.

At Marked Tree High School, the school counselor, teachers, and administrators:

1. Work with, advise, and make students aware of the importance of selecting the proper courses throughout school in order to meet graduation requirements, to prepare for employment, and/or to prepare for admission to post-secondary institutions.
2. Provide materials on occupational and post-secondary institutions to help students understand the world of work and its expectations for employment.
3. Work with individual students on post-secondary/work alternatives.
4. Work with individual students experiencing difficulty with the changing roles of men and women to help understand continuous changes of male/female roles and how this relates to career choice.
5. Counsel with students displaying a lack of interpersonal skills to develop the interpersonal skills necessary for harmony in the workplace.

6. Make employment opportunities, college/technical school choices, and career planning materials available for students' use to become informed about up-to-date opportunities.
7. Provide current materials for career awareness and exploration to form tentative career goals and strategies to reach students and whether college or technical schools could provide those opportunities.
8. Work with individual students to discuss occupational, college, and/or technical interests to understand lifestyle preferences and relate those interest to training in that area.

F. State Goals and Objectives for Career Education

The Arkansas Council for Career Education developed these goals and objectives:

- Goal 1. Students will improve career planning and decision-making skills.
Objective: Students will be able to set goals, understand the importance of a planning process and seek assistance in decision making.
- Goal 2. Students will identify information about career sources of occupational information.
Objective: Students will investigate and locate appropriate sources of career information to match their interest.
- Goal 3. Students will improve job acquisition and retention competencies.
Objective: Students will practice job interview skills and state job retention factors.
- Goal 4. Students will improve attitudes and develop an appreciation for career success.
Objective: Students will demonstrate productive, positive attitudes toward work and task accomplishment.
- Goal 5. Students will improve skills in human relationships.
Objective: Students will identify the need for good human relation skills in the world of work.
- Goal 6. Students will improve self-investigation and evaluation skills necessary for career success.
Objective: Students will be able to examine self in relation to careers, assess self-concept, and appraise own interest and capabilities.
- Goal 7. Students will understand personal, work, and societal responsibilities.

Objective: Students will demonstrate good citizenship, knowledge of relationships with, and responsibilities to peers, co-workers, supervisors and property.

Goal 8. Students will improve understanding of economic factors influencing career opportunities.

Objective: Students will demonstrate an understanding of how various economic conditions (i.e. supply and demand, time, effort, specialization) affect a person and how a person interacts in the economy.

Goal 9. Students will improve understanding of relationships of education and career choices.

Objective: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the relationships of education (both formal and informal) to career opportunities.

G. Facilities for the Guidance Program

Marked Tree High School meets the requirements for guidance program facilities. The guidance office includes space for displaying various materials needed by the students, a separate area for waiting, a private office for counseling, and a place for security of restricted materials. The office also has a private, dedicated telephone line.

The guidance office is located near one entrance to the high school and is located convenient to all students traffic flow in the main high school building. Access is given to larger room as needed for meeting space.

H. Student Services Needs Assessment Samples

Needs assessments questionnaires for students, parents, faculty, and referral agencies are available upon request. The school counselor has access to these types of surveys from the Crowley's Ridge Education Service Cooperative and are administered online

I. School Counselor/Pupil Ratio and Other Standards for Accreditation

One fully licensed and certified counselor, Bobbie Pharis, serves Marked Tree High School grades 7- 12 for the 2018 - 2019 school year. Ms. Pharis holds a current Arkansas Teachers Certificate that will expire in 2019. The current student/counselor ratio is 1:250.

III. Psychological Services

Marked Tree School District provides an evaluation for students with learning or adjustment problems and evaluation for students in exceptional-child education programs.

The Marked Tree School District provides:

- a. Consultation and counseling with parents, students and school personnel.
- b. A system for the early identification of learning potential and factors, which affect the student's educational performance.
- c. A system for liaison and referrals with resources available outside the school.
- d. The district provides written policies, which assure ethical procedures in psychological activities.

Marked Tree High School also has the services from Families Inc. to provide professional counseling services on campus.

Information on all psychological services provided may be obtained from Marked Tree High School Principal, Annesa Thompson; Counselor, Bobbie Pharis, and/or Jennifer Hall, Marked Tree High School's Special Education LEA.

IV. Visiting Teacher and School Social Work

School counselors establish and maintain close working relationships with staff of a variety of school and community agencies. At Marked Tree High School, these agencies include, but are not limited to the Poinsett County Departments of Health and Human Services, Families Inc., Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, and area juvenile court systems. To better help Marked Tree High School students and their families to cope with an array of problems, the school counselor identifies school and community resources and establishes policies and procedures for interagency communications.

