

ASCA WEBINAR SERIES



AMERICAN
SCHOOL
COUNSELOR
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2016 ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors

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Learning outcomes:

Upon completion of this webinar, participants should be able to:

- Summarize the major components of the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors.
- Explain the progression and major changes of the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors over the last three revisions (2004, 2010, 2016).
- Discuss the intent, meaning and use of the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors.



Ethics are Aspirational

- “Ethics is knowing the difference between what you have a right to do and what is right to do.”

Potter Stewart
Associate Justice of the
United States Supreme Court



Preamble

- There is a wording change in the 2016 version
 - ...supporting school counselors, school counseling students/interns, school counseling program directors/supervisors and school counselor educators
 - ...systemic change by providing equitable education access and success by connecting their school counseling programs to the district’s mission and improvement plans.



Purpose Statement

- This wording was added
 - ...in consultation with state school counseling associations, school counselor educators, school counseling state and district leaders and school counselor across...



A. Responsibility of Students



- A.1. Supporting student development (this subtitle wording was changed)
- Also, there was new additions in this standard
 - B. **(NEW ADDITION)** aim to provide counseling to students in a brief context and support students and families/guardians in obtaining outside services if the student needs long-term clinical counseling.
 - C. **(NEW ADDITION)** do not diagnose but remain acutely aware of how a student's diagnosis can potentially affect the student's academic success.
 - D. **(NEW ADDITION)** Acknowledge the vital role of parents/guardians and families.



A. Responsibility to Students

Bolded sections are reworded

- F. Respect students' and families' values, beliefs, **sexual orientation, gender identification/expression** and cultural background and **exercise great care to avoid imposing** personal beliefs or values rooted in one's religion, culture, or ethnicity



A.2. Confidentiality



- School counselors
 - m. **(New Addition)** Advocate for appropriate safeguards and protocols so highly sensitive student information is not disclosed accidentally to individuals who do not have a need to know such information. Best practices suggest a very limited number of educators would have access to highly sensitive information on a need-to-know basis.
 - n. **(New Addition)** Advocate with appropriate school officials for acceptable encryption standards to be utilized for stored data and currently acceptable algorithms to be utilized for data in transit
 - o. **(New Addition)** Avoid software programs without the technological capabilities to protect student information based upon currently acceptable security standards and the law.



A.3. Comprehensive Data-Informed Program

- This entire section is new to the 2016 Code



A.4. Academic, Career and Social/Emotional Plans



School counselors

- (New Addition)** Collaborate with administration, teachers, staff, and decision makers to create a culture of postsecondary readiness
Also, bolded words were added to the 2010 code C
- Provide and advocate for the individual students' **preK-postsecondary college and career awareness**, exploration and postsecondary planning and decision making, which supports the students' right to choose from the wide array of options when students complete secondary education.
- (New Addition)** Identify gaps in college and career access and the implications of such data for addressing both intentional and unintentional biases related to college and career counseling.
- (New Addition)** Provide opportunities for all students to develop the mindsets and behavior necessary to learn work-related skills, resilience, perseverance, and understanding of lifelong learning as a part of long-term career success, a positive attitude toward learning and a strong work ethic.

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A.5. Dual Relationships and (new) Managing Boundaries



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A.6. Appropriate Referrals and (new) Advocacy

- **a. (New Addition)** Collaborate with all relevant stakeholders, including students, educators, and parents/guardians when student assistance is needed, including the identification of early warning signs of students distress.
- **b. Addition of the following:** careful not to indicate an endorsement or preference for one counselor or practice.



2016 ASCA Ethical Standards

A.6.e.

Refrain from referring students based solely on the school counselor's personal beliefs or values rooted in one's religion, culture, ethnicity or personal worldview. School counselors maintain the highest respect for student diversity. School counselors should pursue additional training and supervision in areas where they are at risk of imposing their values on students, especially when the school counselor's values are discriminatory in nature. School counselors do not impose their values on students and/or families when making referrals to outside resources for student and/or family support.



**WARD V. WILBANKS
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
JULEA WARD**

**WOULD NOT COUNSEL GLB STUDENTS
ON RELATIONSHIPS**



A.6. Appropriate Referrals and (new) Advocacy

- **This standard was reworded**
- **f.** Attempt to establish a collaborative relationship with outside service providers to best serve students. Request a release of information signed by the student and/or parents/guardians before attempting to collaborate with the student's external provider



A.6. Appropriate Referrals and (new) Advocacy

- **g. (New Addition)** Provide internal and external service providers with accurate objective, meaningful data necessary to adequately evaluate, counsel and assist the students.
- **h. (New Addition)** Ensure there is not a conflict of interest in providing referral resources. School counselors do not refer or accept a referral to counsel a student from their school if they also work in a private counseling practice



A.7. Group Work

- School Counselors:
 - a. **(New Addition)** Facilitate short-term groups to address students' academic, career and/or social/emotional issues.
 - b. **(REWORDED to include the duty to inform vs. recognize best practice)**
Inform parent/guardian(s) of student participation in a small group.
 - d. **Use data to measure member needs to establish well-defined expectation of group members.**
 - f. **(More specific – separated from a in 2010 code to stand alone)**
Select topics for groups with the clear understanding that some topics are not suitable for groups in schools and accordingly take precautions to protect members from harm as a result of interactions with the group.





