

Chapter 5

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL COUNSELLOR



What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.

JANE GOODALL



Based on **Policy 322: Inclusive Education**, your role as a **School Counsellor** as part of the Education Support Services Team regarding transitions is to collaborate with other school-based team members (e.g., learner, caregivers, educators, Education Support Teachers, education support staff, etc.), service providers, and/or community partners to provide career pathway transition planning and decision-making supports for each learner via a tiered approach and a support, advocacy, intervention, and leadership (SAIL) model.

School-Based Education Support Services Teams: Supporting Inclusive Education

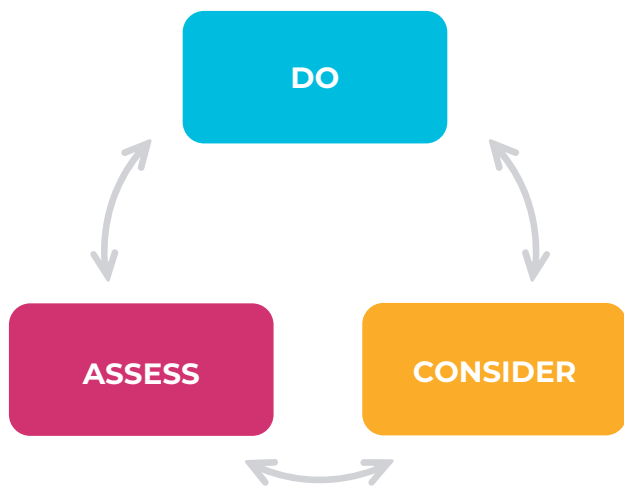


Getting Started:

YOUR SCHOOL COUNSELLOR ITINERARY

To begin your journey of supporting each learner in Hopeful Transitions, it will make sense to create your map, or your “itinerary”. Any experienced traveller appreciates there may be a need to adjust direction along the way, but it is wise to design a route to take you to your preferred destination. You will find all you need on the **Hopeful Transitions** website. The website will serve as your personal “road map” to outline important highlights and lead you to the activities, resources, and tools you will need to navigate a successful journey. As a School Counsellor, you will take part in the school self-assessment and will contribute along the route to the collective success of achieving the Hopeful Transitions school goal(s) that will be established.

You will find role-specific itineraries on the website tool for planning!



DO

What do I need to do?
What is my responsibility?



ASSESS

How will I know my learners are actively engaged in career pathway transition planning?
Do any of our learners require additional support?



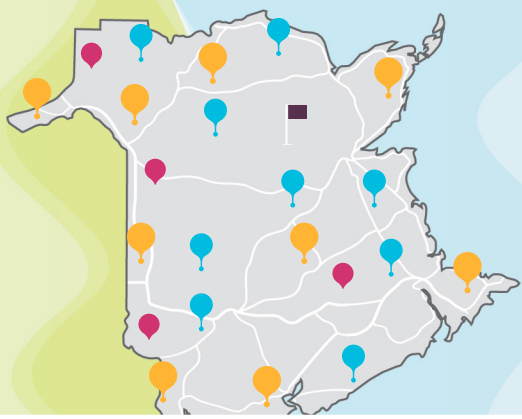
CONSIDER

What will enhance what I'm doing?
What else do I need to think about?

The School Counsellor is a key influencer in the school community, and your support of Hopeful Transitions pathway planning will be critical to the success and impact this work will have. As a person with responsibility for the **Personal Wellness** curriculum, you will highlight the direct connection between hopeful career transition planning and improved mental health. The service you provide encourages you to move freely up and down the transition planning pyramid of interventions depending on each learner's unique needs. The "SAIL" model within the School Counselling Framework describes your work as you support (S), advocate (A), intervene (I), and lead (L) through the fields of practice of mental health, social emotional learning, academic learning, and Career Connected Learning.

Indigenous Principles of Learning

"Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on a reciprocal relationship, and on a sense of place)."



School Counsellor

For this Guide, we will focus on your role as you support Hopeful Transitions for every learner. **The table below outlines some examples of how you can Do, Assess, and Consider hopeful transitions within your role.**



DO

- Champion the work of Hopeful Transitions pathway planning, the website tool and Career Connected Learning as a mental health intervention.
- Model and promote the use of the website tool with staff to support their professional learning.
- Work with the District Lead and Experiential Learning Coordinators to enable experiential learning opportunities for learners.
- Collaborate on a plan to ensure every learner is included in intentional and ongoing conversations about career planning, hopes, and aspirations.
- Promote awareness and access to information for school staff, learners, and families about post-secondary pathways, opportunities, and requirements.
- Collaborate on a school-based plan for every learner to have a Career Life digital portfolio.
- Provide support and instructional leadership to classes around Career Connected Learning and students' creation of Career Life digital portfolios in myBlueprint.
- Promote the use of myBlueprint for planning for course selection.
- Check in with Grade 12 students to discuss their Career Life Portfolio (student-led conferencing) and their post-secondary life plans.
- Share career and transition information/resources with families and/or post on school website (e.g., how to create a myBlueprint family account).
- Participate in Transition Teams for students requiring individualized transition planning interventions.
- Offer individual career counselling.
- Reach out to community, post-secondary, and other organizations to offer support to learners.
- Offer interventions based on the school's Hopeful Transitions goal (e.g., small group instruction, targeted experiential learning opportunities, mentoring).





CONSIDER

- Support professional learning opportunities that reinforce the connection between transition planning, mental health, and social emotional learning.
- Consider hosting a Career and Transition event for the school.
- Research ways to support myBlueprint for students with complex needs.
- Find ways to communicate and link the development of the global competencies and social emotional learning for transition to post-secondary life.
- Work with school staff to engage in Atlantic Canada Career Week and Take Our Kids to Work events and activities each November.
- Get to know the students you work with and have intentional career conversations. They can take as little as one minute.
- Prioritize personalized and dedicated career connected support for newcomers arriving in Grades 10-12 who haven't participated in Personal Wellness 9.



ASSESS

- Track which learners might be needing additional supports or interventions to achieve their hopeful transition.
- Track completion of the Career Life Plan tasks in myBlueprint.
- Create a plan to monitor each learner's Career Life digital portfolio.



Reflective Questions:

1. *Who are the learners in our school who may not be receiving equitable support in career pathway transition planning, and how can I support them?*
2. *How can I include families in career pathway transition planning? Why is this important?*
3. *How can we become more culturally competent in supporting career pathway transition planning for each learner?*
4. *How can I communicate the connections to positive mental health and Hopeful Transitions?*
5. *How can I encourage educators to engage in career conversations with their learners?*

Case Study:

Amin is a 15-year-old recent newcomer from Syria who has recently been referred to the School Counsellor for support in career pathway transition planning. Amin has been struggling in his classes and isolating himself. Amin's Personal Wellness educator has been struggling to support Amin in engaging with the Career Connected Learning outcomes. In meeting with the School Counsellor, Amin shared his dreams of attending university to study engineering but has admitted to feeling pressure to provide for his family financially and has indicated having no hope for a prosperous future.

Questions:

What might the School Counsellor do to support career pathway transition planning for Amin?

What other steps could be taken to ensure that Amin receives help and guidance to help plan for the future?

*What can you find on the **Hopeful Transitions website** to support Amin?*

