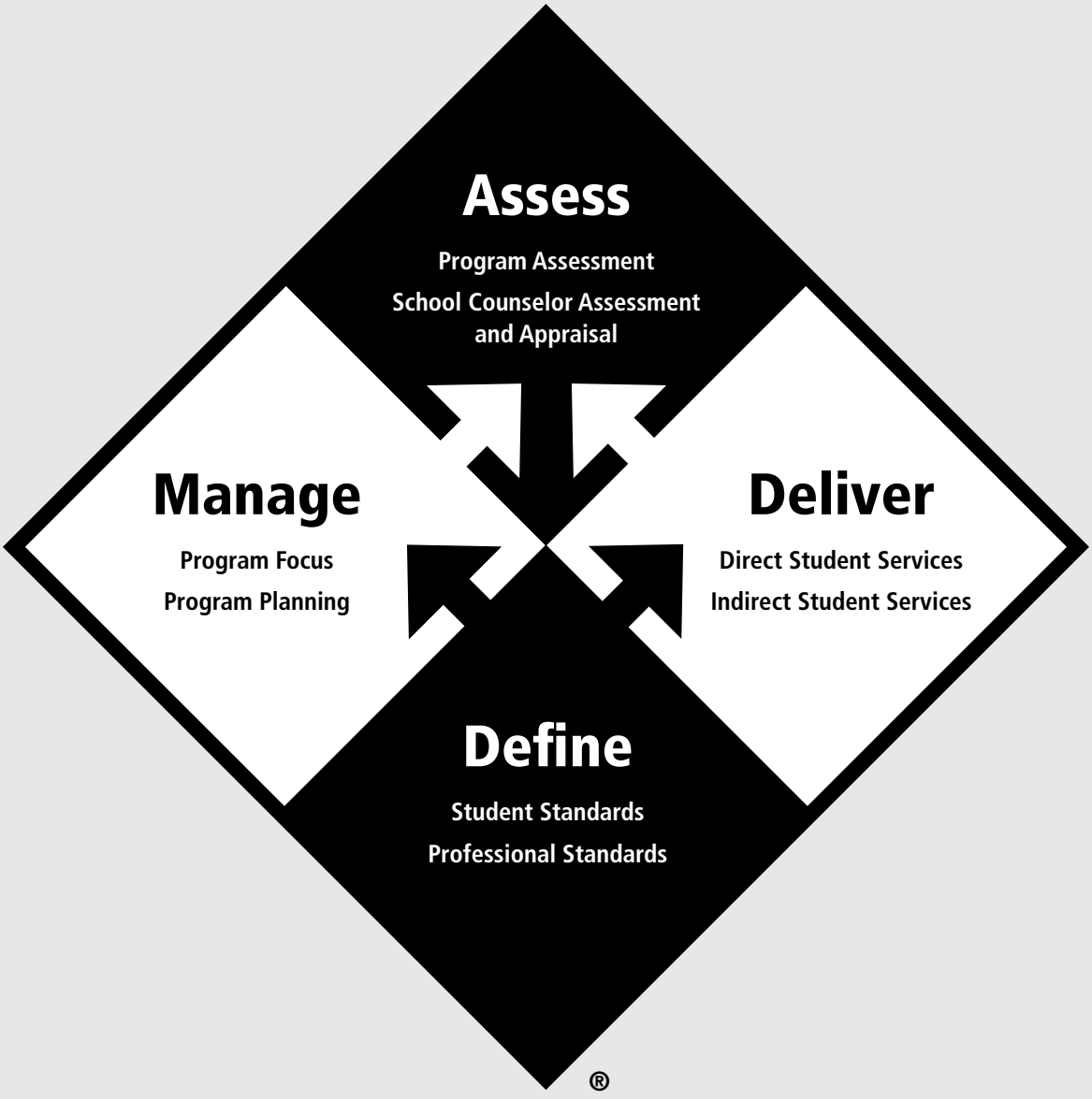
ASCA National Model®

A Framework for School Counseling Programs

FIFTH EDITION

AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION



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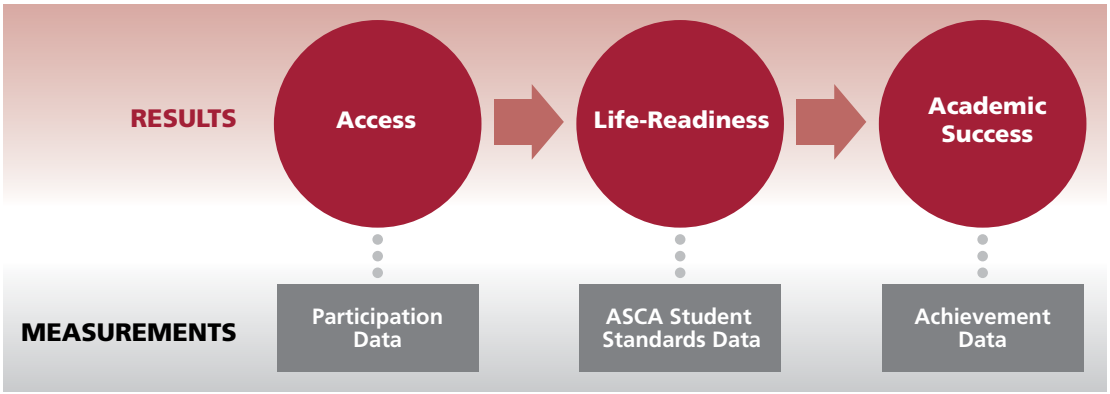
ASCA National Model®

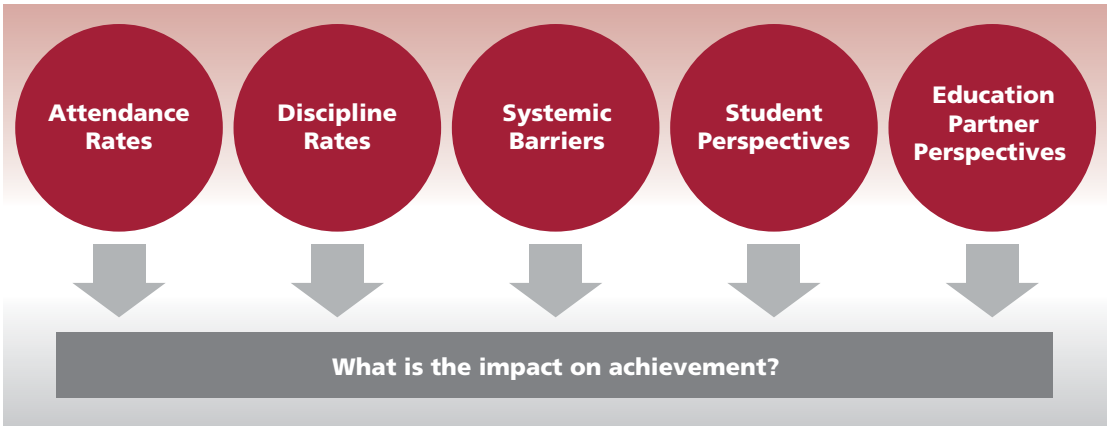
"The ASCA National Model®: A Framework for School Counseling Programs" outlines the components of a school counseling program integral to the school's mission. School counselors design, implement and assess a school counseling program that improves life-readiness and academic success for each and every student.



Result	School counselors implement a school counseling program that:	Measured By
Access	■ Engages each and every student in Tier 1 school counseling activities ■ Provides interventions to students with identified Tier 2 needs ■ Addresses barriers to student success, which promotes systemic change	Participation Data Answers the question, "Who participated in what activities?"
Life-Readiness	Enhances each and every student's mindsets and behaviors for life-readiness as defined by the ASCA Student Standards, which leads to academic success, college and career readiness and social/emotional development.	ASCA Student Standards Data Attainment of the ASCA Student Standards
Academic Success	■ Helps each and every student achieve their highest academic potential. ■ Identifies students with specific needs and provides support aligned to those needs. This support includes addressing factors that contribute to achievement gaps, such as attendance, discipline, school climate and systemic barriers.	Achievement Data ■ Traditional grades ■ Standards-based grades ■ Benchmark assessments ■ Promotion rates ■ Graduation rates ■ Test scores

