

# School Counseling Interview Questions

## + Questions YOU want to ask at the end of your Interview!

### Qualification Questions

*Qualifications-focused questions give you the opportunity to summarize the specific skills and other attributes you bring to the role.*

#### 1. Tell me about yourself.

**How to Answer:** This is a very popular interview-opener. It's easy to get off course here, straight out of the gate. Many candidates are tempted to go through a long, meandering account of their entire career. You should think of this answer as your Elevator Pitch -- a succinct overview that highlights the most impressive parts of your education, experience and other accomplishments.

Try to answer the question in three-parts: 1) Who You Are 2) Why You're Qualified 3) Why You're Here

#### 2. Walk me through your education and experience

**How to Answer:** This question is a variation on "Tell Me About Yourself." This question is so open-ended that many people just don't know what to say. A common pitfall is to start at the very beginning of your career and ramble on and on about things that are not relevant, leaving out your most recent experience and greatest accomplishments altogether. Similar to telling the employer about yourself, try to provide a succinct overview that highlights the most related parts of your education, experience and other accomplishments.

Try to answer the question in three-parts: 1) Who You Are 2) Why You're Qualified 3) Why You're Here

#### 3. What do you know about our school and why do you want to work here?

**How to Answer:** This question allows you to showcase your motivation, enthusiasm, and alignment with the company values and objectives. To do the following four things to ace this question.

- Research the school and the school district it belongs to
- Align your skills and experiences

- Show enthusiasm for the school and the school district it belongs to
- Be specific and keep it concise

**4.** Describe your key accomplishments in your internship experience?

**How to Answer:** Your current internship role is the most interesting to the interviewer. Be prepared to describe your top achievements and responsibilities in this job. As always, you should focus on the areas most relevant to the work that you would be doing if hired. Avoid these common mistakes:

- 1) Don't just rattle off your job description. Focus on your accomplishments and how you went above the normal call of duty.
- 2) Stress any impressive statistics, numbers, or details.
- 3) Don't try to describe absolutely everything that you do. Focus on the highlights that this particular interviewer will care about.
- 4) Keep your audience in mind. Define any unfamiliar terms and skip or explain details that could be confusing.

**5.** What are the top 3 strengths you bring to this role?

**How to Answer:** Embrace this question as an opportunity to talk about your best qualities. To prepare your answer, write down a list of your top strengths and decide which 3 are most relevant for the position at hand.

Avoid choosing generic strengths that anyone can claim. Don't wimp out with general statements that you're a "hard worker" or "people person." Be specific and prepare an example to demonstrate each strength.

**6.** What is your strongest asset? How will your strengths support the implementation of an ASCA National Model program?

**How to Answer:** When answering the question about your strongest asset in relation to implementing the ASCA National Model in a school counseling context, focus on a key strength such as empathy, communication, or organizational skills.

- Articulate how this strength directly supports the roles and responsibilities of a school counselor. For instance, if choosing empathy, discuss how it

helps in creating a supportive environment essential for student development.

- Next, link this strength to the four components of the ASCA National Model: Foundation, Delivery, Management, and Accountability.
  - For example, empathy enhances the 'Delivery' aspect by ensuring counseling services are accessible and tailored to students' needs, while also contributing to the 'Accountability' component through effective feedback mechanisms.
- The goal is to show a clear connection between your personal strengths and the specific requirements of the ASCA National Model, using examples from your experience to demonstrate practical application.

## 7. What is your greatest weakness?

**How to Answer:** Everybody dreads the "weakness" question and with good reason. There is no perfect answer to this question and it's easy to screw it up. Don't choose a weakness that could limit your ability to do the job well. Don't be defensive or dwell on the negative. Show that you are aware of the weakness and striving to improve.

*Choose a weakness you are already working on improving.* Prepare to describe how you are addressing the weakness and make it clear that it's a non-issue for the position. This allows you to show that you are driven to improve yourself and helps you conclude your answer to the question in a positive way.

## 8. What made you decide to pursue a career as counselor?

- a. This question may be supplemented with the population you intend to work with.

### **Behavioral Questions**

*Behavioral questions typically focus on your experience in a specific work situation to evaluate soft skills such as problem solving, conflict resolution and leadership.*

1. Describe a time when you had a heavy workload and competing deadlines. How did you set priorities?

**How to Answer:** This interview question can be awkward because nobody enjoys talking about screw-ups or missed deadlines in a job interview. However, most of us have had to ask for more time on a work project at some point in the past. If you say you've never ever missed a deadline, most interviewers will be skeptical.

*The key with a question like this is to discuss the negative experience in a neutral way and emphasize the lessons learned.*

2. What experiences have you had in working with special education students? How are special education students included in a school counseling program?

