

1 **Browning Public Schools**

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3 **Policy #4440**

4 Policy Name: *Guidance Service*

5 Regulation: -----

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7 Given the trust and status afforded school staff by students, staff will often be placed in the position
8 of functioning as a “personal counselor” to a student in order to address the student’s needs. Staff
9 communications in a counseling context with students are to be guided by the following principles:

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- 11 1) Confidentiality will be maintained in accordance with the law. Situations, which indicate danger
- 12 to self or others, will be reported to appropriate referral sources and the need to set aside
- 13 confidentiality in such situations explained to the student.
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- 15 2) The relationship between school personnel and students will be objective and free of “conflict of
- 16 interest” related to any aspect of a personal relationship.
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- 18 3) The staff member should be both competent and objective in dealing with the personal issues of
- 19 students. If not, then appropriate referral is to be made.
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21 Counseling relationships require rapport, active listening, and a commitment to cooperative work
22 with families in order to resolve conflicts. Staff priorities in this relationship must operate within the
23 contextual framework and awareness that parents and guardians are primary influences in the lives of
24 their children. This primary relationship needs to be fostered and recognized generally in order to
25 address the best interest of the child.

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- 27 1) Parental involvement is to be solicited at the earliest appropriate time with the consent of the
- 28 student. Should the student permit parental contact, impartial and professional support in
- 29 addressing family conflict will be provided.
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- 31 2) However, requests not to involve the parent by the student will be honored and the counseling
- 32 relationship continued. The exception to this is that in the event that reasonable cause exists to
- 33 suspect abuse or neglect. The matter will then be reported in writing promptly to the Department
- 34 of Family Services or Blackfeet Family Services/Child Protection.
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36 Browning Public Schools will also provide formal guidance and counseling services through
37 appropriate personnel in accordance with standards established by the legislature of the State of
38 Montana and the Board of Public Education.

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40 The general goal of this program is to help students achieve the greatest personal value from their
41 educational opportunities.

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43 **Cross Reference:**

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45 **Legal Reference:** MCA 26-1-801, 26-1-809 Privileged Communication
46 MCA 41-3-101 Declaration of Policy (Child Abuse and Neglect)

47 **Policy History:**

48 Adopted on: 4/13/00
49 Revised on: 9/29/00