

Hartselle City Schools
Annual Notification Regarding
School Provided or Sponsored Counseling or Mental Health Services
For Students Under 14 Years of Age

(This annual notification is required by Ala. Act. #2022-422, effective July 1, 2022.)

Parental “Opt-in” Required to Receive Services

Hartselle City Schools offers a variety of student counseling and mental health services for your child. However, Alabama law now requires that parents and/or guardians of all children under 14 years of age must submit a written “**opt-in**” **each year** for their children to receive most counseling and mental health services.* You may choose for your child to receive none, some, or all the counseling or mental health services listed below:

1. **General Guidance Counselor Services** – access to or participation in large group, small group, or individual counseling and to professional counseling services addressing issues including, but not limited to bullying, stress management, test or other anxiety, making good choices, substance abuse, peer relationships, etc.
2. **Mentoring** – Counselors or partner organizations addressing student needs on issues such as friendships, healthy relationships, anger management, and anxiety.
3. **Assessments/Surveys** – student questionnaires related to social behaviors, feelings, etc.
4. **Crisis Intervention** - short-term, immediate assistance by school counselor or professional to address specific concerns regarding the student’s well-being or mental health.
5. **School-Based Mental Health** - Mental health counseling services by school professionals or private practitioners in the school setting. Parent or legal guardian’s permission will be obtained for specific private practitioner counseling before services are provided

**Counseling or mental health services may be provided without an opt-in (1) based on an IEP or §504 plan, (2) when there is an imminent threat to the health of the student or others, or (3) when students meet with guidance counselors related to course selection, course registration, career interests or opportunities, or similar activities.*

Review of Materials

You may request to review any materials used in the guidance and counseling programs available to students by submitting your written request for access to those materials to the school principal.

Information Regarding How to Allow, Limit, or Prevent Your Child’s Participation in Counseling or Mental Health Services

If your child is under fourteen, under Alabama law, they will only be allowed to participate in certain counseling or mental health services if you opt-in unless one or more of exceptions. **If you would like the school system to be able to offer your child any of the counseling or mental health services in the numbered list above, you must OPT-IN for each listed service you choose on the form provided below.** You may limit or prevent your child’s participation in counseling or mental health services by checking only the services desired, by declining to opt-in to one or more counseling or mental health services, or by rescinding a previous opt-in for services.