**How to Answer:** When responding to an interview question about experiences with special education students and their inclusion in school counseling, begin by detailing your specific experiences, such as teaching, volunteering, or other interactions with these students. The focus should be on demonstrating both practical experience and a comprehensive approach to inclusivity and support for special education students within the school counseling framework.

- Highlight the strategies used, like adapting learning materials or working within individualized education plans (IEPs), and reflect on the skills and insights gained, emphasizing adaptability and understanding of students' unique needs.
- Then, transition into discussing the inclusion of special education students in school counseling programs. Stress the importance of accessible, individualized support and aligning counseling practices with each student's IEP.
- Mention collaboration with special education teachers, parents, and adherence to legal standards like the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

3. What has your experience been in working with students of color? LGBTQ students?

**How to Answer:** Schools should be committed to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are going to be interested in your personal commitment. When answering this question it's key to focus on specific interactions and initiatives that showcase cultural competence and inclusivity. The aim is to demonstrate a proactive,

empathetic, and educated approach to meeting the unique needs of students from diverse backgrounds.

- Start by mentioning any direct experiences you have had working with these groups, such as through teaching, counseling, or community involvement, and emphasize any specific strategies or programs you've implemented or participated in that support these students.
- Highlight your understanding and respect for diverse cultural backgrounds and identities, and discuss how you've created or contributed to a safe, inclusive environment.
- Additionally, mention any relevant training or professional development in diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Conclude by emphasizing your commitment to continuing education in these areas and your dedication to supporting all students, regardless of their background or identity, in a school counseling setting.

**4.** What is your experience with parenting programs? What support will your counseling program offer to parents? What instructional services can you provide?

**How to Answer:** When addressing your experience with parenting programs and the support your counseling program will offer to parents, along with instructional services, start by briefly outlining your direct experience with parenting programs, if any. This could include involvement in workshops, seminars, or direct consultation services aimed at supporting parents. The key is to demonstrate your recognition of the importance of parental involvement in a child's education and your readiness to offer practical, supportive resources and services to parents in your role as a school counselor.

- Emphasize your understanding of the crucial role parents play in the educational and emotional development of their children.
- Then, describe how your counseling program will support parents, such as through regular communication, offering parenting resources, organizing workshops on topics like positive parenting techniques, or addressing specific challenges like cyberbullying.
- Highlight your approach to collaborating with parents as partners in their child's education and well-being.

- Finally, mention any instructional services you can provide, which might include guidance on effective communication with children, understanding developmental stages, or strategies to support learning at home.

## 5. How do you keep yourself organized?

**How to Answer:** When responding to a question about organization in the context of school counseling, it's effective to emphasize a combination of practical tools and personal strategies.

- Begin by mentioning any specific organizational tools you rely on, such as digital calendars, task management apps, or traditional planners, and explain how you use these to keep track of appointments, deadlines, and important tasks.
- Highlight your approach to prioritizing tasks, perhaps mentioning methods like to-do lists or the Eisenhower Box, to illustrate how you manage time effectively and handle competing demands.
- Consider mentioning how you organize student information, emphasizing confidentiality and efficiency, possibly through a secure digital system or well-maintained physical files.
- Include a brief mention of regular review and adjustment of your methods to adapt to changing needs or to improve efficiency.
- The goal is to convey that you have a robust and adaptable system in place for managing the multifaceted responsibilities of a school counselor, ensuring that you can effectively support students, staff, and programs.

## Scenario Questions

*A scenario question is when you are given a hypothetical situation and asked what you would do in that situation.*

1. How do you develop a plan to deliver the student standards (Mindsets & Behaviors) through classroom lessons or group sessions?

**How to Answer:** When answering a question about developing plans to deliver student standards, particularly the Mindsets & Behaviors standards, in classroom lessons or group sessions, it's important to emphasize a strategic and

collaborative approach. The aim is to show a thoughtful, data-informed, and adaptable approach to implementing these standards in a way that resonates with and benefits all students.

- Begin by highlighting your familiarity with the ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors standards and your understanding of their importance in guiding students' academic, career, and social/emotional development.
- Mention your process of aligning these standards with the specific needs and goals of the student population, possibly through assessments or consultations with teachers and administration.
- Explain how you design or select curriculum and activities that integrate these standards, ensuring they are age-appropriate, diverse in content, and engaging for students.
- Emphasize the importance of an inclusive approach that addresses varied learning styles and backgrounds.
  - Additionally, mention how you measure the effectiveness of these lessons or sessions, such as through student feedback, assessments, or observations, and how you adjust your approach based on this feedback.

## 2. How would you approach appraisal and advice?

**How to Answer:** When responding to a question about your approach to appraisal and advice in a school counseling context, emphasize a balanced, empathetic, and evidence-based approach. The key is to communicate your ability to provide thoughtful, individualized guidance that respects the student's perspective and promotes their holistic development.

