

**MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION  
CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR  
ELEMENTARY COUNSELOR (GRADES K-8)**

**I. PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS:** The elementary school counselor, initial student services certificate, valid for a period of four (4) years from the effective date on the certificate, will be issued to those persons meeting the following requirements:

**A.** Recommendation for certification from the designated official of a college or university approved to train elementary school counselors by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; and

**B.** The applicant must possess either:

**1.** Completion of a master's degree with a major emphasis in guidance and counseling from a college or university meeting approval of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education based upon the completion of a planned program of at least forty-two (42) semester hours of approved graduate credit in courses in guidance and counseling with at least twelve (12) semester hours focused upon guidance in the elementary schools:

**a.** Competence in each of the following areas:

- 1) Human Growth and Development;
- 2) Social and Cultural Diversity;
- 3) Assessment;
- 4) Career Development and Planning;
- 5) Helping Relationships;**
- 6) Group Work;
- 7) Structural Components of a Guidance Program;
- 8) Comprehensive Guidance Program Components: Guidance Curriculum;**
- 9) Comprehensive Guidance Program Components: Individual Planning;**
- 10) Comprehensive Guidance Program Components: Responsive Services;**
- 11) Comprehensive Guidance Program Components: System Support;**
- 12) Technology;
- 13) Professional Relationships in School, Family and Community;
- 14) Ethical Standards;
- 15) Legal Standards; and
- 16) Professional Orientation, Identity and Well-Being.**

**b.** Supervised practice in an Elementary School Guidance Program for at least three (3) semester hours;

**OR**

**2.** A master's degree or higher degree in education, school counseling, counseling, counseling psychology, **rehabilitation counseling** or a closely related mental health discipline; and **completed** additional graduate course work specific to school counseling, as designated by the state-approved recommending certification official, including a supervised internship or field experience of at least three hundred (300) hours in an appropriate school setting; and

**C.** The applicant must either:

- 1.** Possess a bachelor's degree in education from a state-approved teacher preparation program; or
- 2.** Complete a curriculum in teaching methods and practices, classroom management and the psychology of the exceptional child, as specified by the recommending certification officer of a state-approved program; and

**D.** Must achieve a score equal to or greater than the Missouri qualifying score on the assessment designated by the State Board of Education, not to include the principles of learning and teaching.

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**II. CAREER CONTINUOUS STUDENT SERVICES CERTIFICATE**

- A.** The elementary school counselor, career continuous student services certificate will be issued upon completion and verification of the following:
1. Four (4) years of state-approved school counseling experience;
  2. Participation in two (2) years of district-provided mentoring (during the first two (2) years of student services experience);
  3. The development, implementation and completion of a professional development plan of at least forty (40) contact hours of professional development, or three (3) semester hours of graduate credit toward an advanced degree; and
  4. Successful participation in an annual performance-based evaluation.
- B.** The elementary school counselor, career continuous student services certificate will remain valid upon verification of the following:
1. Participation in a performance-based system of evaluation; and
  2. Participation in twenty (20) contact hours of professional development annually.
- C.** The elementary school counselor, career continuous student services certificate holder is exempt from additional professional development if the holder has a local professional development plan in place with the school and meets at least two (2) of the following:
1. Ten (10) years of state-approved school counselor experience;
  2. An educational specialist's degree in school counseling; and/or
  3. Certification from a board-approved nationally recognized professional school counselor organization.