# ASCA BUSINESS MEETING

July 11, 2025





**July 11, 2025** 4:30 to 6:00 p.m.

- A. Call to Order
- B. Welcome and Introductions
- C. State of the Profession
- D. Standing Rules/Parliamentary Procedures
- E. 2024 Business Meeting Minutes
- F. State of the Association
- G. Position Statements
- H. Bylaws Revision
- I. New Business
- J. Recognition and Awards



## A. Call to Order

Christy Welch, Chair of the ASCA Board of Directors, will call the meeting to order.

### **Action Requested**



## **B. Welcome and Introductions**

Ms. Welch will welcome the Delegates and introduce the ASCA Board of Directors.

## **Action Requested**



## **C. State of the Profession**

Ms. Welch will provide a report about developments in the school counseling profession during the past year.

### **Action Requested**



## D. Standing Rules/ Parliamentary Procedures

Parliamentarian Lezya Weglarz will present the standing rules of the ASCA Business Meeting. The following information is from the ASCA Board of Directors Procedures Manual.

## **Action Requested**

#### A M E R I C A N S C H O O L COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION

## 2025 ASCA BUSINESS MEETING

The Membership Linkage committee helps plan the ASCA Business Meeting, in accordance with ASCA Bylaws, policies, and procedures.

- 1. ASCA Business Meeting Representation
  - 1-A The ASCA Business Meeting consists of voting members of the ASCA Board of Directors and delegates of the chartered divisions.
  - 1-B Each chartered division shall appoint two Delegates.
  - 1-C Delegates to the ASCA Business Meeting are members of their state/territory school counselor association and are Professional or Retired members of ASCA, as required by ASCA Bylaws.
- 2. Delegate Responsibilities
  - 2-A In accordance with Policy Governance, delegates shall act in the best interests of ASCA and the school counseling profession, not the interests of individual state/territory associations.
  - 2-B Delegate terms begin when delegate credentials are approved and end on the day prior to the first day of the ASCA Business Meeting the following year.
  - 2-C Delegates are expected to attend ASCA Business Meetings in their entirety.
  - 2-D Delegates are expected to be prepared for the ASCA Business Meeting by reading any information provided to all delegates by ASCA, submitting any information requested, and completing any required training or orientation.
  - 2-E Delegates are expected to provide relevant information and feedback to the ASCA Board of Directors. This information is vital to the work of the board in creating and meeting Ends Policies for the success of ASCA.
- 3. Meetings
  - 3-A The ASCA Business Meeting shall meet annually.
  - 3-B The chair of the ASCA Board of Directors shall preside at meetings of the ASCA Business Meeting. In the absence of the chair, the assistant chair shall preside.
  - 3-C In accordance with ASCA Bylaws, the ASCA Board of Directors shall appoint a Parliamentarian to help ensure that the ASCA Business Meeting is conducted in accordance with ASCA Bylaws, the principles of Policy Governance and the rules approved by the delegates.



- 3-D Delegates to the ASCA Business Meeting shall be provided certifying credentials by the Executive Director. Disputes or discrepancies regarding delegate credentials shall be resolved by the Board of Directors, whose decisions shall be final.
- 3-E All voting delegates can participate in discussion at the discretion of the presiding chair, who will determine the number of times, order and duration that delegates may speak.
- 3-F Delegates shall not participate in the discussion of or vote on a question in which they have a direct personal or financial interest not common to other members of the ASCA Business Meeting.
- 3-G Decisions are made by a majority vote of delegates, in accordance with ASCA Bylaws and the following procedures:
  - Any delegate may make a motion.
  - All motions must be supported by a second prior to discussion and vote.
  - Any changes to a motion must be accepted by the maker and seconder. If the maker and seconder do not accept proposed changes, then the motion that is acceptable to the maker and seconder must be voted upon. If the motion is defeated, another motion may be introduced.
  - Once a motion has been made and seconded, a vote must be made on that motion before another motion can be made, except a motion to end discussion.
  - Any delegate may propose ending discussion at any time by calling for a vote of a motion. When this occurs, the Delegate must agree by majority vote to end discussion. If a majority of delegates vote to end discussion, then delegates will vote on the main motion without further discussion.
  - The maker of a motion may withdraw his or her motion at any time before it is voted on, with the approval of the seconder.
  - The presiding chair may rule any motion out of order if it contradicts ASCA Bylaws, the principles of Policy Governance or the standing rules approved by the delegates.
- 3-H Members of the Association other than members of the ASCA Business Meeting may observe the ASCA Business Meeting and may address the group at the discretion of the presiding chair. These members may not introduce motions or vote.



## E. 2024 Business Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the 2024 Business Meeting are included. Delegates are asked to review the minutes from the 2024 Business Meeting.

### **Action Requested:**

Delegates are asked to approve or amend the minutes from the 2024 Business Meeting.



## 2024 ASCA Business Meeting

July 12, 2024 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. CDT Kansas City, Mo

#### A. Call to Order

Ms. Lisa Fulton, chair of ASCA's Board of Directors, called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. CDT on Friday, July 12, 2024.

#### **B.** Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Fulton welcomed the Delegates, introduced the ASCA Board of Directors and acknowledged and thanked all the committee members.

#### C. State of the Profession

Ms. Fulton shared her observations about the evolution of the profession. She pointed out that while school counselors have made strides in sharing a common and consistent identity over the past two decades, there are still some in the profession who do not align their practices with the ASCA National Model®. While the most recent ASCA State of the Profession survey showed that 78% of school counselors implement comprehensive school counseling programs aligned with the ASCA National Model®, there is still work to be done. Ms. Fulton urged delegates to continue to strive to ensure that all school counselors share a common and consistent identity and create equitable opportunities and inclusive environments for each and every student.

#### **D. Standing Rules/Parliamentary Procedures**

Parliamentarian, Dr. Lyndsey Brown from Kansas, presented the procedures for Delegate Assembly.

*Motion*—It is moved to approve the Standing Rules as presented. The motion was made by Chelcie Heitman from Kansas and seconded by Melanie Scott from Kansas.

Vote—The motion passed with 100 voting in favor and 0 voting against.

#### E. 2023 Business Meeting Minutes

*Motion*—It is moved to approve the minutes of the 2023 Delegate Assembly as presented. The motion was made by Sally Tilley from Oklahoma and seconded by Chelsea Hinkle from Oklahoma.



*Discussion* – Ms. Marks from Washington noted a typo in her name from the 2023 minutes. She should be listed as Marin Marks from Washington.

*Vote*—The motion passed with 98 voting in favor and 1 abstention.

#### F. State of the Profession

ASCA Executive Director, Jill Cook, presented shared about the association's work during the last year. She acknowledged the twentieth anniversary of the Recognized ASCA Model Program and shared new resources and programs developed by ASCA. Ms. Cook also reported on collaborations with the U.S. Department of Education as well as dozens of coalitions and partnerships. Ms. Cook also provided an overview of the most recent SCA leader survey and how those results illustrate the growth of the state affiliates and ultimately impact the profession and students all over the country.

#### **H.** Position Statements

ASCA Position Statements Committee chair, Dr. Andrew Shuerman and co-chair, Dr. Crystal Hatton, thanked the committee members for their work and provided background on the revision process. The committee revised ten statements and proposed a new statement. As in previous years, a public comment period occurred in the fall of 2023 to inform the revision process and again during April 2024 for additional input.

The Delegates were asked to approve the following statements:

- 1. The School Counselor and Career Development
- 2. The School Counselor and Confidentiality
- 3. The School Counselor and Equity for All Students
- 4. The School Counselor and High-Stakes Testing
- 5. The School Counselor and Section 504 Plan and Process *new*
- 6. The School Counselor and Student Appraisal and Advisement & Postsecondary Preparation
- 7. The School Counselor and Students Experiencing Homelessness
- 8. The School Counselor and Student Sexual Wellness *formerly the School Counselor and the Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections*
- 9. The School Counselor and Supporting Students in Foster Care
- 10. The School Counselor and Suicide Prevention, Intervention and Postvention *formerly Suicide Prevention/Awareness*
- 11. The School Counselor and the Use of Non-School-Counseling Credentialed Personnel in

Implementing School Counseling Programs

Motion-It is moved to accept the recommendations from the Position Statement



Committee as presented. The motion was made by Jen Smela from Colorado and seconded by Matthew McClain from Colorado.

*Vote*—The motion passed with 97 voting in favor and 0 voting against.

#### **I. Bylaw Revisions**

Christy Welch, chair of the Bylaw Committee provided an overview of the Board of Director's recommended revisions to the ASCA Bylaws. The proposed changes were to create consistent language throughout the document to align with other policies and manuals.

The Bylaws Committee proposes the following revisions:

#### ARTICLE IV: DELEGATE ASSEMBLY ASCA BUSINESS MEETING

ARTICLE IV, SECTION 1. Composition and Selection of the <del>Delegate Assembly ASCA</del> Business Meeting.

- IV-1a. The Delegate Assembly ASCA business meeting shall be composed of voting members of the ASCA Board of Directors and delegates of the chartered Divisions as described in ASCA policies and procedures that address Delegate Representation.
- IV-1b. Division delegates shall be selected in any manner that a Division chooses; however, delegates must be Professional or Retired members of ASCA.
- IV-1c. A Division shall submit to ASCA's Corporate Treasurer the names and addresses of its

delegates to the Delegate Assembly ASCA business meeting.

ARTICLE IV, SECTION 2. Functions of the <del>Delegate Assembly</del> ASCA Business Meeting.

IV-2a. The Delegate Assembly Attendees of the ASCA business meeting represent the ASCA membership.

- IV-2b. The Delegate Assembly identifies current issues, trends and concerns that inform the Ends policies of the Association.
- IV-2c. The Delegate Assembly provides recommendations to the Board of Directors, committees and task forces.
- IV-2db. The Delegates Delegate Assembly reviews and votes on proposed revisions to ASCA Bylaws.
- IV-2c. Delegates review and vote on newly proposed and revisions to existing ASCA position statements.
- IV-2ed. The Delegates Assembly at the ASCA business meeting performs such other functions as may be in the best interest of ASCA, not in conflict with the Bylaws and specifically assigned to it by the Board of Directors.



ARTICLE IV, SECTION 3. ASCA Business Meetings of the Delegate Assembly.

- IV-3a. The Delegates Assembly shall meet annually for a business meeting. Additional meetings may be called by majority vote of the Board of Directors.
- IV-3b. Two-Thirds of the members of the Delegate Assembly delegates must be present to constitute a quorum.
- IV-3c. Each member of the Delegate Assembly delegate shall have one vote. Decisions of the Delegates Assembly shall be made by a simple majority vote except in cases involving issues that require a greater majority, as defined in ASCA Bylaws and policies and procedures that address Governance.
- IV-3d. Business meetings of the Delegate Assembly shall be conducted in accordance with standing rules adopted by the delegates.