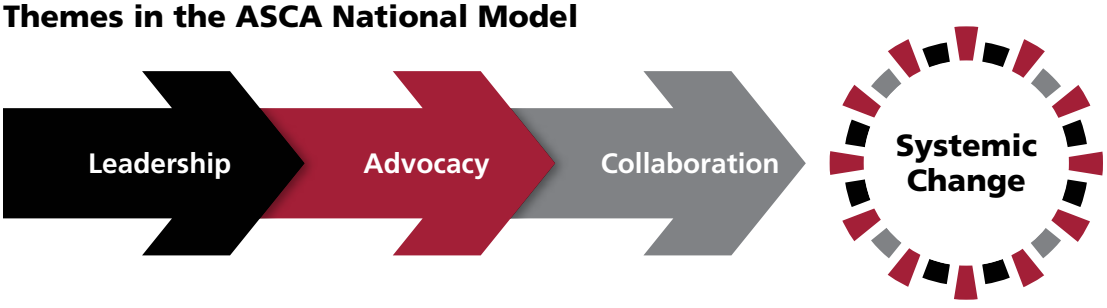
The fifth edition of the ASCA National Model® provides a continued focus on school counselors' use of data to identify student needs and measure student success. School counselors analyze achievement data, along with contributing-factors data, to inform strategies supporting the school's goals. Contributing-factors data includes attendance rates, discipline rates, systemic barriers, and student and education partner perspectives. Education partners may include families, staff, administrators, decision-makers, and any other school or community organizations/individuals.

Contributing-Factors Data



The fifth edition also provides more information on the alignment between the school counseling program and a multitiered system of supports (MTSS) framework. MTSS tiers are connected to school counseling strategies and interventions throughout the ASCA National Model®. The ASCA National Model® reinforces the school counselor's role in providing leadership, advocacy and collaboration with education partners to promote systemic change. School counselors collaborate to identify and address systemic barriers that may be a result of school policies, practices and traditions. The ultimate goal of this work, and the school counseling program, is to help each and every student reach their highest potential.

Themes in the ASCA National Model



For more complete information on the ASCA National Model®, see "The ASCA National Model®: A Step-by-Step Guide."

Define

A school counseling program is defined by three sets of standards, which guide school counselors through developing, implementing and assessing a school counseling program.

1. The ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies identify the essential knowledge, attitudes and skills school counselors need to implement a school counseling program.
2. The ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors identify the principles of ethical behavior necessary for school counselors to maintain the highest standards of integrity, leadership and professionalism.
3. The ASCA Student Standards: Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success describe the essential knowledge, attitudes and skills students need to achieve academic success, college and career readiness, and social/emotional development. School counselors are committed to helping each and every student attain these mindsets and behaviors to promote positive mental health and high levels of academic achievement leading to future success.

School counselors design their school counseling program based on their beliefs about students. As outlined in the ASCA Professional Standards & Competencies, school counselors believe:

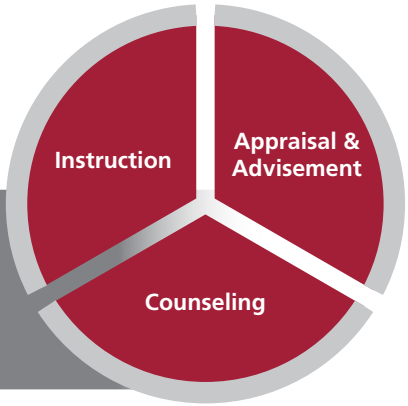
M 1. Each and every student can learn and can succeed.
M 2. Each and every student should receive a high-quality education.
M 3. Each and every student should have access to a school counseling program.
M 4. Each and every student should graduate from high school prepared for postsecondary opportunities.

When communicating how their program is designed, school counselors share their beliefs about student success, as well as how their program aligns with the school/district vision and mission statements.

Program implementation helps achieve the beliefs, mission and vision. Program assessment shows evidence as to how the school counseling program has helped turn the beliefs, mission and vision into reality.

Deliver

School counselors deliver direct and indirect student services that improve life-readiness and academic success for each and every student.

