



School Counseling

School counseling programs are provided in Amherst County Public Schools (ACPS) in compliance with the regulations of the Virginia Board of Education and Amherst County School Board policy. The school counseling program is part of the comprehensive education provided to all students through activities that focus on teaching positive approaches to school and lifelong learning and the knowledge and skills for life and employment. It includes:

- **Academic counseling**, which helps students and their parents or guardians to acquire knowledge of the curriculum choices and testing and choose appropriate courses leading to graduation and a transition to college, career, and other educational opportunities.
- **Career counseling**, which helps students to acquire information and skills in order to plan for work, jobs, apprenticeships, and postsecondary educational and career opportunities. The school counseling program also helps students develop an understanding of themselves and of the rights and needs of others; learn to resolve conflicts; and set individual goals reflecting their interests, abilities, and aptitudes.
- **Social or emotional counseling** may be provided in large groups (e.g., all ninth graders) in which general issues of social development are addressed or in structured individual or small-group multisession counseling that focuses on the specific concerns of the participant(s). Parents or guardians shall receive written notification of short-term social or emotional counseling of a small group nature. Parental or guardian consent is not required for short-term social or emotional counseling and/or crisis intervention that is needed to maintain order, discipline, or a productive learning environment.

You may excuse your child from academic, career, or social or emotional counseling at any time by completing the opt-out form. A parent or guardian who opts to have their child excused from academic or career counseling shall have sole responsibility to ensure that all academic and graduation requirements are fulfilled. Parents or guardians may review materials to be used in school counseling programs at their children's school by contacting the school counselor. Information can also be found on the ACPS website at **amherst.k12.va.us**.



School Counseling Opt-Out Form

Complete and **return this form to the school office or your child's teacher by the second week of school** only if you **DO NOT** want your child to participate in an aspect of the school counseling program.

I request that my child _____, in grade____, **NOT** participate in the following:

☐ Academic counseling that is provided by his or her school.

☐ Career counseling that is provided by his or her school.

☐ Social or emotional counseling that is provided by his or her school.

I understand that parental permission is not required for counseling and/or crisis intervention that is needed to maintain order, discipline, or a productive learning environment. I understand that, in opting to have my child excused from academic or career counseling, I shall have sole responsibility to ensure that all academic and graduation requirements are fulfilled.

Signature of parent or guardian: _____

Date: _____

Student's name: _____
(please print)

Student's school: _____
(please print)