#### ARTICLE V: ASCA OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ARTICLE V, SECTION 1. Officers. The officers of ASCA shall be the Chief Governance Officer (Chair of the Board), Assistant Chief Governance Officer (Assistant Chair of the Board), and the Corporate Treasurer.

ARTICLE V, SECTION 2. Powers and Functions.

- V-2a. The Board of Directors shall conduct the governance of ASCA but shall not take any action contrary to Bylaws adopted by the Delegate Assembly at the ASCA business meeting.
- V-2b. The Board of Directors shall create policies and procedures to carry out the mission of ASCA.

ARTICLE V, SECTION 3. Board of Directors

V-3a. The voting members of the Board of Directors shall consist of nine atlarge Directors.

- V-3b. The Chair of the Board shall be an elected Director on the Board of Directors who is selected by the members of the Board of Directors to serve a one-year term as the Chair of the Board, in accordance with policies and procedures that address Governance.
- V-3c. The Assistant Chair of the Board shall be an elected Director on the Board of Directors who is selected by the members of the Board of Directors to serve a one-year term to assist the Chair of the Board and to serve as the Chair of the Board in the Chair's absence, in accordance with policies and procedures that address Governance.
- V-3d. At-large Directors shall be elected by the ASCA membership to serve a threeyear term to take actions or to make decisions on behalf of the members in accordance with ASCA policies and procedures that address Governance.
- V-3e. Three Directors shall be elected by the ASCA membership each year.



- V-3f. Directors shall not serve more than two terms on the Board of Directors.
- V-3g. The term of office for any elected Director shall coincide with the Fiscal Year of ASCA.
- V-3h. Directors must be employed full-time in school counseling in a school, school district, regional or state department of education or as a full-time faculty in a school counselor education program.
- V-3i. Directors must hold a valid and active school counselor license or certificate issued by a state department of education or equivalent state or federal agency.
- V-3j. Directors must maintain ASCA Professional Membership through the entirety of their term.
- V-3k. Directors must be a member of an ASCA affiliated state school counselor association through the entirety of their term.

ARTICLE V, SECTION 4. Nominations and Elections of Board of Directors.

- V-4a. Three Directors shall be elected annually through a general election by ASCA Professional and Retired members held in accordance with ASCA Policies and procedures that address Nominations and Elections.
- V-4b. Candidates must be an ASCA professional member and hold a master's degree or higher in school counseling or the substantial equivalent and must be employed full-time in school counseling in a school, school district, regional or state department of education or as a full-time faculty in a school counselor education program.
- V-4c. Candidates must have been practicing school counselors for at least five years on the due date for the submission of candidate applications.
- V-4d. Candidates must hold a valid and active school counselor license or certificate issued by a state department of education or equivalent state or federal agency on the due date for the submission of candidate applications.
- V-4e. Candidates must be ASCA Professional Members and must have been ASCA Professional Members for at least the five continuous years immediately preceding the due date for the submission of candidate applications and must be a member of an ASCA affiliated state school counselor association.
- V-4f. Candidates are required to complete ASCA leadership training no more than five years before the due date for the submission of candidate applications.
- V-4g. Candidates for the Board of Directors shall meet additional qualifications required by ASCA policies and procedures that address Nominations and Elections.
- V-4h. Candidates whose eligibility changes at any time during the election process must notify the Nominations and Elections Committee Chair immediately.
- V-4i. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall conduct elections in accordance with ASCA policies and procedures that address Nominations and Elections and present their recommendation to the Board for approval.



- V-4j. The Nominations and Elections Committee selects a slate of candidates not to exceed eight candidates.
- V-4k. Nominations and Elections guidelines shall be developed by the Nominations and Elections Committee and approved by the Board of Directors.
- V-4l. If any elected candidate should be unable to assume office by the beginning of ASCA's Fiscal Year, the candidate with the next highest number of votes in the election shall be asked to serve in the vacant position. If none of the candidates agrees to serve, the Board of Directors shall fill the vacancy.

#### ARTICLE VI: ADDITIONAL POSITIONS AND DUTIES

ARTICLE VI, SECTION I. Corporate Treasurer.

- VI-1a. The Board of Directors shall appoint a Treasurer of the Corporation who may also function as Secretary if the Board so decides.
- VI-1b. The Treasurer of the Corporation shall maintain ASCA's records, administer the affairs of the Association, including financial affairs, and perform such other duties as are

incidental to this office, in accordance with ASCA's mission and vision, subject to the provisions of its Bylaws and policies and procedures adopted by the Board of Directors.

#### ARTICLE VI, SECTION 2. Parliamentarian.

VI-3a. The Board of Directors shall appoint a Parliamentarian to serve a one-year term. VI-3b. A Parliamentarian shall perform appropriate duties at <del>Delegate Assembly the</del>

ASCA business meeting and may be appointed for other official meetings.

ARTICLE VI, SECTION 3. Additional Appointments.

The Board of Directors may appoint other positions as needed.

#### ARTICLE VII: OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEES

ARTICLE VII, SECTION 1. Committees. ASCA's committees shall be appointed to accomplish specific tasks within specific timeframes. If membership on a committee includes individuals who are not members of the Board of Directors, that committee shall function only as an advisory committee and shall not conduct any function reserved for the Board.

ARTICLE VII, SECTION 2. Standing Committees. The standing committees shall be the ASCA Bylaw Review Committee, the Nominations and Elections Committee, and the Membership Linkage Committee.



- VII-2a. ASCA Bylaws Review. The ASCA Bylaws Review Committee annually reviews the ASCA Bylaws and makes recommendations to the Board of Directors. The ASCA Bylaws Review Committee also reviews all proposed amendments to the ASCA Bylaws and makes recommendations to the Board of Directors. The ASCA Bylaws Review Committee is appointed annually by the Board of Directors.
- VII-2b. Nominations and Elections. The Nominations and Elections Committee develops policies and procedures for approval by the Board of Directors and conducts elections in accordance with ASCA policies and procedures that address Nominations and Elections. The Nominations and Elections Committee is appointed annually by the Board of Directors.
- VII-2c. Membership Linkage. The Membership Linkage Committee assists the board in its duty to proactively link with the ownership/members. To ensure transparency and accountability to ASCA members, the board will seek input and share results with the membership. The committee also plans the annual business meeting in accordance to ASCA Bylaws, policies, and procedures. The committee recommends the parliamentarian for the ASCA business meeting and coordinates the membership linkage activities. The Membership Linkage Committee is appointed annually by the Board of Directors.

#### ARTICLE VIII: BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF THE ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE VIII, SECTION 1. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year shall begin October 1 and end the following September 30.

ARTICLE VIII, SECTION 2. Property of the Association. In the event the Association should be dissolved, none of its property shall be distributed to any of the members. Instead, all of its property shall be transferred to such organizations(s) as the Board of Directors shall determine to have purposes and activities most nearly consonant with those of the Association provided, however, that such organization(s) shall be exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding provisions of the Internal Revenue Laws.

ARTICLE VIII, SECTION 3. Annual Meeting.

- VIII-3a. The Delegate Assembly shall constitute the annual business meeting of the Association. The ASCA business meeting shall be held annually.
- VIII-3b. The Board of Directors of ASCA may call additional business meetings of the ASCA general membership that are not part of the ASCA business meetings of the Delegate Assembly.



VIII-3c. At any meeting of the general membership that is not a meeting of the delegates Delegate Assembly, 100 Professional or Retired members of ASCA in good standing and a majority of the Board of Directors members must be present to constitute a quorum.

#### **ARTICLE X: AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS**

- ARTICLE X, SECTION 1. Amendment. These Bylaws may be amended by majority vote of the Delegate Assembly at the ASCA business meeting or a majority vote at a general membership meeting as provided in this section.
- X-1a. An amendment shall be proposed by the Board of Directors or by petition over the signature of not less than 50 Professional or Retired members of ASCA in good standing. Petitions for Bylaws amendment must be submitted to the Board of Directors not less than 90 days prior to the first session of the ASCA business meeting. of the Delegate Assembly or a general membership meeting where Bylaws revisions will be considered. All proposed Bylaws amendments shall be reviewed by the Bylaws Review Committee.
- X-1b. Copies of amendments proposed under the provision of the foregoing paragraph shall be distributed to <del>members of the Delegate Assembly or the</del> <del>general membership delegates</del> not less than 30 days prior to the first session of the <del>annual</del> ASCA business meeting. of the Delegate Assembly or a general membership meeting where Bylaws revisions will be considered.
- X-1c. In the event the attendance at <del>Delegate Assembly or general membership</del> the ASCA business meeting does not constitute a quorum, Bylaws amendments may be approved by mail ballot, electronic ballot or other means approved by the Board of Directors. In such case, amendments shall be approved by a majority of ballots or votes received.
- X-1d. Amendments originating during the Delegate Assembly or a general membership ASCA business meeting shall be discussed and if approved by the delegates Delegate Assembly or members in attendance of a general membership at the ASCA business meeting shall be submitted for mail ballot, electronic ballot or other means approved by the Board of Directors. Such proposed amendments shall be sent, no more than (90) days following the date of presentation, for a vote by the ASCA Delegate Assembly members or members delegates in attendance of the business a general membership the business meeting before whom the amendment originated. Such proposed amendment shall be referred forthwith to the Bylaws Review Committee whose written recommendation shall accompany any such ballot. Amendments originating during Delegate Assembly or general membership the ASCA business meeting shall be approved by a majority of ballots or votes received.



X-1e. Bylaw amendments that affect Board or <del>Dd</del>elegate service, such as terms or eligibility, shall not be applicable to Board members and <del>Dd</del>elegates who are in office, newly elected or engaged in an election at the time the amendment is approved, unless the delegates <del>Delegate Assembly</del> explicitly approves applying the Bylaw amendments immediately.

*Motion*—It is moved to accept the ASCA Bylaws revisions as presented. The motion was made by Emilia Mattucci from Pennsylvania and seconded by Larissa Valonis from Pennsylvania.

*Vote*—The motion passed with 96 voting in favor and 0 against.

#### J. New Business

No new business was presented.

#### K. Recognition and Awards

Ms. Cook recognized Dr. Gibson, Ms. Welch and Ms. Fulton as outgoing members of the ASCA Board of Directors. Dr. Gibson and Ms. Fulton recognized state school counselor associations who were celebrating charter renewals, anniversary commemorations and membership achievements.

The California Association of School Counselors was recognized as the second recipient of the Pinnacle Award that honors a state/territory association for an outstanding innovation.

The meeting adjourned at 5:57 p.m. CDT.