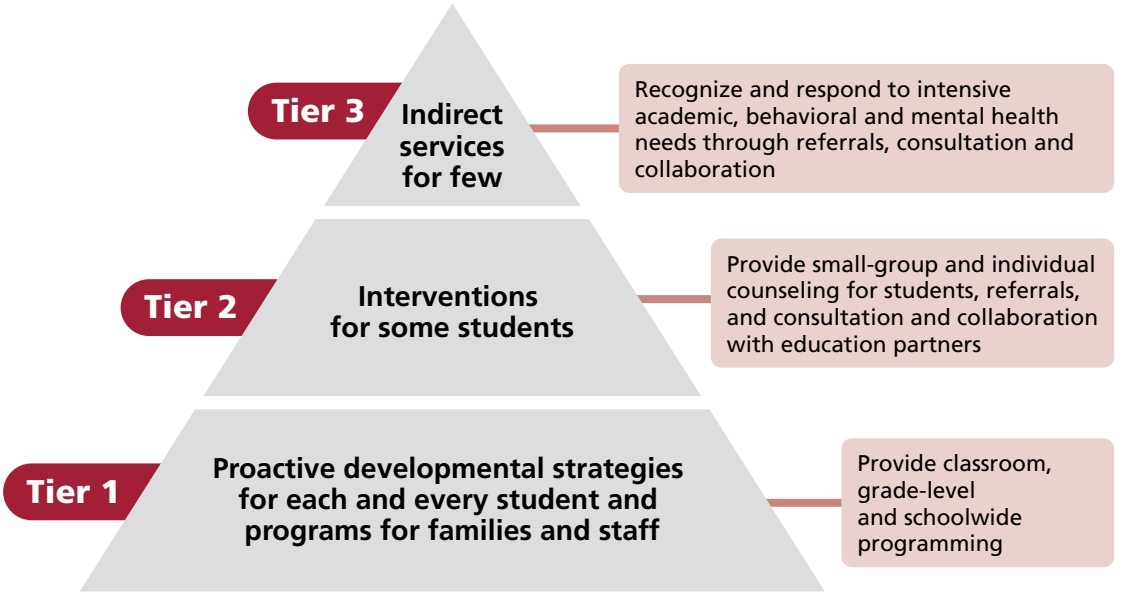


1. Direct student services are in-person or direct interactions between school counselors and students.

Direct Student Service	School Counselors:	Setting
Instruction	Enhance student access, life-readiness and academic success through delivery of the ASCA Student Standards.	Classroom, Small Group, Individual (Aligns with MTSS Tier 1 and 2 strategies)
Appraisal & Advisement	Appraisal: Analyze and assess students' abilities, interests, skills and achievement from test and inventory results. Advisement: Make recommendations based on appraisal of test and inventory results to help students make decisions for their future.	Classroom, Small Group, Individual (Aligns with MTSS Tier 1 and 2 strategies)
Counseling	Provide students with short-term assistance and support based on counseling theories and techniques during times of transition, heightened stress, critical change or other situations impeding academic, career and social/emotional development.	Small Group, Individual (Aligns with MTSS Tier 1 and 2 strategies)

2. Indirect student services are provided on behalf of students through the school counselor's interactions with others.

Indirect Student Service	School Counselors:	Audience
Referrals	Connect students and families with more intensive resources for life-readiness and academic success.	Students and families (Aligns with MTSS Tier 2 and 3 strategies)
Consultation	Provide information, perspectives, strategies and recommendations to individuals who can support a student's needs. Seek information on what students might need to address an issue and strategies to enhance life-readiness and improve academic success.	Teachers, administrators, families and education partners (Aligns with MTSS Tier 2 and 3 strategies)
Collaboration	Work with education partners (faculty/staff, parents/guardians, community services/ agencies) on an identified goal for student success, sharing responsibility for identified tasks among cooperating individuals.	Teachers, administrators, families and education partners (Aligns with MTSS Tier 2 and 3 strategies)