- Begin by stating your commitment to understanding each student's unique context and needs, using a variety of appraisal methods such as interviews, observations, and standardized assessments.
- Highlight your focus on building a trusting relationship to ensure students feel comfortable and understood.
- Explain how you integrate data from appraisals to provide tailored advice, ensuring it's developmentally appropriate and aligned with the student's strengths, challenges, and personal goals.
- Stress the importance of collaborating with teachers, parents, and other relevant stakeholders to offer comprehensive support. Also, mention your

dedication to ongoing professional development to stay informed about best practices in counseling.

**3. How do you develop a positive relationship with students in individual counseling? Small-group counseling?**

**How to Answer:** When addressing the development of positive relationships with students in both individual and small-group counseling settings, emphasize the importance of trust, empathy, and understanding. The goal is to convey your ability to establish strong, positive connections with students, tailored to the nuances of both one-on-one and group settings.

- Begin by explaining your approach in individual counseling, such as actively listening, demonstrating genuine interest in each student's experiences, and maintaining confidentiality to build trust.
- Highlight your use of empathy and validation to create a safe, supportive environment where students feel valued and understood. For small-group counseling, discuss your strategies for fostering a sense of community and respect among group members, such as establishing group norms and encouraging inclusive communication.
- Mention your focus on ensuring each student feels heard and included, and how you facilitate interactions that promote shared understanding and peer support.
  - Additionally, emphasize your adaptability in meeting diverse needs and personalities, and your commitment to continuous learning about effective counseling practices.

**4. How will you assess the school counseling program?**

**How to Answer:** When answering a question about assessing a school counseling program, focus on a comprehensive, data-driven approach.

- Begin by acknowledging the importance of ongoing assessment to ensure the program meets student needs and aligns with the school's goals.
- Mention the use of quantitative methods, such as surveys and statistical analysis of student outcomes, to gather objective data on program effectiveness.



- Also, highlight the value of qualitative feedback from students, teachers, and parents through interviews or focus groups to gain insights into the program's impact.
- Discuss the importance of aligning your assessment with recognized standards, such as those set by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), and how you plan to use these assessments to identify areas for improvement.
- Emphasize your commitment to using this data to make informed decisions about program modifications, professional development needs, and resource allocation.
- Conclude by mentioning the importance of transparency and communication with school stakeholders about assessment processes and outcomes, demonstrating your collaborative and proactive approach to program evaluation.

**5. What type of data would demonstrate an effective school counseling program?**

**How to Answer:** In responding to a question about the type of data that would demonstrate an effective school counseling program, focus on a variety of metrics that encompass the program's comprehensive impact. The key is to show an understanding of using both quantitative and qualitative data to comprehensively evaluate and continuously improve the counseling services offered.

- Begin by mentioning academic data, such as improvements in grades, attendance records, and graduation rates, which directly reflect the program's influence on students' academic achievements.
  - Also, include behavioral and emotional data, like reductions in disciplinary incidents and improvements in student self-reports of well-being and emotional health, to show the program's impact on students' social and emotional development.
- Highlight the importance of collecting feedback data from students, parents, and teachers through surveys or interviews, providing insights into the perceived effectiveness and areas for improvement.

- If relevant, mention the use of post-graduation data, like college acceptance rates or career readiness indicators, to assess long-term outcomes of the counseling program.
- Emphasize that a combination of these diverse data points, aligned with the school's goals and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) standards, is essential in demonstrating the multifaceted effectiveness of a school counseling program.

## 6. How do you use data to reflect on school counseling program goals?

**How to Answer:** When answering a question about using data to reflect on school counseling program goals, emphasize a strategic and data-informed approach. The aim is to convey your ability to use data not just for assessment, but as a tool for continuous, responsive improvement in the school counseling program.

- Begin by stating how you first establish clear, measurable goals for the counseling program aligned with the school's broader objectives and the ASCA National Model.
- Explain how you collect relevant data, such as student academic performance, attendance records, behavioral reports, and feedback from students, parents, and teachers.
- Highlight your process of analyzing this data to assess the program's effectiveness in achieving its goals, identifying areas of success and those needing improvement.
- Discuss how you use these insights to make data-driven decisions, adapting and refining the program to better meet student needs and enhance overall effectiveness.
  - Additionally, mention the importance of sharing these findings with school stakeholders to ensure transparency and foster collaborative efforts for program improvement.

## 7. One of your students tells you she's pregnant?

**How to Answer:** When responding to a scenario where a student discloses a pregnancy, it's crucial to emphasize a supportive, nonjudgmental, and confidential approach. The goal is to show that you can handle sensitive issues with care, professionalism, and a focus on the student's best interests.