A.8. Student Peer-Support Program

- b. **(NEW WORDING)** Supervise students engaged in peer helping, mediation and other similar peer-support groups. School counselors are responsible for appropriate skill development for students serving as peer support in school counseling programs. School counselors continuously monitor students who are giving peer support and reinforce the confidential nature of their work. School counselors inform peer-support students about the parameter of when students need to report information to responsible adults.



A.9. Serious and Foreseeable harm to self and others **(New Wording on title)**

- a. **(more comprehensive with some wording changes – bolded pieces are additions or changes)** – Inform parents/guardians and/or appropriate authorities when a student poses a **serious and foreseeable risk of harm** to self or others. **When feasible**, this is to be done after careful deliberation and consultation with other appropriate professionals. **School counselors inform students of the school counselor’s legal and ethical obligations to report the concern to the appropriate authorities unless it is appropriate to withhold this information to protect the student (e.g. student might run away if he/she knows parents are being called).** The consequence of the risk of not giving parents/guardians a chance to intervene on behalf of their child is too great. Even if the danger appears relatively remote, parents should be notified.





A.9. Serious and Foreseeable harm to self and others (**New Wording on title**)

- b. (changes in wording and additions in bold) – Use risk assessments with caution. If risk assessment are used by the school counselor, an intervention plan should be developed and in place prior to this practice. When reporting risk-assessment results to parents, school counselor do not negate the risk of harm even if the assessment reveals a low risk as students may minimize risk to avoid further scrutiny and/or parental notification. School counselors report risk assessment results to parents to underscore the need to act on behalf of a child at risk; this is not intended to assure parents their child isn't at risk, which is something a school counselor cannot know with certainty.
- c. (updated language giving school counselors responsibility rather than just “understanding” and more comprehensive) – Do not release a student who is a danger to self or others until the student has proper and necessary support. If parents will not provide proper support, the school counselor takes necessary steps to underscore to parents/guardians the necessity to see help and at time may include a report to child protective services.
- d. (updated language giving school counselors responsibility rather than just “understanding” and more comprehensive) – Do not release a student who is a danger to self or others until the student has proper and necessary support. If parents will not provide proper support, the school counselor takes necessary steps to underscore to parents/guardians the necessity to see help and at time may include a report to child protective services.



A.10. Underserved and At-Risk

- This entire section is new to the 2016 code





A.11. Bullying, Harassment and Child Abuse

- This entire section is new to the 2016 code



A.12. Student Records

- School Counselors
 - a. **(updates and changed in bold)** Abide by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), **which defines who has access to students' educational records and allows parents the right to review and challenge perceived inaccuracies in their child's records.**
 - b. **(New Addition)** Advocate for ethical use of student data and records and inform administration of inappropriate or harmful practices.



A.12. Student Records



- e. **(New Addition)** Recognize that electronic communications with school officials regarding individual students, even without using student names, are likely to create student records that must be addressed in accordance with FERPA and state laws.
- f. **(updates in language and additions in bold)** – Establish a reasonable timeline for purging sole-possession records or case notes. Suggested guidelines include shredding paper sole-possession records **or deleting electronic sole-possession records** when a student transitions to the next level, transfers to another school or graduates. **School counselors do not** *(changed from “apply careful discretion and deliberation”)* destroy sole-possession records that may be needed by a court of law, such as notes on child abuse, suicide, sexual harassment or violence, **without prior review and approval by school district legal counsel. School counselors follow district policies and procedures when contacting legal counsel.**



A.13. Evaluation, Assessment and Interpretation

- School Counselors
 - a. **(New Addition)** Use only valid and reliable tests and assessments with concern for bias and cultural sensitivity.
 - c. **(minor language changes)** Are mindful of confidentiality **guidelines** when utilizing **paper or electronic** evaluative or assessment **instruments** and programs.



A.13. Evaluation, Assessment and Interpretation

- e. **(New Addition)** Use multiple data points when possible to provide students and families with accurate, objective and concise information to promote students' well-being.
- i. **(Addition of)** Conduct school counseling program evaluations to determine



A. 14. Technical and Digital Citizenship **(title changed from Technology)**

- e. in 2010 code referred to cyberbullying – which is not included in this section of 2016 code)
- a. **(similar to a. of 2010 code, but more comprehensive)** – Demonstrate appropriate section and use of technology and software applications to enhance students' academic, career and social/emotional development. Attention is given to the ethical and legal considerations of technological applications, including confidentiality concerns, security issues, potential limitations and benefits and communication practices in electronic media.
- c. Promote the safe and responsible use of technology in collaboration with educators and families



A. 14. Technical and Digital Citizenship (title changed from Technology)

e. **(New Addition)** Use established and approved means of communication with students, maintaining appropriate boundaries. School counselor help educate students about appropriate communication and boundaries.