#### **Board Members in Attendance:**

Lisa Fulton, Chair Dr. Eva Gibson, Assistant Chair Roberto Aguilar Monica Bryant Priscilla Grijalva Dr. Ebonee Magee-Dorsey Steve Sharp Richard Tench Christy Welch

**Parliamentarian**: Dr. Lyndsey Brown (non-voting) **Staff Members**: Jill Cook, Amanda Fitzgerald, Eric Sparks

#### A M E R I C A N S C H O O L COUNSELOR Association

## 2025 ASCA BUSINESS MEETING

#### State/Territory Delegates in attendance:

**Alabama** Winnie Davis Jamie Haley

**Alaska** Thomas Dunning Kelsey Kramer

**Arizona** Christina Culbertson Kristina Guy

**Arkansas** Kelli Dockery Allison Spraggins

**California** Jordan Blevins Andres Castro

**Colorado** Matthew McClain Jen Smela

**Connecticut** Lisa Kilcourse Kelly Norris

**Delaware** Kristina Hall Rachel Herskowitz

**Florida** Larissa Bennett Drew Grissell

**Georgia** Gabrielle Brundidge Robin Zorn

**Guam** Nadine Cruz Brenda Porter

**Hawaii** Scott Miyagi Kaimionalani Gample

**Idaho** Baylie Bunn

**Illinois** Andrea Allen-Moore Patrick Wildman **Indiana** Lydia McNeiley Ryan Preci

**Iowa** Courtney Cook Becky Lins

**Kansas** Chelcie Heitman Melanie Scott

**Kentucky** Amy Riley Sherlyn Bratcher

**Louisiana** Bernell Elzey, Jr. Val Estoque

**Maine** Rebecca Edelman Kelly Wright

**Maryland** Nikki Ham Maureen Ponce

Massachussetts Lori Ford Jessica Descartes

**Michigan** Thomas Michalos JoAnne Wegrzynowicz

**Minnesota** Sydney Piras Calli Moreau

**Mississippi-Magnolia State** Crystal Brewer Alexya Irvin

**Missouri** Rebecca Chambers-Arway Carey Hughes

**Montana** Tina Boone Tanya Kirschman **Nebraska** Suzanne Scott April Knust

**Nevada** Jeremy Elsmore Colleen Tuttle

**New Hampshire** Alison Memoli

**New Jersey** Jennifer Correnti Carl Palmer

**New Mexico** Katie Doss Robert Wiebelhaus

**New York** Mary Banaszak Lysa Mullady

**North Carolina** Deanna Ford Connie Thompson

**North Dakota** Jared Bollom Steven Quinlivan

**Ohio** Cara Habermehl Laura Hogue

**Oklahoma** Chelsea Hinkle Sally Tilley

**Oregon** Heather Hadraba Amy Henry

**Pennsylvania** Emilia Mattucci Larissa Valonis

**Rhode Island** Anne-Marie Flaherty Stacy Haines-Mayne **South Carolina -Palmetto State** Kimberly Brown Heather Williams

**South Dakota** Amanda Bender Charlene Soukup

**Tennessee** Amy Baltimore Katie Wood

**Texas – Lone Star** Tiffany Gilmore Myra Ortega

**U.S. Virgin Islands** Rashida Lester Tiana Wilson

**Utah** Holly Jensen Dylan Lines

**Virginia** Paige Abasolo Jentae Scott-Mayo

**Washington** Marin Marks Christine Robinson

**West Virginia** Lauren Hensley Anna Simmons

**Wisconsin** Vicki Cox Russ Nelson

**Wyoming** Lexi Carr Lucas Grant



## F. State of the Association

ASCA Executive Director Jill Cook will provide an update about the state of the association.

## Action Requested



## **G. Position Statements**

Position Statements Committee assistant chair Dr. Jacinta Nafziger will present position statements for approval.

## **Action Requested**

Delegates are asked to review and discuss the proposed revisions to the Position Statements and take action as appropriate.

#### **2025 ASCA Position Statements**

Thank you to the following ASCA members for their dedicated work on the 2025 ASCA Position Statements Committee.

Crystal Hatton, VA, Chair	
Jacinta Nafziger, MI, Assistant Chair	
Jessica Aslin, LA	Margarita Landeros, CA
Alma Barrios, TX	Sadie Miller, CO
Lillena Borden, ID	Jill Minor, OH
Oliver Camacho, IN	Amber Mungavin, VA
Leanne Campbell, OK	Alana Pustay, OH
Andres Castro, CA	Susan Rose, KY
Stacie Collier, WA	Stephanie Steigerwalt, PA
Sarah Evans Zalewski, CT	Jesika Stuart, TN
Mandy Frayer, MO	Derek Therrien, GA
Tiffany Fuller, AL	Katherine Wood, TN
Michelle Hirschy, CA	Carla Young, NY

## **Summary of Changes**

Statement	Years Revised	Notes
The School Counselor and Corporal Punishment	Adopted 1995, revised 2000, 2006, 2012, 2019, 2025	References and citations were updated. The statement was updated to emphasize that school counselors oppose the use of corporal punishment at home and at school.
The School Counselor and Discipline	Adopted 1989, revised 1993, 1999, 2001, 2007, 2013, 2019, 2025	Revisions were made to make language active and less repetitive and to ensure the school counselor's role is identified as a consultant to others and not a disciplinarian. The statement was updated to include the school counselors' use of data to identify discipline disparities among student groups and the school counselor's role in student return-to-school meetings. Language was updated with research, and new resources were also added.
The School Counselor and Gifted and Talented Student Programs	Adopted 1988, revised 1993, 1999, 2001, 2007, 2013, 2019, 2025	References and citations were updated. Updated language further emphasizes the importance of meeting the diverse needs of students who are or may be identified as gifted and talented.

Statement	Years Revised	Notes
The School Counselor and Prevention of Gun-related School Violence	Adopted 2018, revised 2019, 2025	This statement was updated with particular focus on the school counselor's role and using the ASCA Ethical Standards to discuss advocacy on the topic. Additional clarity was added under each level of the statement. Citations were updated.
The School Counselor and Student Mental Health	Adopted 2009, revised 2015, 2020, 2025	The 2025 revision incorporates updated research and data on student mental health, emphasizing the school counselor's role in preventive mental health services. A key shift is the focus on collaboration with community partners rather than stakeholders, reinforcing the importance of collaboration with education partners to support student well-being. The revision also expands on school counselors' advocacy for mental health accommodations and highlights systemic barriers affecting access to care. Additionally, it addresses youth- focused skills in recognizing and responding to signs of distress, acknowledging that peers are often the first point of support for students experiencing emotional or behavioral concerns. Finally, the revised document reflects the evolving impact of COVID-19 on student mental health and references the updated ASCA National Model <sup>®</sup> (2025) to align with current best practices.
The School Counselor and Safe Schools and Crisis Response	Adopted 2000, revised 2007, 2013, 2019, 2025	Specific attention was paid to the accuracy and timeliness of the references, as well as clearly articulating the school counselor's role as supported by the literature. Both public comments and committee perspectives were considered and integrated according to their relevance to the current standing of the statement.
The School Counselor and Suicide Risk Assessment	Adopted 2020, revised 2025	The draft 2025 revision strengthens the emphasis on school counselors' ethical obligations, particularly in reporting suicide risk and ensuring parent/guardian notification, even for students 18 or older. It clarifies that risk assessments are not predictive tools and should never be used to negate concerns about a student's safety. The revision also highlights the importance of cultural sensitivity, emphasizing that assessments should account for diverse backgrounds and that conversations with parents/guardians should be conducted in their primary language whenever possible.

Statement	Years Revised	Notes
Statement         The School         Counselor and         Support Staff         in School         Counseling         Programs	Years Revised Adopted 1974, reviewed and reaffirmed 1980, revised 1986, 1993, 1999, 2001, 2008, 2013, 2019, 2025	Notes           Additionally, the new version provides clearer guidelines for parent/guardian notification, specifying what language to avoid and reinforcing the need to connect families with appropriate resources. School counselors are encouraged to advocate for district suicide prevention policies that align with best practices, particularly when no policy exists or when existing protocols are inadequate. The update also introduces the ASCA Information-Gathering Tool as a key resource for systematically assessing suicide risk and developing intervention plans. With expanded references to ASCA Ethical Standards, legal mandates like FERPA, and suicide prevention research, the revised statement offers clearer, stronger guidance for school counselors while reinforcing their critical role in student safety and suicide prevention efforts.           This statement was revised with current best practices. Notably, the language has been refined to specify "administrative support staff" rather than the broader "support staff," to add clarity about the roles of student services. The rationale section has been strengthened by including the most recent national student-to-school- counselor ratios and research highlighting the impact of high caseloads on program effectiveness. The revised statement also places greater emphasis on collaboration, defining clear distinctions between the responsibilities of administrative staff, school counselors and administration. It explicitly states that administrative support staff role and more appropriately handled by the school counselor. It reinforces that supervision of these staff members falls under administration. Additionally, new research has been incorporated to underscore the necessity of strong partnerships for implementing school counseling programs. These updates ensure the statement remains relevant, evidence-based, and aligned with the evolving
		needs of school counselors and students.
The School Counselor and Threat Assessment	Proposed 2025	The writing of this new position statement began with a draft developed using Carolyn Stone's 2022 article titled "School Counselors' Role in Threat Assessments" as the primary resource and ASCA's position statements on gun violence and safe schools as support. The subcommittee

Statement	Years Revised	Notes
		reviewed and discussed additions and revisions before the
		final draft was submitted.
The School	Adopted 2017,	The title of this statement has been proposed to change to
<b>Counselor and</b>	revised 2019,	The School Counselor and Working with Students Who
Working with	2025	Are Undocumented. Person-first language has been
Students		utilized and highlighted throughout the document. The
Experiencing		team highlighted core constructs supporting students who
Undocumented		are undocumented and updated citations to be within the
Status		last five years. Seminal historical articles have been
		incorporated throughout the body of the position
		statement. Finally, the school counselor role has been
		updated, and important practices implemented throughout
		the comprehensive school counseling program have been
		emphasized.

