

## **School Social Work Services Frequently Asked Questions**

### **How can students access support if they are in crisis?**

If a student is experiencing a crisis situation that requires immediate intervention, the student should come to the Counseling Center. The School Counselor or Social Worker will then make an assessment based on the situation to determine the need for further intervention or contact with parents/guardians and other staff.

### **How is the role of a Social Worker different from a School Counselor?**

In middle school, the role of a School Counselor is commonly defined differently than at the high school level. At Deerfield High School, each student is assigned a School Counselor for their four years of high school. The School Counselors assist with course selection, educational goal-setting, and social-emotional issues. At times, students may require additional support for social/emotional and/or school functioning. Based on the needs of the student, a Social Worker may conduct a diagnostic assessment or provide ongoing support through weekly individual sessions or support group meetings.

### **When is ongoing social work support appropriate?**

When making a determination for ongoing social work services, areas such as the student's behavior, attendance, grades, and social/emotional functioning are considered.

### **What kinds of issues do students talk about with Social Workers?**

Social Workers provide a safe and confidential place for students to discuss a variety of issues that are of concern to them. These issues may be related to school performance, communication with teachers, relationships with friends or classmates, relationships with siblings and parents/guardians, or any other concerns important to the student's school functioning. In order to protect students, the Social Workers are required to break confidentiality if concerns about safety are raised by the student.

### **What kinds of services do Social Workers provide?**

Social Workers function in a variety of ways to meet the needs of our students. Most often they meet with students individually on a short-term basis or for the duration of the school year. In addition, they assist individual students or the school as a whole in a time of crisis. Social Workers are also responsible for leading support groups that help students who are dealing with similar issues. In each of these settings, Social Workers support students with individualized goal setting and assist with problem-solving to promote student success.

**What kinds of support groups are available, and how does a student join one?** A variety of support groups are provided by the Counseling Department and are available to all students throughout the school year. Typically, groups meet weekly during the school day on a rotating schedule. Students may be referred by various staff members, parents/guardians, or via self-referral. The appropriateness of a specific group will be discussed with each student. To find out more about a specific group, students or parents/guardians may contact their student's School Counselor or Shana Axelrod, Social Worker. For a list of DHS support groups, click [here](#).