Manage

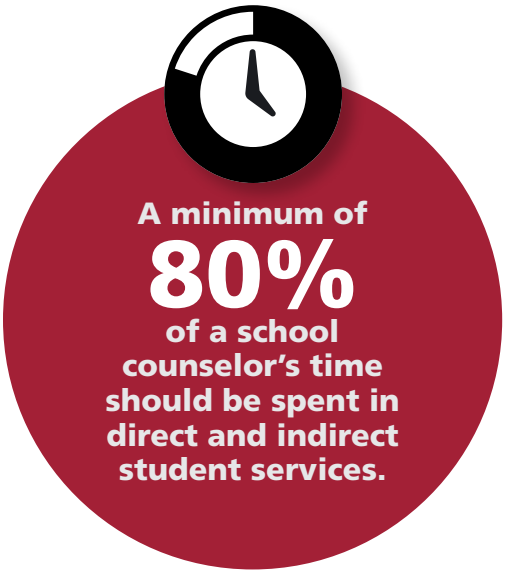
The Manage component guides school counselors through design, planning and implementation of the school counseling program. School counselors manage their program by focusing on how they:

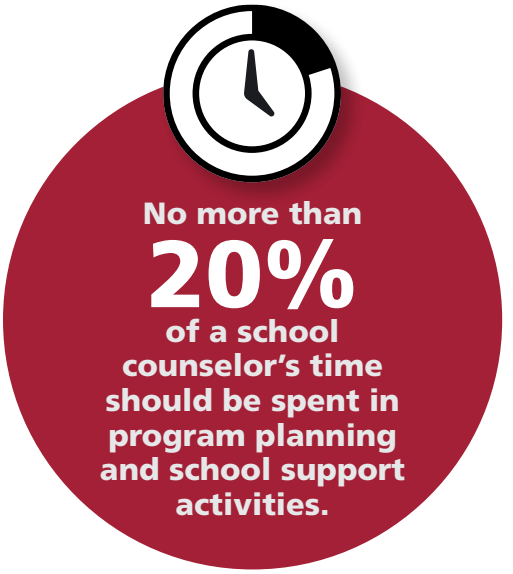
- plan for each and every student to learn the ASCA Student Standards
- identify and address achievement gaps
- plan and monitor their time
- educate and advocate for the school counseling program

Purpose	Description	How the School Counseling Program Promotes Success for Each and Every Student
Plan how each and every student will learn strategies and skills for student success.	School counselors plan what behaviors each and every student will learn by: ■ identifying specific standards in the ASCA Student Standards delivery plan that will be delivered in Tier 1 and 2 settings ■ planning how the standards will be delivered using lesson plans and small-group sessions plan ■ using these standards to provide focus for individual sessions with students.	Identifies behaviors standards from the ASCA Student Standards school counselors deliver in classrooms, large groups, small groups and individually to enhance life-readiness for each and every student.
Identify and address achievement gaps.	School counselors identify school counseling data priorities that align with the school improvement plan and create achievement gap plans to address the needs of students who are not reaching achievement goals or benchmarks.	Focuses attention on achievement gaps for students not meeting achievement benchmarks and connects the gaps to contributing factors, such as attendance, discipline and policies/procedures (e.g., patterns in course enrollment or discipline policies)
Plan and monitor time.	■ Use weekly calendars to prioritize, plan and publicize day-to-day work. ■ Publicize an annual calendar, which includes all major school counseling activities, to students, families and education partners. ■ Monitor use of time. ASCA recommends school counselors spend at least 80% of their time in direct and indirect services to students and 20% or less in program planning and school support.	Communicates all of the school counseling activities delivered to each and every student and documents the school counselor's appropriate use of time to ensure their ability to address success for each and every student in their caseload

Purpose	Description	How the School Counseling Program Promotes Success for Each and Every Student
Educate about and advocate for the school counseling program.	■ Hold the annual administrator conference with the administrator in charge of the school counseling program to educate about the program's impact and advocate for its organization, goals, plans and use of time. ■ Hold fall and spring advisory council meetings to educate education partners about the program's impact and advocate for the support and role of the school counselor. ■ Communicate school counseling program information to students and families, and share the program's impact with decision-makers and other education partners.	Communicates program priorities and plans for each and every student to the administrator in charge of the school counseling program, as well as other education partners. Gives a voice to education partners through dialogue about how the school counseling program addresses success for each and every student

Download templates to design, implement and assess your school counseling program at: *schoolcounselor.org/templates*.





School counselors use data to inform school counseling program development, implementation and assessment. The data helps school counselors:

- Monitor student access, life-readiness and academic success
- Identify students who are having difficulties with mindsets and behaviors for success
- Identify achievement and opportunity gaps
- Assess the effectiveness of school counseling program activities
- Educate decision-makers and education partners about the school counseling program's impact

School counselors use three categories of data to plan for and report results of the school counseling program.