1	The School Counselor and Corporal Punishment
2	(Adopted 1995, Revised 2000, 2006, 2012, 2019, 2025)
3	
4	ASCA Position
5	Corporal punishment adversely affects children and adolescents' physical
6	well-being, mental health and social/emotional development. School
7	counselors oppose the use of corporal punishment and advocate for
8	trauma-informed discipline policies and procedures.
9	
10	The Rationale
11	Even though corporal punishment has been on a steady decline since
12	the 1970s and has notable negative effects, it is still legal in 17 states
13	and used in 14 (Greene-Santos, 2024). The United Nations Committee
14	on the Rights of the Child (n.d.) defines corporal punishment as "any
15	punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some
16	degree of pain or discomfort, however light."
17	
18	School counselors recognize the use of corporal punishment at home
19	and/or at school is linked to negative outcomes in academic
20	performance and problematic behaviors (Grogan-Kaylor, 2020; Maiti,
21	2021). Research shows physical punishment to be ineffective in
22	teaching new behaviors, and it is detrimental in teaching problem-
23	solving skills. A review of the literature (Afifi et al., 2022; Duong, et
24	al., 2021; Zolotor et al., 2020) reinforces earlier findings that corporal
25	punishment:
26	Increases antisocial behaviors, such as lying, stealing, bullying
27	and aggression. Heightens the risk of child abuse, as physical
28	discipline may escalate in severity
29	<ul> <li>Erodes trust between students and authority figures, creating</li> </ul>
30	unsafe and ineffective learning environments
31	Hinders cognitive development and academic performance
32	<ul> <li>Contributes to negative mental health outcomes, including</li> </ul>
33	depression, anxiety and long-term emotional dysregulation
34	<ul> <li>Contradicts trauma-informed approaches, which emphasize</li> </ul>
35	safety, empowerment and resilience
36	Survey, empowerment and residence
37	The School Counselor's Role
38	School counselors have a responsibility to protect students and to
39	promote healthy student development using multitiered systems of
40	support that incorporate evidence-based practices, including teaching
41	new behaviors that promote positive social/emotional development
42	(ASCA, 2019). School counselors are in an optimal position to
43	implement proactive strategies that promote positive behaviors and
44	respect diverse cultural values. Recognizing cultural influences on
45	views of corporal punishment, the school counselor serves as a
46	resource for school personnel and families by advocating for effective
47	intervention and alternative discipline strategies. School counselors
48	follow the laws and policies of their jurisdictions while being mindful of
. •	

49	ethical standards. They can encourage public awareness of the
50	consequences of corporal punishment, provide strategies on
51	alternatives to corporal punishment and encourage legislation
52	prohibiting the continued use of corporal punishment.
53	promoting the continued use of corporal pullishment.
53 54	School counselors collaborate with families, educators and
55	community partners to develop healthy relationships between
56	students and adults. While school counselors do not implement
57	disciplinary practices, they are aware that alternatives to
58	corporal punishment can include:
59	Implementing behavioral contracts to support self-
60	regulation and accountability
61	Establishing clear and consistent expectations with logical
62	consequences for misconduct
63	<ul> <li>Facilitating conferences with students, families and staff</li> </ul>
64	to address underlying issues
65	<ul> <li>Encouraging pro-social behaviors through restorative</li> </ul>
66	practices, skills-based learning in mediation and conflict
67	resolution
68	<ul> <li>Promoting emotional regulation and mindfulness</li> </ul>
69	practices to support student well-being
70	<ul> <li>Connecting families with parenting programs that</li> </ul>
71	encourage positive reinforcement and effective discipline
72	
73	Summary
73 74	Research shows corporal punishment increases students' antisocial
73 74 75	Research shows corporal punishment increases students' antisocial behavior, adversely affects cognitive development and erodes the trust
73 74 75 76	Research shows corporal punishment increases students' antisocial behavior, adversely affects cognitive development and erodes the trust between children and adults. It is ineffective in teaching new and
73 74 75 76 77	Research shows corporal punishment increases students' antisocial behavior, adversely affects cognitive development and erodes the trust between children and adults. It is ineffective in teaching new and positive behaviors and is detrimental in teaching appropriate problem-
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73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85	<ul> <li>Research shows corporal punishment increases students' antisocial behavior, adversely affects cognitive development and erodes the trust between children and adults. It is ineffective in teaching new and positive behaviors and is detrimental in teaching appropriate problemsolving methods. School counselors oppose the use of corporal punishment and advocate for alternative methods to be used at home and school.</li> <li><b>References</b></li> <li>Afifi, T.O., Ford, D., Gershoff, E.T., Grogan-Kaylor, A., Lee, S.J., &amp; Merrick, M. (2022). Spanking as an adverse childhood experience: Examining mental health outcomes across lifespan. Journal of Child</li> </ul>
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73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93	<ul> <li>Research shows corporal punishment increases students' antisocial behavior, adversely affects cognitive development and erodes the trust between children and adults. It is ineffective in teaching new and positive behaviors and is detrimental in teaching appropriate problem-solving methods. School counselors oppose the use of corporal punishment and advocate for alternative methods to be used at home and school.</li> <li><b>References</b></li> <li>Afifi, T.O., Ford, D., Gershoff, E.T., Grogan-Kaylor, A., Lee, S.J., &amp; Merrick, M. (2022). Spanking as an adverse childhood experience: Examining mental health outcomes across lifespan. Journal of Child Development, 93(4), 567-582. <u>https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13788</u>, Child Abuse &amp; Neglect, 71, 24-31, <a href="https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2017.01.01">https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2017.01.01</a></li> <li>American School Counselor Association. (2019). Position Statement: The School Counselor and Discipline. <a href="https://www.schoolcounselor.org/Standards-Positions/Position-Statements/ASCA-Position-Statements/The-School-Counselor-">https://www.schoolcounselor.org/Standards-Position-Statements/The-School-Counselor-</a></li> </ul>
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#### The School Counselor and Discipline 1

2 (Adopted 1989; revised 1993, 1999, 2001, 2007, 2013, 2019, 2025)

3

#### 4 **ASCA** Position

- 5 School counselors have specialized training and skills in promoting appropriate
- 6 mindsets and behaviors for student success and preventing disruptive student
- 7 behavior. School counselors are not disciplinarians; they collaborate with school
- 8 personnel in developing individual and schoolwide support systems and programs
- 9 that encourage positive student behavior where effective teaching and learning can
- 10 take place.
- 11

#### 12 **The Rationale**

- 13 Disruptive student behavior is one of the most serious, ongoing problems
- 14 confronting school systems today (National Center for Education Statistics, 2023).
- Schools are adopting proactive approaches by establishing, teaching and reinforcing 15
- a shared set of behavioral expectations for all students and are moving away from 16
- 17 a one-size-fits-all discipline model in favor of a more data-informed, individualized
- 18 and positive framework. Hence, school counselors can promote these best practices
- 19 to foster long-term effective learning environments for each and every student
- 20 (Lloyd et al., 2023).
- 21
- 22 To effectively promote life-readiness and academic success for each and every
- 23 student, school counselors must maintain a relationship with students that fosters
- 24 wellness and success (ASCA, 2022). Therefore, school counselors should not be
- 25 involved in administering discipline. It is especially crucial for schools to move away
- 26 from punitive disciplinary practices, which conflict with current understanding of
- 27 trauma and its impact on student well-being (Brown, 2025). School counselors
- 28 understand the impact of trauma and how it might influence student behavior.
- 29

30 School counselors have the skills to be an impartial and resourceful consultant,

- 31 mediator and student advocate. Furthermore, school counselors understand that
- 32 disparities in disciplinary actions may occur that disproportionately affect students
- 33 of color, male students and students with disabilities (Cruz et al., 2021) and can
- 34 address these disparities through leadership, advocacy and collaboration promoting 35 systemic change.
- 36
- 37 School counselors have training in positive mental health development and
- 38 prevention efforts for school discipline. Therefore, school counselors support
- students by understanding the motive behind their behaviors and are best 39
- 40 positioned to serve as quides for discipline procedures (Fisher & Devlin, 2023).
- 41

#### 42 The School Counselor's Role

- School counselors provide school counseling programs that promote life-readiness 43
- 44 and academic success for each and every student. These programs promote
- 45 positive student mindsets and behaviors, which create a safe, effective learning
- 46 environment for each and every student and focus on positive, healthy behaviors.
- 47
- 48 Within a multitiered system of supports, school counselors:

49	• Promote and lead wellness and prevention efforts to create safe, supportive
50	school environments
51	<ul> <li>Provide instruction on topics contributing to safe classrooms</li> </ul>
52	• Lead individual and small-group counseling that encourages positive behavior
53	choices and responsibility for self and actions
54	<ul> <li>Coordinate and facilitate programs beneficial for positive behaviors</li> </ul>
55	Participate in student return-to-school meetings to create plans for student
56	support after a prolonged absence
57	<ul> <li>Provide teacher support in the use of appropriate classroom management</li> </ul>
58	strategies
59	<ul> <li>Consult with families, teachers, administrators and other education partners</li> </ul>
60	to understand and promote developmentally appropriate student behavior
61	<ul> <li>Collaborate with teachers and other education partners to design and</li> </ul>
62	implement positive behavior and intervention support plans for individual
63	students
64	<ul> <li>Collaborate with school partners to develop, implement and maintain a</li> </ul>
65	developmentally appropriate schoolwide discipline program
66	<ul> <li>Serve as a mediator for student-to-student and student-to-staff conflicts</li> </ul>
67	<ul> <li>Support practices that facilitate student well-being while accounting for</li> </ul>
68	family's cultural perspectives
69	<ul> <li>Provide staff development on trauma-sensitive approaches to address</li> </ul>
70	student behavior, de-escalation practices and emotional regulation of
71	students and adults (Brown, 2025; Fisher & Devlin, 2023)
72	<ul> <li>Remain informed of school, district and state policies related to student</li> </ul>
73	discipline
74	<ul> <li>Advocate for use of best practices for schoolwide discipline, including</li> </ul>
75	ensuring objective and equitable disciplinary practices that prevent implicit
76	biases
77	• Understand system-level change in schools and may help inform schoolwide
78	climate and culture that ultimately shapes the approach to discipline
79	(Goodman-Scott & Ziomek-Daigle, 2021)
80	
81	Summary
82	School counselors have specialized training and skills in promoting appropriate
83	student behavior and preventing disruptive student behavior School counselors
84	maintain positive relationships with students to promote life-readiness and student
85	success. The school counselor is a significant contributor to the development of the
86	prevention and intervention programs through which problem behaviors are
87	managed and positive behaviors are nurtured.
88	
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## **1** The School Counselor and Gifted and Talented Student

### 2 **Programs**

3 (Adopted 1988; revised 1993, 1999, 2001, 2007, 2013, 2019, 2025)

#### 4 5 ASCA Position

- 6 Gifted and talented students have unique and diverse developmental needs.
- 7 Intentional, well-structured gifted and talented education programs offer a range of
- 8 benefits, and school counselors provide additional academic, career and
- 9 social/emotional support to meet those needs within the scope of the school
- 10 counseling program and in collaboration with parents/guardians, school personnel,
- 11 and community partners.
- 12

#### 13 The Rationale

- 14 Students who are gifted and talented often experience unique and diverse
- 15 challenges related to their social/emotional and behavioral development. Therefore,
- 16 it is important for school counselors to be aware of their needs so appropriate
- 17 support can be provided (Minor & Duchac, 2020; Wood & Peterson, 2018).
- 18
- 19 Additionally, significant disparities exist in gifted education programs nationwide.
- 20 Students who are Black, Hispanic, from rural communities or lower socioeconomic
- 21 status are often unidentified and underrepresented within gifted education
- 22 (Crawford et al., 2020; Ford et al., 2020). In addition, students from minoritized
- 23 groups enrolled in gifted education often experience challenges such as isolation,
- 24 microaggressions, stereotype threat and negative peer pressure. Due to the lack of
- diversity in the teaching field, teachers may have difficulty meeting the needs of
- 26 gifted students from multicultural backgrounds (Cohen, 2022).
- 27