A.15. Virtual/ Distance School Counseling (all new)





B.1. Responsibilities to parents/guardians

- School Counselors
 - e. **(more comprehensive than B.1.d)** with the addition of **the mission of the school counseling program and program standards in academic, career, and social/emotional domains that promote and enhance the learning process for all students**



B.2. Responsibilities to the School

- **(this is a combination of Section C.3, D.1, D.2 and E.2 of the 2010 code – there is some overlap and the wording is different in several of the points within this section; concepts are similar, but wording isn't a direct reflection of the 2010 code in most points)**
- School Counselors
 - **a. (New Addition)** Develop and maintain professional relationships and systems of communication with faculty, staff and administrators to support students.



B.2. Responsibilities to the School

- d. **(New Addition)** Provide leadership to create systemic change to enhance the school.
- j. **(New Addition)** Strive to use translators who have been vetted or reviewed and bilingual/multilingual school counseling program materials representing languages used by families in the school community.
- m. **(New Addition)** Promote cultural competence to help create a safer more inclusive school environment



B.13. Responsibilities to Self

- School Counselors
 - a. **(New Addition)** Have completed a counselor education program at an accredited institution and earned a master's degree in school counseling.
 - j. **(New Addition)** Refrain from refusing services to students based solely on the school counselor's personally held beliefs or values rooted in one's religion, culture or ethnicity: School counselors respect the diversity of students and seek training and supervision when prejudice or biases interfere with providing comprehensive services to all students.





B.13. Responsibilities to Self

- k. **Not stated the same in 2010 code, but similar to C.3.b**
- Work towards a school climate that embraces diversity and promotes academic, career and social/emotional development for all students
- l. **Similar to F.1.f just reworded** - Make clear distinction between actions and statements (both verbal and written) made as a private individual and those made as a representative of the school counseling profession and of the school district.
- m. **(New Addition)** Respect the intellectual property of others and adhere to copyright laws and correctly cite other's work when using it.



C. School Counselor Administrators/Supervisors (New title and focus)

- School counselor administrators/supervisors support school counselors in their charge by:
 - a. **Similar to D.2.b in 2010 code with some rewording**
 - b. **(New Addition)** Advocating for fair and open distribution of resources among programs supervised. An allocation procedure should be developed that is nondiscriminatory, informed by data and consistently applied.



C. School Counselor Administrators/Supervisors (New title and focus)

- c. **(New Addition)** Taking reasonable steps to ensure school and other resources are available to provide appropriate staff supervision and training.
- d. **Similar to E.1.d, but new wording:** Providing opportunities for professional development in current research related to school counseling practice and ethics.
- e. **(New Addition)** Taking steps to eliminate condition or practices in their schools or organizations that may violate, discourage or interfere with compliance with the ethics and laws related to the profession.
- f. **(New Addition)** Monitoring school and organization policies, regulations and procedures to ensure practices are consistent with the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors.



D. School Counseling Intern Site Supervisors

- **Changes in section wording from 2010 code**
- **Field/intern site supervisors: (new title for the competencies)**
- All competencies are new and much more focused than those in the 2010 code. 2010 code focused on the experience, maintaining appropriate insurance, and site visits.
- The 2016 code is laid out to ensure that the supervisors have adequate training, are using a collaborative model, and are competent with technology and policies and procedures. It also focuses on evaluation tools, remediation plans, and recommendation of dismissal when interns are unable to demonstrate competence.



E. Maintenance of Standards

- This section existed with a single statement in the 2010 code – this time it's much more extensive and lays out procedures that serve as a guide for ethical behavior.
- This is similar to what was laid out in G.1. of the 2010 code.
 - a. Highlights the understanding of mandatory reporting in the respective district and states
 - b. Lays out what do when the behavior in question is unlawful, abusive, egregious or dangerous, in which case proper school or community authorities are contacted.
 - c. Specifies steps to take when the matter remains unresolved



You can't practice risk free!



The graphic features a green background with faint circular patterns and vertical stripes. A dark blue horizontal bar on the left contains the ASCA logo, which consists of a stylized building with three columns and a pediment, with the text "AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION" to its right. To the right of this bar, a white rounded rectangle contains the word "Questions?" in a bold, dark blue font. At the bottom of the graphic, the text "ASCA WEBINAR SERIES" is written in a dark blue, spaced-out, sans-serif font.