School Counseling Data Category	Definition	How the School Counselor Uses this Data to Promote Success for Each and Every Student
Participation Data	How many students access the school counseling program, how often they participate and for what length of time	Measures participation in opportunities that prepare each and every student for school and lifelong success
ASCA Student Standards Data	The knowledge and skills students need for life-readiness as defined by the behavior standards from the ASCA Student Standards and measured through pre-/post-assessments	Measures attainment of the ASCA Student Standards.
Achievement Data	The impact of the school counseling program on student data including: ■ Traditional grades ■ Standards-based grades ■ Benchmark assessments ■ Promotion rates ■ Graduation rates ■ Test scores	Measures achievement data to identify any students or student groups who are not achieving at their highest potential. It includes measurement of any factors that contribute to achievement, including but not limited to ■ Attendance rates ■ Discipline rates ■ Systemic barriers ■ Student perspectives ■ Education partner perspectives

Assess

School counselors regularly assess their own skills and their program to determine its effectiveness in enhancing access, life-readiness and academic success for each and every student.

Program Assessment

Purpose	Description	How the School Counseling Program Promotes Success for Each and Every Student
Assess the school counseling program for alignment with the ASCA National Model®	The School Counseling Program Assessment guides the regular assessment of design and delivery of a school counseling program and its impact on access, life-readiness and academic success.	Research shows that school counseling programs aligned with the ASCA National Model® improve student achievement, attendance and discipline. School counselors implementing these programs have increased job satisfaction and a better understanding of their role in the school's ecosystem.

School Counselor Assessment and Appraisal

Purpose	Description	How it Promotes Success for Each and Every Student
Self-assess your own mindsets and behaviors and formulate an appropriate professional development plan	The ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies Assessment is used to self-assess the school counselor's knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to implement a school counseling program	Continued professional development promotes increased school counseling expertise, leading to improved student outcomes.
Gain feedback on your performance as a school counselor	The ASCA School Counselor Performance Appraisal provides a guide for performance evaluation measured by expectations that are specific to the school counseling profession.	Provides an opportunity for the school counselor to share artifacts of activities implemented to improve student achievement and create systematic change for each and every student.

Appropriate and Inappropriate Activities for School Counselors

This chart provides a comparison between two similar types of activities and can be helpful when explaining how school counselors spend their time.

Appropriate Activities for School Counselors	Inappropriate Activities for School Counselors
Appraisal & advisement for academic planning	Building the master schedule
Academic advising for new students	Coordinating paperwork and data entry of all new students
Presenting school counseling lessons based on the ASCA Student Standards to address students' developmental needs and needs identified through data	Covering classes when teachers are absent or to create teacher planning time
Consulting with teachers about building classroom connections, effective classroom management and the role of the ASCA Student Standards in student success	Supervising classrooms, common areas, in-school suspension or time-out rooms
Interpreting cognitive, aptitude and achievement tests	Coordinating school/district cognitive, aptitude and achievement testing programs
Analyzing schoolwide and school counseling program data	Serving as a data entry clerk
Analyzing GPAs in relationship to achievement	Computing GPAs
Interpreting student records	Maintaining student records
Protecting student records and information per state and federal regulations	Keeping/filing clerical records
Providing short-term individual and small-group counseling services to students	Providing long-term counseling in schools
Providing counseling to students who are frequently tardy or absent	Signing excuses for students who are tardy or absent
Providing counseling to students who have disciplinary problems	Disciplining students or assigning discipline consequences
Consulting with the school principal to identify and resolve student issues, needs and problems	Assisting with duties in the principal's office
Advocating for students at individual education plan and 504 meetings, student study teams and school attendance review boards, as necessary	Coordinating schoolwide individual education plans, 504 plans, student study teams, response to intervention plans, MTSS and school attendance review boards

ASCA NATIONAL MODEL® RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

Effectiveness of School Counseling Research

- ASCA National Model®: What the Research Says
- School Counselors Matter
- Effectiveness Research

Learn more at *schoolcounselor.org/effectiveness*

View webinars about the ASCA National Model at:

videos.schoolcounselor.org

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Learn about the Recognized ASCA Model Program®:

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