28 Intentional, well-structured gifted and talented education programming offers a

29 range of activities supporting gifted students' development. These activities may

- 30 include proactive strategies such as referring students for gifted identification
- 31 (Crawford et al., 2020), guiding them in setting and achieving college and career
- 32 goals, clarifying postsecondary pathways (Edwin & Fisher, 2023) and enhancing
- 33 academic performance.
- 34

### 35 The School Counselor's Role

36 School counselors refer and provide consultation in the identification of gifted and 37 talented students when appropriate through the use of a districtwide, multicriteria

- 38 system (i.e., intellectual ability; academic performance; visual and performing arts
- 39 ability; practical arts ability; creative-thinking ability; leadership potential;
- 40 parent/guardian, teacher, peer nomination; expert assessment). The definition of
- 41 gifted and talented requirements differs by state and district. School counselors are
- 42 involved in the analysis of data obtained from multicriteria sources and are not
- 43 responsible for the coordination, collection, and/or administration of the multi-
- 44 criterion system or any assessment used in the selection process.
- 45
- 46 In addition, school counselors often provide focused social/emotional support
- 47 through individual or small-group counseling (Boulden et al., 2021). They promote

- 48 supportive school climate for gifted and talented students through collaboration
- with teachers (Wood, 2018) and lead efforts among parents/guardians to ensureconsistent support (Johnson et al., 2024).
- 51

52 School counselors advocate for the inclusion of and the participation in activities 53 that effectively address the academic, career and social/emotional needs of gifted 54 and talented students at all academic levels (ASCA, 2022). School counselors assist 55 in promoting understanding and awareness of the unique traits and issues that may 56 both positively and adversely affect gifted and talented students including:

- 57 accelerated learning
- advanced cognitive functioning
- 59 underachievement
  - dropping out of school
  - delinquency
    - difficulty in peer relationships
    - stress management
  - depression
- 65 anxiety
  - twice exceptional
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- 68 School counselors play a pivotal role in advocating for each and every student, 69 serving as crucial change agents who can:
  - support underrepresented gifted learners
  - challenge biased assessments and referral systems
  - connect families with available resources
  - promote more equitable identification practices
- 73 74
- 75 School counselors keep current on the latest gifted and talented programming 76 research and recommendations to employ best practices to meet the needs of identified students and collaborate with other school personnel to maximize 77 78 opportunities for all gifted and talented students. They also keep current on the 79 latest gifted and talented programming research and recommendations to employ best practices to meet the needs of identified students and collaborate with other 80 81 school personnel to maximize opportunities for all gifted and talented students 82 (Hatton, et al., 2024). 83

### 84 Summary

- 85 Students identified as gifted and talented have unique developmental needs and
- special abilities, which are considered when implementing a school counseling
   program. School counselors work in collaboration with other school personnel to
- 88 maximize opportunities for gifted and talented students.
- 89 II

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#### The School Counselor and School-Related Gun Violence 1

#### 2 **Prevention and Response** 3

(Adopted 2018; revised, 2019, 2025)

#### 4 5 **ASCA** Position

6 School counselors design, deliver and assess a comprehensive school counseling 7 program that promotes a safe school environment vital to the success of each and

- 8 every student. School counselors collaborate with school staff and community
- 9 partners to promote school environments free from gun violence and threats of gun
- 10 violence and are responsive to student needs in the event of gun violence or threats
- 11 of gun violence.
- 12

#### 13 **The Rationale**

- 14 Gun violence is the leading cause of premature death among children and teens
- 15 ages 0-19 in the United States (CDC, 2024). In 2023, 9% of high school students
- were threatened or injured with a weapon, such as a gun, knife or club, on school 16
- 17 property during the past year (YRBSS, 2023). From 2013 through 2022, 720
- incidents of gunfire were identified on school grounds. Additionally, the shooters 18
- were either current or former students in approximately 75% of the incidents 19
- 20 (Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, n.d.).
- 21

22 School-related gun violence has detrimental effects on students, school personnel

- 23 and the overall community. Students who experience gun violence face significant
- 24 challenges with academic achievement, physical health and social/emotional
- 25 development. They are at an increased risk for developing depression, anxiety,
- substance abuse and violent behaviors. Furthermore, when students experience 26 27 gun violence in schools, they are left traumatized and feel unsafe and vulnerable.
- 28 These outcomes are detrimental for students, as they must feel safe within their
- 29 school environments to learn and thrive (Paolini, 2020; Everytown, 2019).
- 30

#### 31 The School Counselor's Role

As leaders and advocates of safe-school initiatives, school counselors are uniquely 32 positioned within schools to assist with developing preventive and proactive school 33 policies and procedures (Wachter Morris et al., 2021). They are a vital resource in 34 35 the creation, development and implementation of best-practice strategies designed to improve school climate, fostering connection, support and collaboration for each 36 37 and every student (Ellington et al., 2023).

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39 To promote a safe school environment free of gun violence and threats of gun 40 violence, school counselors:

- 41 • Facilitate classroom instruction, individual and small-group counseling 42 focused on positive social/emotional development (Paolini, 2020).
- 43 Conduct schoolwide programs to promote a safe and inclusive school 44 environment fostering a sense of belonging for each and every student 45 (Paolini, 2020).
- Identify students who are at risk for gun violence (Paolini, 2020; Ellington et 46 al., 2023). 47
- 48 Assist students at risk by collaborating with families and other school 49 personnel.
- 50 • Provide students with a way to make anonymous reports when concerns 51 arise (Paolini, 2020).
  - Implement bullying prevention and intervention efforts (Paolini, 2020).
  - Collaborate with families and other education partners to make referrals as needed (Paolini, 2020; Ellington, et al. (2023).
- 55 Participate as a member of the school's multidisciplinary threat assessment 56 team of school personnel, including faculty, staff, administrators, coaches, 57 and available school resource officers (Stone, 2022; Paolini, 2020).
- Educate the school community and families about gun violence and warning 58 59 signs for students at risk (Paolini, 2020).
- 60 Encourage students, families and school personnel to monitor themselves for warning signs or concerns (Ellington, et.al., 2023).
  - Encourage family involvement to support students at home and at school.
  - Communicate with parents/guardians to determine if students have out-ofschool mental health support, and seek permission to collaborate accordingly (Ellington, et.al., 2023).
  - Advocate for manageable caseloads so each and every student can receive appropriate attention and support.
    - Review the school's crisis plan to understand the school counselor's role
    - Integrate a continuum of mental health supports within a multi-tiered system of support (Ellington, et al. 2023).
      - Use surveys to gather information about safety concerns and feelings about overall safety (Paolini, 2020; Ellington et. al., 2023).
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72 74 School counselors are encouraged to advocate and oppose any efforts to arm

educators, including teachers, school counselors and administrators. Research has 75

- 76 revealed that arming school personnel elicits several concerns, such as the negative impact on school climate, school staff's lack of training and the danger associated 77
- 78 with an accidental discharge of one's weapon (Everytown for Gun Safety, 2024).
- 79

#### 80 Summary

Through the implementation of a school counseling program, school counselors 81

- 82 promote school safety to create an environment where each and every student
- 83 succeeds. School counselors work collaboratively with school and community
- 84 partners in an effort to prevent and respond to both threats of gun violence and
- 85 incidents of gun violence.
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## 1 The School Counselor and Student Mental Health

2 (Adopted 2009, Revised 2015, 2020, 2025)

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#### 4 ASCA Position

5 School counselors recognize and respond to the need for mental health

- 6 services that support the positive mental health development of each and
- 7 every student. They collaborate with education partners, such as families,
- staff, administrators, decision-makers and any other school or community
  organizations/individuals, to raise awareness of mental health resources in
- 9 organizations/individuals, to raise awareness of mental health resources in 10 an effort to ensure students receive comprehensive support both in and out
- an effort to ensure students receive comprehensive support both inof school.
- 11 of sc 12

### 13 The Rationale

14 Students' unmet mental health needs can be a significant obstacle to student

- 15 academic, career and social/emotional development and even compromise
- 16 individual and school safety. Mental health challenges affect one in five children and
- 17 youth, yet they often go unmet, with only 25% receiving the support they need
- 18 (Klassen, Stewart, Lapshina, 2021). School-based mental health services, as
- opposed to community-based supports, are accessed more equitably across racial
- and ethnic groups, highlighting the essential role of school counselors (Larsen et
- al., 2017). School counselors collaborate with education partners to create
- strategies to address social determinants of health, which requires school counselors to be knowledgeable and prepared to address systemic and structural
- 23 injustices influencing students' current and future well-being (Johnson & Brookover,
- 25 2021). In addition, the full impact of COVID-19 may take decades to understand,
- 26 but schools can respond to these societal changes by enhancing support services –
- 27 starting with school counselors (Mitchell, 2021).
- 28

School-based mental health and behavioral services play a crucial preventive role. 29 30 According to the Adolescent Behavior and Experiences Survey, nearly half of all 31 students felt persistently sad or hopeless (CDC, 2022). Research shows that policies 32 and programs targeting childhood mental health can improve long-term well-being and may prevent the development of mental health disorders (Bitsko et al., 2019). 33 34 Without early intervention for students showing warning signs, setbacks in 35 academic, career and social/emotional development may persist into later school years and adulthood. Adolescents are most likely to seek support first from friends 36 37 for mild emotional and behavioral concerns, highlighting the critical need for youth-

- 38 focused stigma reduction and basic skills in recognizing and responding to signs of
- 39 distress (van den Toren et al., 2019).
- 40
- 41 The ASCA Student Standards: Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success (ASCA,
- 42 2025) identify and prioritize the specific knowledge, attitudes and skills students
- 43 demonstrate as a result of a school counseling program. School counselors use the
- 44 standards to assess student growth and development, guide the development of
- 45 strategies and activities and create a program that helps students achieve their
- 46 highest potential. These strategies include providing educational opportunities to

- 47 enhance mental health awareness, short-term counseling interventions to promote
- 48 wellness and efforts to remove barriers to success.
- 49