- Begin by acknowledging the importance of creating a safe space for the student, where she feels heard and respected. Mention that your immediate response would be to listen empathetically, providing emotional support and reassurance.
- Stress the importance of confidentiality in such sensitive matters, respecting the student's privacy while also being aware of legal and ethical reporting requirements.
- Highlight the next steps you would take, which involve informing the student of her options and resources available, both within and outside the school, such as counseling, medical care, and educational support.
- Discuss the importance of a collaborative approach, involving other professionals as needed and with the student's consent, such as a school nurse or a mental health counselor.
- Conclude by emphasizing your role in providing ongoing support and guidance to the student, helping her navigate this challenging situation while ensuring her educational and personal well-being.

#### 8. You suspect one of your students is being abused?

**How to Answer:** In responding to a scenario where you suspect a student is being abused, it's important to focus on a responsible, ethical, and legally compliant approach. The aim is to demonstrate a thoughtful balance between taking necessary action, respecting the student's situation, and adhering to legal and ethical guidelines.

- Start by emphasizing your commitment to student safety and well-being as a top priority. Mention that you would closely follow the school's protocols and legal obligations for reporting suspicions of abuse, recognizing the critical importance of these procedures in protecting children.
- Highlight the importance of maintaining a supportive and non-invasive approach with the student, ensuring they feel safe and heard without directly confronting them with your suspicions, as this could potentially escalate the situation.
- Stress your reliance on professional judgment and training in identifying signs of abuse and the importance of collaboration with school administrators and child protection services.

- Conclude by underlining the sensitivity and confidentiality with which you would handle such a situation, keeping the student's best interests at heart, while adhering to the legal and ethical standards of the profession.

## 9. One of your student's parents is terminally ill?

**How to Answer:** In responding to a situation where a student's parent is terminally ill, emphasize a compassionate, supportive, and holistic approach.

- Begin by acknowledging the profound impact such a situation can have on a student, both emotionally and academically.
- Mention that your first step would be to offer a safe, empathetic space for the student to express their feelings and concerns.
- Highlight the importance of providing continuous emotional support, tailored to the student's individual needs and coping style.
- Discuss collaborating with school staff to ensure a supportive educational environment, which might include academic accommodations or adjustments as needed.
  - Additionally, stress the importance of involving external resources if necessary, such as referrals to mental health professionals or support groups, while respecting the family's privacy and wishes.
- Conclude by emphasizing your role in closely monitoring the student's well-being over time, offering ongoing support and adjusting your approach as the situation evolves. The key is to convey your readiness to provide empathetic, comprehensive support, considering both the emotional and academic needs of the student during such a challenging time.

## 10. Your student does not get into his/her top college choice?

**How to Answer:** When addressing a scenario where a student does not get into their top college choice, emphasize a supportive, realistic, and forward-looking approach.

- Begin by acknowledging the student's disappointment and validating their feelings, as this is a significant moment in their life.
- Stress the importance of providing emotional support and helping the student process the situation. Then, shift the focus towards resilience and exploring alternatives.

- Discuss how you would encourage the student to look at other acceptances they may have received and consider the positives of those options. Highlight the importance of helping the student understand that college admissions decisions are not a reflection of their worth or potential.
- Mention guiding the student in exploring alternative paths, such as other colleges, gap years, or different educational opportunities, and the value of staying flexible and open-minded.
- Conclude by emphasizing your role in empowering the student to see this as a redirection rather than a rejection, fostering a growth mindset and resilience. The aim is to help the student move forward positively and confidently, despite the setback.

*For more school counseling interview questions check out, [Sample Interview Questions for School Counselors](#) by the American School Counselor Association.*

## Examples of Possible End-of-Interview Questions School Counseling Internship

***\*\*Before the interview, research via the school report card and website. The best questions are SPECIFIC questions related to the school. Below are some general questions to consider asking at the end of your interview.***

### **Type of Work**

- What student population will I work with/grade level, etc.?
- What is the average caseload of interns at this school?
- Are there any required days/times I am expected to be on-site at the school (weekly team meetings, MTSS meetings, professional development/training, etc.)?
- Will I be able to co-lead or solo lead groups?
- Will I be able to co-present/present classroom lessons?
- Will I be able to meet with parents/teachers/administrators?
- Is your department RAMP certified, and if not, do you have plans to pursue it

### **Supervision**

- Can I receive a minimum of 1 hour of uninterrupted supervision per week?
- What is your supervision style?

### **Training**

- What are the orientation/onboarding or training requirements for the school?
- Do you allow interns to record sessions with students (with parental permission)?

### **Logistics**

- Will I have a private office to see students and complete paperwork?
- What is the most convenient transportation and route to the school?
- How will students be added to my caseload?

### **Digital Services**

- What platform/portal/service do you use for documentation and record-keeping? Is there training available?
- Will I get a school/district email?