Typical tasks the school counselor may be involved with while helping students and their families gain access to the services they need include:

- a. Identifying and assisting students and their parents with special needs by referring them to resources in and outside Marked Tree High School;
- b. Maintaining contacts with outside resources;
- c. Developing, publishing, and distributing a list of community resources, referral agencies, and hotlines for parents, students and colleagues;
- d. Developing a student self referral system; and
- e. Following up on referrals.

V. Occupational and Placement Services

This type service shall include, but not be limited to the dissemination of career education information, placement services and follow-up studies. Follow-up studies are conducted by the school counselor for vocational completers and/or for students leaving the public school system without a high school diploma or its equivalent.

VI. Conflict Resolution Services

These services shall include, but not be limited to the following: educational and social programs which help students develop skills enabling them to resolve differences and conflicts between groups and programs designed to promote understanding, and positive communication.

The need for programs that teach the peaceful expression and early resolution of conflict arises from many factors including overcrowded schools, tensions inherent in multicultural and multiethnic student bodies, and broad ranges of economic backgrounds. In addition there are day-to-day conflicts typical in any school setting. Furthermore, nationwide polls indicate that discipline in schools has been a prevalent issue over the last ten years and that valuable teaching is list in maintaining order and resolving student disputes.

Truancy and dropout studies indicate a need for programs that foster self-esteem and encourage students to assume greater responsibility for improving the quality of their social and learning environments.

Conflict Resolution Training address issues assertively by enabling students to:

- Learn new skills in communication conflict resolution
- Exercise responsibility for improving their school environment
- Build a stronger sense of peer cooperation and community at school
- Peacefully express and resolve their own conflicts without adult supervision
- Feel a sense of power and accomplishment at being able to peacefully resolve their own conflicts
- Express anger in constructive ways so there is less likelihood of tension, hostility and vandalism at school
- Develop the skills necessary to behave in a more disciplined way; thereby, reducing the amount of time teachers must spend maintaining order in the classroom.

Counselors address conflict resolution training by choosing from a variety of methods and curriculum including, but not limited to, individual sessions, small group sessions, consultation, behavior management plans, and classroom visitations.

VI. School Suicide/Crisis Plan

Marked Tree High School has a current “Crisis Plan” that was updated in August 2018. (The policy is reviewed and updated annually in order to keep up-to-date on any and all changes in laws and/or developments in preventions, etc.) The Crisis Team consists of: Annesa Thompson, Principal; Bobbie Pharis, Counselor; Waylon Dunn, Coach and Teacher; Charlene Kincaid, School Nurse, Kathy Johnson, Secretary, and Tyler Simmons, Custodian. Faculty and staff are in-serviced every year regarding the crisis plan and any updates and/or changes.

A Marked Tree High School Crisis Plan is located in every classroom and building on campus. Each substitute teacher is given the Crisis Plan in their folders when they arrive on campus. Unannounced drills are conducted a minimum of three (3) times a semester, to test the plan and identify possible areas that need to be corrected or emphasized further.

Most suicide threats and attempts, as well as other crisis situations, occur after school hours and off campus. Students and their parents often perceive Marked Tree High School personnel as important resources. For this reason school personnel may be called upon at home and afterhours to help in a crisis. A current Crisis Team call list is maintained by Mrs. Annesa Thompson, principal, in order for this process to be quickly and efficiently activated.

VIII. At-Risk Students and The School Dropout Program

Marked Tree High School defines a dropout as: Any student who leaves school for any reason except death, before graduation or completion of a GED program of studies, without transferring to another school.

At-risk students are those enrolled in Marked Tree High School, whose progress toward graduation, school achievement, preparation for employment, and a variety of health, social, educational, family and economic factors jeopardize futures as productive workers and citizens. These are students with special needs who are underserved, categorized, ignored, unchallenged, and for whom expectations are generally low.

A bold effort is made to identify these at-risk students and to work with these students and their families to ensure success at Marked Tree High School. Referrals are made by teachers to the counselor and/or principal as needed to get extra help and attention for these students. The counselor, administrators and/or teachers make every possible effort to work with these identified students and their parents to help identify specific problems and find resources to aid in the problem area(s).

Marked Tree High School has an Alternative Education Program located on campus and coordinated by Barbara Wilburn. Students are referred when needing credit recovery and

other needs such as, but not limited to behavior management. Information regarding any of this program may be obtained from Mrs. Thompson or Ms. Pharis.