#### The School Counselor's Role 50

- School counselors design and implement school counseling programs that promote 51
- 52 academic, career and social/emotional success for each and every student. School
- counselors do not diagnose but recognize how a student's diagnosis and 53
- 54 environment can potentially affect the student's access, participation and ability to
- 55 achieve academic, postsecondary and social/emotional success (ASCA, 2022).
- 56
- 57 School counselors acknowledge they may be the only counseling professional
- available to students and their families, particularly in rural areas. Even though 58
- 59 some school counselors may have additional licensure to provide long-term
- counseling or therapy, such as the licensed professional counselor, it is 60
- inappropriate for the school counselor to provide those services, including providing 61
- individual, IEP-mandated counseling. School counselors provide culturally 62
- responsive counseling to students in a brief context and support students and 63
- families/guardians in obtaining outside services if students need long-term clinical/ 64 65 mental health counseling (ASCA, 2022).
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- 67 Therefore, school counselors:
- 68 69 Deliver instruction based on the ASCA Student Standards that enhances • 70 awareness of mental health, promotes positive mental health and well-being, 71 and seeks to remove the stigma associated with mental health issues
  - Provide students with appraisal & advisement to address academic, career and social/emotional needs
  - Recognize mental health warning signs, including: •
    - changes in school performance and attendance 0
    - mood changes, especially if coupled with existing mental health 0 concerns
      - school avoidance
      - psychosomatic symptoms 0
      - increased disciplinary problems at school 0
    - problems at home or with the family situation (e.g., stress, trauma, 0 divorce, substance abuse, exposure to poverty conditions, domestic violence)
- communication from teachers and other educational and community 84 0 85 partners with behavioral and/or academic concerns 86
  - substance use 0
  - Provide short-term counseling and crisis intervention
- Provide referrals to school and community resources that treat mental health 88 89 issues (e.g., anxiety, suicidal ideation and depression) with the intent of removing barriers to learning and helping the student return to the classroom 90
- 91 Provide resources and information to education partners about the mental health concerns of students, including recognition of the role environmental 92 factors have in causing or exacerbating mental health issues 93

- 94 Collaborate and coordinate with education partners and service providers 95 (with a signed release) to meet the needs of the whole child and to ensure 96 students and their families have access to mental health services 97 Advocate for students' access to and families' awareness of Section 504 plans or IEP services supporting mental health needs 98 99 recognize and address barriers to accessing mental health services and the associated stigma, including cultural beliefs and language barriers 100 101 • Adhere to appropriate and evolving guidelines regarding confidentiality, consultation and the distinction between public and private information. 102 103 Help identify and address student mental health issues while working within 104 the: ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors 105 106 ASCA Professional Standards & Competencies for School Counselors 107 • National, state and local laws and policies, which guide school 108 counselors' informed decision-making and standardizes professional practice to protect both the student and school counselor 109 110 Seek to continually update their professional knowledge regarding student • 111 social/emotional needs, including best practices in universal screening for 112 mental health risk 113 Advocate for ethical use of valid and reliable universal screening instruments 114 with concerns for cultural sensitivity and bias if state legislation or school 115 board policy requires universal screening programs for mental health risk 116 factors (ASCA, 2022) 117
- 118 School counselors design and implement school counseling programs that promote 119 academic, career and social/emotional success for each and every student rather 120 than providing long-term, therapeutic counseling
- than providing long-term, therapeutic counseling.

#### 122 Summary

- Students' unmet mental health needs pose barriers to learning and development.
  School counselors provide short-term counseling and referral services to students
  and families as part of their comprehensive school counseling program. As a
- 126 component of this program, school counselors collaborate with education partners127 to meet the needs of the whole child.
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## **1** The School Counselor and Safe Schools and Crisis

### 2 **Response**

3 (Adopted 2000; revised 2007, 2013, 2019, 2025)

#### 4 5 **ASCA Position**

6 School counselors lead safe school initiatives to create a positive school climate,

- 7 working collaboratively to promote life-readiness and academic success for each
- 8 and every student. Schoolwide safety programming benefits the overall school
- 9 community by promoting positive mental health development, strong relationships
- 10 and effective crisis prevention, intervention and response.
- 11

#### 12 The Rationale

- 13 Crises can affect individual students, schools and the overall community. Crises are
- 14 traumatic for students and can have an adverse impact on their academic and
- 15 social/emotional development (McDonald & Fenderson, 2024). All students need a
- 16 physically and emotionally safe environment for learning, and school counselors are
- 17 uniquely positioned to lead and collaborate on safe school initiatives by providing
- 18 effective crisis prevention, intervention and response (Charlton et al., 2021).
- 19 Therefore, it is necessary for school counselors to understand trauma and
- 20 implement trauma-informed practices to effectively meet students' needs.
- 21

22 A crisis management plan is the most effective way to prepare for a crisis, as it

- 23 helps to ensure school staff understand their roles and how they are to respond
- 24 (McDonald & Fenderson, 2024). School counselors understand that plan and are
- 25 equipped to respond to crises by providing counseling to students; consulting and
- 26 collaborating with families, teachers, administrators and other education partners;
- 27 disseminating resources; and making referrals as needed (McGough & Mylroie,
- 28 2024; Ellington et al., 2023).
- 29

Furthermore, school connectedness has been identified as a protective factor for promoting safety for students both in school and outside of school (Goetschius, et al., 2021). When students can identify at least one trusted adult within school, they feel better connected to the school environment and may feel comfortable sharing any concerns related to safety. Additionally, engaging with students and being accessible and available to them throughout the school day increases the likelihood that safety concerns can be identified and addressed accordingly (Ellington, et al., 2022). School are used as a set of the set of th

- 2023). School counselors are well-equipped to sustain healthy relationships withstudents that foster wellness and student success.
- 39

### 40 The School Counselor's Role

41 Through the implementation of a school counseling program, school counselors

- 42 promote school safety, avail themselves for disclosure of threats, redirect students
- 43 engaging in unhealthy or unsafe behaviors, promote positive mental health
- 44 development and make mental health referrals as needed. School counselors are
- 45 familiar with the school community and knowledgeable about the roles of
- 46 community mental health providers, which helps them connect students to proper
- 47 support (Ellington, et al., 2023).

- 48
- To support essential crisis prevention and response preparedness practices, school
   counselors:

•	<ul> <li>Provide classroom instruction and individual and small-group counseling</li> <li>promoting positive mental health development and school safety.</li> </ul>
52	promoting positive mental health development and school safety
	• Are accessible and available to students in an effort to foster engagement
54	and identify concerns related to safety
	<ul> <li>Provide interventions for students at risk of dropping out or harming self or otherway</li> </ul>
56	others
	<ul> <li>Foster safe and connected school environments by building rapport with</li> </ul>
58	students
	<ul> <li>Assess school climate to determine perceptions and beliefs about crisis</li> </ul>
60	management and school safety
	Participate in district and school response team planning and practices and
62	help ensure resources are available for students and staff to
63	process/understand crisis response drills
÷ ·	<ul> <li>Advocate for student safety by recommending that school personnel put</li> </ul>
65	consistent procedures, communication and policies in place
66	<ul> <li>Collaborate with school administration to report and address any concerns</li> </ul>
67	<ul> <li>Offer conflict resolution programs, anti-bullying programs and peer-</li> </ul>
68	mediation supports
69	<ul> <li>Support student-initiated programs such as Students Against Violence</li> </ul>
70	Everywhere
71	<ul> <li>Implement family, faculty and staff education programs</li> </ul>
72	<ul> <li>Facilitate open communication between students and caring adults</li> </ul>
73	<ul> <li>Defuse critical incidents and provide related stress debriefing</li> </ul>
74	<ul> <li>Identify and support students with mental health concerns</li> </ul>
75	<ul> <li>Promote trauma-informed practices</li> </ul>
76	<ul> <li>Advocate for restorative justice programs</li> </ul>
77	• Partner with community resources, particularly those that can provide

- Partner with community resources, particularly those that can provide information, support and services during and after community crises
- Implement safe reporting procedures that protect confidentiality, privacy and anonymity

(Ellington, et al., 2023; Garran & Rasmussen, 2014; Rajan & Branas, 2018; Swartz et al., 2016)

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School counselors engage in roles congruent with their training. When school counselors use risk assessment or universal screeners, they follow ethical

- counselors use risk assessment or universal screeners, they follow ethical
   guidelines and adhere to any district, local, state and federal law. Additionally,
- school counselors avoid engaging in roles during drills that are incompatible with
- 88 the school counseling role, such as acting as the school shooter/invader and trying
- 89 to get into locked rooms to test that teachers and students are following protocol.
- 90

### 91 Summary

92 School counselors are leaders in safe school initiatives that promote a positive

- 93 school climate. They actively engage in fostering safety for each and every student
- 94 and responding to critical response situations in schools. School counselors are a
- 95 vital resource in preventing, intervening and responding to crises.

96

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## The School Counselor and Suicide Risk Assessment

(Adopted 2020, Revised 2025)

#### 3 **ASCA** Position 4

5 When a student is identified as at risk for suicide, school counselors have both an ethical and legal

6 responsibility to take appropriate action. School counselors understand that suicide risk is difficult to

quantify, and the use of suicide risk assessments is only one part of the evaluation process. Thus, risk 7

8 assessments should be used to gather information to assist parents/guardians in taking action rather than

determining a student's level of risk. 9 10

#### **The Rationale** 11

12 Suicide is the second-leading cause of death for young people ages 10 to 24. Between 2000–2021, suicide 13 rates for this age group increased 52.2% (Garnett & Curtis, 2023). Deaths are only a portion of the burden 14 of suicidal behavior; suicide attempts and suicidal thoughts among youths exceed deaths among this group.

15 In 2021, 9% of students in high school reported attempting suicide over the previous 12-month period

(Jones, et. al., 2022). School counselors are in an optimal position to support students who are at risk for 16

17 suicide. However, human behavior is often spontaneous and unpredictable, and research shows that risk 18 assessments are not always reliable when determining one's level of risk. Additionally, the nature of the

19 school environment makes it extremely difficult to conduct extensive assessments and students' responses 20 may yield inaccurate information (ASCA, 2023).

21

22 The ASCA Information Gathering Tool is a valuable resource designed to help school counselors

23 systematically collect essential information when assessing suicide ideation, ensuring informed and effective

24 support for students in crisis. School counselors recognize that these conversations are not clinical

25 interviews and always consult with knowledgeable colleagues when determining appropriate next steps. As

26 part of a comprehensive approach to student safety, school counselors understand the importance of

27 directly asking students about suicidal thoughts, access to means and safety planning. Collaboration with

28 the student's support network, including caregivers and school-based mental health professionals, is

29 essential in developing a plan prioritizing student safety and well-being. (ASCA, 2023). 30

#### 31 **The School Counselor's Role**

32 School counselors recognize that the level of suicide risk is difficult to quantify (ASCA, 2022; Stone, 2022).

33 If school counselors are required to use assessments, screenings, or any type of instrument to determine 34 suicide risk, they should advocate that they are never required to negate any level of risk of harm (Stone, 2022). In addition, school counselors should communicate concerns accurately and ensure appropriate 35

- 36 action is taken.
- 37

School counselors support the development of district policy based on best practices in suicide prevention 38 39 (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, American School Counselor Association, National Association 40 of School Psychologists, & The Trevor Project, 2019). When district protocols are in place, school counselors 41 must follow them while advocating for change when the protocols do not comply with ethical standards. 42 When the school district does not have a written suicide-risk protocol for school personnel, school counselors 43 advocate for the team-based creation of suicide-risk policies and procedures that support students' mental 44 health needs and align with team members' competencies. It is also imperative that suicide risk assessments are culturally sensitive to meet the needs of a diverse student population (Gallo & Wachter 45

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Morris, 2022).

48 If state legislation or school board policy requires a schoolwide screening program, school counselors 49 advocate for the ethical use of valid and reliable instruments with concerns for cultural sensitivity and bias 50 (ASCA, 2022). School counselors maintain that notifying parents/guardians of a student's suicidal ideation is 51 non-negotiable, even if the student is 18 years of age or older. The exception is when the parent/guardian's 52 abuse or neglect is the expressed reason for the student's suicidal ideation. In these cases, the school 53 counselor must contact child protective services.

- 54 When a student is suicidal and in crisis in school, the school counselor's primary role is to keep the student 55 56 safe until the student can be transferred to the parents/guardians. Before releasing the student to the 57 parents/guardians, school counselors:
  - Ensure the conversation is in the parents/guardians' primary language if possible, and do not use the student as a translator (ASCA Information-Gathering Tool, 2023)
- 59 60 Provide clear information to the parents/guardians about what is known regarding the student's suicidal ideation
  - Do not negate the risk of harm based on a student's self-report

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- 62
- Avoid using words or phrases such as "this is the cause of impulse control" or "low risk" in an effort to 63 ٠ 64
  - soften the message to the parents/guardians
- Reflect on the cultural background of students and their parents/guardians 65
- Strongly encourage parents/guardians to seek a medical or mental health provider for a 66 comprehensive assessment of their child 67
- 68 Help the family find resources if needed or requested; mobile crisis outreach programs can be an ٠ easily accessible resource. School counselors should be able to provide a list of outside agencies and 69 70 resources in their community to students and parents/quardians (A.6.b.)
  - Clearly inform parents/guardians about the limitations of the school counselor's role in regard to clinical assessments. (Stone, 2022)
  - Create a plan to follow up with the student and family
- 75 As parents/guardians are the people most invested long-term in a child's life, they must be able to exercise 76 custody and control over their child's well-being. However, in the event the parents/guardians are neglecting 77 the child's mental health needs, school counselors make a report to the proper authorities. It is helpful for

78 school counselors to document these interactions with the parents/guardians and the student to ensure all

79 parties understand the plan that has been established (Stone, 2022).

80

#### 81 Summary

School counselors have an ethical and legal obligation to prioritize student safety, particularly in suicide 82 prevention. They play a critical role in identifying students who may be at risk, notifying parents/guardians 83 84 and collaborating with school staff and mental health professionals to ensure appropriate intervention. While 85 suicide risk assessments serve as information-gathering tools, they are not predictive instruments, and 86 school counselors advocate for ethical practices in their use. School counselors recognize the level of suicide 87 risk (e.g., low, medium, high) is difficult to accurately quantify. If required to use a risk assessment, it 88 must be completed with the understanding that it is an information-gathering tool and just one part of the 89 risk assessment process. 90

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# The School Counselor and Use of Administrative Support Staff in School Counseling Programs

3 (Adopted 1974; reviewed and reaffirmed 1980; revised 1986, 1993, 1999, 2001,
4 2008, 2013, 2019, 2025)

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#### 6 ASCA Position

- 7 School counselors understand the value added to a school counseling program
- 8 through the effective use of administrative support staff. Partnerships with these
- 9 staff members allow school counselors to use their time and professional expertise
- 10 more effectively to meet student needs and ensure each and every student receive
- 11 access to a comprehensive school counseling program.
- 12

#### 13 The Rationale

- 14 To achieve maximum effectiveness in a school counseling program, the ASCA
- 15 National Model<sup>®</sup> recommends a student-to-school counselor ratio of 250:1 and that
- 16 80% or more of a school counselor's time be spent providing direct and indirect
- 17 services to students (ASCA, 2025). Recent studies have demonstrated significant
- 18 correlations between student achievement and student-to-school-counselor ratios
- 19 (e.g., Gewertz, 2018). However, the national average ratio is 376:1 for the 2023–
- 20 2024 school year (U.S. Department of Education [USDE], 2024).
- 21

22 Research consistently shows that larger caseloads make it difficult for school

- 23 counselors to fulfill their responsibilities (Hilts, 2023). The ASCA National Model<sup>®</sup>
- offers a framework for school counseling programs where school counselors are
- actively involved in providing direct services to students and in team efforts for indirect convices such as consultation and collaboration (ASCA 2025). High
- indirect services such as consultation and collaboration (ASCA, 2025). High
   student-to-school-counselor ratios create considerable challenges for school
- 27 student-to-school-counselor ratios create considerable challenges for school 28 counselors, limiting their ability to effectively develop and implement a school
- 29 counseling program that promotes the best possible outcomes for each and every
- 30 student.
- 31
- 32 School counselors need additional support to build strong partnerships and
- 33 implement comprehensive school counseling programs effectively (Mason, 2023).
- 34 When the school counselor works effectively with administrative support staff, the 35 school counselor's efficacy is enhanced (Atici, 2014).
- 36

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#### 37 The Role of Administrative Support Staff in School Counseling Programs

- Administrative support staff may include but are not limited to administrative assistants, secretaries, receptionists, registrars and other similar professional
- 40 positions. These staff provide opportunity for school counselor to concentrate on
- 41 delivering the school counseling program by assisting in a variety of areas, such as:
- welcoming and managing the flow of students and families to the school counseling office
  answering general questions that do not require a school counselor's
  - answering general questions that do not require a school counselor's expertise
- 46 handling phone calls
- responding to general school-counseling-program-related email

- 48 maintaining student records
- 49 organizing files
  - data entry
    - new student registration
- 51 52

50

53 Their assistance helps school counselors have more time to implement best

54 practices, including the design, delivery and assessment of a comprehensive school 55 counseling program; well-defined school counseling roles and responsibilities; clear

- 55 counseling program; well-defined school counseling roles and responsibilities; clear 56 communication; established boundaries; and ethical decision-making to promote
- 57 student success.
- 58

59 School counseling administrative support staff positions require sensitivity to

- 60 students' concerns, knowledge of the school counseling program and understanding
- 61 of the school counselor's role. These positions also require maintaining the highest
- 62 level of confidentiality of student records and personal information. Clerical support
- 63 staff defer to the school counselor for all services and interventions that are outside
- 64 the support staff role and more appropriately handled by the school counselor.
- 65

#### 66 The School Counselor's Role

- School counselors are encouraged to collaborate with administrative support staff to
  outline processes and activities that best support the school counseling program.
  School counselors create channels for clear communication, foster a positive work
  environment and show respect and appreciation to support staff.
- 71

72 School counselors may assist in selecting initial and ongoing professional

- development for school counseling administrative support staff to ensure they
   understand the procedures and responsibilities of the office (Atici, 2014). This
- 75 professional development may include topics such as:
  - human relations
    - cultural competence and humility
    - community resources
    - the importance of maintaining confidentiality regarding student issues and student records
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82 Supervision of support staff is the responsibility of administrators. School

- counselors consult with administrators related to the responsibilities of the positionand individual performance.
- 85

#### 86 Summary

- 87 School counselors understand the value administrative support staff add to a school
- 88 counseling program. Incorporating administrative support staff within the school
- counseling program allows school counselors to concentrate on specialized tasks
   that align with their expertise and training. School counselors work with
- 91 administrative support staff to outline processes and activities that fit within their
- 92 professional role and best support the school counseling program.
- 93
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## **1** The School Counselor's Role in Threat Assessment

2 (Proposed, 2025)

3

## 4 ASCA Position

5 School counselors are essential members of the multidisciplinary threat

- 6 assessment team, contributing expertise on student development and
- 7 supporting intervention strategies. School counselors' participation on the
- 8 team brings focus to prevention efforts that promote students' well-being

9 and responsive efforts to develop support plans for students in need of

- 10 intervention. It is not appropriate for school counselors to lead threat
- 11 investigations.

## 13 The Rationale

- 14 Incidents that threaten student and staff safety include bullying,
- 15 harassment, violence, weapons or gang behavior (Ercek & Birel, 2021). As
- school violence concerns grow, the number of students who present as a
- 17 potential threat to others has increased. This increase makes defining the
- role and scope of the school counselor's involvement in threat assessments
- 19 necessary.
- 20

21 A threat assessment aims to interrupt people on a pathway to commit

- <sup>22</sup> "predatory or instrumental violence, the type of behavior associated with
- 23 targeted attacks" (Hoffman & Meloy, 2021). Hence, a threat assessment
- team's main function is to ensure safety and to develop a support plan for
- students in need of intervention. School counselors play a collaborative role
- in threat assessment, contributing their expertise to inform interventions
- 27 and support plans to gather information.
- 28
- 29 To protect the student-to-school-counselor relationship, it is not appropriate
- 30 for school counselors to conduct assessments or make final decisions.
- 31 Students need trusted adults they can turn to when sharing concerns about
- 32 potential threats, and school counselors are well-positioned to serve in this
- 33 role. For students to feel comfortable speaking up, they must have a
- 34 reporting process that ensures their safety, makes them feel valued and
- 35 provides appropriate protection. When trusted adults build relationships with
- 36 students and create supportive school environments, students are
- encouraged to share critical information while feeling secure in doing so (Ellington, et al., 2023).
- 38 39
- 40 Although confidentiality is a foundational component of the student-to-
- 41 school-counselor relationship, it is important for students to understand that
- 42 this confidentiality has limits, particularly when there is a risk of harm to self
- 43 or others. School counselors have an ethical and legal duty to warn when
- 44 credible threats are disclosed. By clearly communicating these boundaries in

advance and consistently applying them, school counselors can maintain
trust while fulfilling their obligation to protect the well-being of each and
every student (ASCA, 2022).

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#### 50 The School Counselor's Role

School counselors have an ethical obligation to promote safe school environments (ASCA, 2022). Thus, as members of a multidisciplinary team, school counselors are in an optimal position to build positive relationships with students, foster connectedness within schools, and identify and support students who are a risk to themselves or others (Ellington et al., 2023). In relation to threat assessments, school counselors:

- Participate in multidisciplinary threat assessment teams to provide
   input on student behavior, development and needs
  - Advocate for a threat assessment team if one is not currently in place
- Gather information about concerns for suicide along with threat
   assessment to acquire a comprehensive understanding of students'
   needs (Ellington, et al., 2023)
- Facilitate periodic check-ins to provide additional support with students
   who are potentially at risk (Ellington, et al., 2023)
  - Advocate for interventions that support students' social/emotional well-being, mental health, academic and career development.
- Focus on students' emotional needs rather than on punishment or discipline
  - Recognize mental health warning signs
- Provide short-term counseling to support students involved in or
   affected by potential threats, helping them process emotions, manage
   stress and access further support when needed
- Educate the school community on preventive measures, such as
   fostering a safe school climate and recognizing early warning signs of
   distress
  - Avoid responsibilities conflicting with the school counselor's ethical role, such as interrogating students, conducting threat investigations or determining punitive outcomes
- Fulfill the ethical responsibility to always act in students' best interest,
   to promote their academic success, career development and
   social/emotional well-being.
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### 83 Summary

- 84 School counselors understand the positive effects of providing a safe and
- caring school environment and play a vital role in creating a supportive
- atmosphere. As a member of a multidisciplinary team, school counselors
- collaborate with administrators and others to provide support with threat

88 assessments. 89 References 90 American School Counselor Association (2022). ASCA Ethical Standards for 91 School Counselors. Alexandria, VA: Author. 92 93 Ellington, B., Dunbar, A., & Wachter-Morris, C. (2023). Elevating and 94 Expanding School Counselors' Roles and Voices in the Prevention of School 95 96 Violence. Professional School Counseling, 27(1), 2156759X2211500. 97 Ercek, M. K., & Birel, F. K. (2021). Developing the school safety perception 98 scale: The validity and reliability of study. *Dinamika Ilmu*, 21(1), 37-53. doi: 99 10.21093/di.v21i1.2787 100 101 Hoffman, J., & Meloy, J. R. (Eds.). (2021). International Handbook of Threat 102 Assessment (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press, USA. 103 https://doi.org/10.1093/med-psych/9780190940164.001.0001 104 105 Resources 106 American School Counselor Association (2019). The School Counselor and 107 Prevention of School-Related Gun Violence. Virginia: Alexandria. 108 109 110 American School Counselor Association (2019). The School Counselor Safe Schools and Crisis Response Virginia: Alexandria. 111 112 Cornell, D., & Sheras, P. (2006). Guidelines for Responding to Student 113 Threats of Violence. 114 115 National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). (2021). Best Practices 116 in Threat Assessment. 117 118 National Association of Social Workers (NASW). (2020). Standards for 119 School Social Work Services. 120 121 122 National Association of School Nurses (NASN). (2021). The Role of the School Nurse in Behavioral and Mental Health. 123 124 U.S. Secret Service & U.S. Department of Education. (2018). Enhancing 125 School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An Operational Guide for 126 Preventing Targeted School Violence. 127 128 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). 129 (2019). The Role of Schools in Promoting Mental Health and Preventing 130 Suicide. 131

#### 1 The School Counselor and Working with Students Who Are 2 Undocumented

- 3 (Adopted 2017; revised 2019, 2025)
- 4

#### 5 ASCA Position

School counselors promote each and every student's academic, career and
social/emotional development regardless of immigration status. They advocate for
students' right to access free and appropriate public education and advocate with
and on behalf of students to ensure safety. School counselors actively work to

- 10 address conditions that do not reflect the school counseling professional ethics.
- 11 They maintain culturally sustaining practices to help create a safe and inclusive

12 school environment to promote success for each and every student.

13

#### 14 The Rationale

- 15 The 1982 Plyler v. Doe Supreme Court ruling (U.S. Supreme Court, 1982)
- 16 constitutionally protects access to pre-K–12 public education for students who are
- 17 undocumented. However, after high school, students who are undocumented
- 18 confront the challenge of ineligibility for federal financial assistance and disparate
- 19 state-level tuition policies. Therein, school counselors serve as frontline advocates
- 20 for students who are undocumented, assist in navigating formidable obstacles and
- support access to postsecondary education (Diaz-Strong, 2025). In 2025, 23 states
- 22 extended in-state tuition rates to qualifying students who are undocumented, while
- 23 eight states provide need-based financial assistance to such individuals
- 24 (Immigrants Rising, 2025). Given that school counselors address academic, career
- and social/emotional development, they have an ethical responsibility to stay
   informed of legislation and options that facilitate student access to postsecondary
- 26 Informed of legislation and options that facilitate student access to postsecondary
   27 education and career opportunities.
- 28
- 29 In addition to restricted access to financial aid for higher education, recent
- 30 research underscores the unique stressors students who are undocumented face,
- 31 including fear of deportation, family separation and concerns about their future
- 32 (Muñoz et al., 2023; Salazar et al., 2024; U.S. Department of Education [USDE],
- 33 2015). Such challenges can significantly impede academic, career and
- 34 social/emotional development, resulting in issues of depression, anxiety, fear,
- 35 structural racism, absenteeism and acculturation (Abrego & Gonzales, 2010; Ee &
- 36 Gándara, 2020; Torres-Olave et al., 2021). Consequently, school counselors are 37 ethically obligated to offer services that meet the unique needs of students who
- 37 ethically obligated to oner services that meet the unique needs of students who 38 are undocumented which may include research-based practices such as culturally
- 39 sustaining practices, strengths-based approaches and school-based strategies
- 40 within a multitiered system of supports (Edirmanasinghe et al., 2022; Goodman-
- 41 Scott et al., 2022; Ponterotto et al., 2008). These practices are vital tools for
- 42 systemic change.
- 43

#### 44 The School Counselor's Role

- 45 School counselors focus their skills, time and energy on delivering direct and
- 46 indirect services that have a positive impact on each and every student, including
- 47 students experiencing issues surrounding undocumented status regardless of

48 national origin, race, color, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation,

49 socioeconomic status or other demographic factors (ASCA, 2025). As integral

50 members of the educational team, school counselors use leadership, advocacy and

51 collaboration to promote equitable opportunities and systemic change that foster an 52 inclusive school climate.

53

Recognizing that some students face unique legal, social and psychological challenges, school counselors continually refine their knowledge of the legal landscape as well as evidence-based practices addressing family separation, detention, deportation and other immigration-related issues. Through their comprehensive school counseling programs, school counselors ensure each and every student receives the academic, career and social/emotional supports necessary to thrive in school and beyond.

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To promote success for each and every student regardless of immigration status,school counselors:

- Support students who are undocumented by helping them obtain an education that meets their needs and prepares them for postsecondary opportunities, including informing students and families about educational opportunities and rights (e.g., referrals for multilingual language services, special education services and medical treatment).
- Assist students with seeking postsecondary goals, navigating college access and finding funding for their goals, keeping abreast of current policies and practices of postsecondary institutions regarding access for students who are undocumented.
  - Provide social/emotional support for students affected by immigration stressors, including support if the student has been discriminated against or experiences bullying or harassment.
  - Advocate for the rights of each and every student, including students who are undocumented, by ensuring students are not barred from education based on international birth certificates, lack of a Social Security number or a home language other than English.
- Advocate for schools to be a safe haven for students who are undocumented and follow federal, state and local laws; district policy; and ethical practice related to divulging confidential information to any individuals and outside agencies without proper legal documentation.
  - Advocate against the practice of separating children from their families at U.S. borders (ASCA, 2018).
- Partner with available community resources to support referrals in assisting
   families with challenges surrounding their immigration status, including
   recovery associated with keeping families intact when possible and trauma
   resulting from separation.
- Collaborate with school and district personnel and education partners to
   eliminate discriminatory language and actions toward students who are
   undocumented and their families.
- Inform school and district personnel, students, families and the community
   about policies, procedures and rights of students who are undocumented and
   their families.

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#### 97 Summary

- 98 School counselors understand that students who are undocumented need support 99 for legal, financial and social stressors as well as assistance with postsecondary 100 goals. School counselors have a responsibility to provide services to each and 101 every student regardless of their immigration status, to advocate for their access 102 to services and to prevent discrimination against students by removing barriers 103 impeding student development and achievement. 104 105 References Abrego, L. J., & Gonzales, R. G. (2010). Blocked Paths, Uncertain Futures: The 106 107 Postsecondary Education and Labor Market Prospects of Undocumented Latino 108 Youth. Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk (JESPAR), 15(1-2), Article 109 1-2. https://doi.org/10.1080/10824661003635168 110 111 American School Counselor Association. (2018). ASCA issues a statement 112 condemning the separation of children and families at U.S. borders. Alexandria, VA: 113 Author. Retrieved from https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Press%20releases/ ASCA-114 115 statement-against-border-separation.pdf 116 117 ASCA. (2025). ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs 118 (5th ed.). 119 ASCA. (2022). Ethical Standards for School Counselors. American School Counselor 120 Association, 2022. https://www.schoolcounselor.org/Standards-Ethical-Standards 121 122 Diaz-Strong, D. X. (2025). Nested contexts of support: How the local context 123 124 shapes school agents' support of undocumented students. Children and Youth 125 Services Review, 170, 108130. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2025.108130 126 Edirmanasinghe, N. A., Attia, M., Brant-Rajahn, S., & Staton, A. R. (2022). Working 127 128 with Immigrant Children in Schools: Applying a Multi-Tiered Approach. Journal of 129 Child and Adolescent Counseling, 8(2), 59–71. 130 https://doi.org/10.1080/23727810.2022.2074771 131 Ee, J., & Gándara, P. (2020). Under Siege: The Disturbing Impact of Immigration 132 Enforcement on the Nation's Schools. Immigration Initiative at Harvard Issue Brief 133 Series. 134 135 Goodman-Scott, E. C., Edirmanasinghe, N. A., Moe, J., & Boulden, R. (2022). Assessing the Influence of Multitiered Systems of Support Training on School 136 137 Counselors' Perceptions of School Counseling Activities: Results of a National Study. 138 Professional School Counseling, 26(1), 2156759X221138232. 139 https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X221138232 140 141 Immigrants Rising. (2025). Overview of Undocumented Students. Immigrants 142 Rising. https://immigrantsrising.org/wp-content/uploads/Immigrants-
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- 168 <u>undocumented-youth.pdf</u>
- 169170 U.S. Supreme Court. (1982). U.S. Reports: Plyler v. Doe, 457 U.S. 202. U.S.
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#### 173 ASCA Resources

- 174 https://www.schoolcounselor.org/Publications-Research/Publications/Free-ASCA-
- 175 Resources/Support-Immigrant-Students



## **H. Bylaws Revisions**

Bylaws committee chair Stephen Sharp will present the proposed revisions of the ASCA Bylaws. A majority vote of the Delegates is required for revision. The ASCA Bylaws were last revised in 2024.

#### **Action Requested**

Delegates are asked to consider the revisions proposed by the ASCA Bylaw Review Committee.



#### ARTICLE I: NAME AND MISSION

ARTICLE I, SECTION 1. The name of the Association shall be the American School Counselor Association (ASCA).

ARTICLE I, SECTION 2. ASCA expands the image and influence of school counselors. ASCA empowers school counselors with the knowledge, skills, linkages, and resources to promote equity, access to a high-quality education and overall success for every student in the school.

The mission of ASCA shall be to represent school counselors and to promote professionalism and ethical practices.

The mission of ASCA is to represent the school counseling profession and equip school counselors to create equitable opportunities and inclusive environments that enable all students to succeed.

#### **ARTICLE V: ASCA OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

ARTICLE V, SECTION 1. Officers. The officers of ASCA shall be the Chief Governance Officer (Chair of the Board), Assistant Chief Governance Officer (Assistant Chair of the Board), and the Corporate Treasurer.

ARTICLE V, SECTION 2. Powers and Functions.

- V-2a. The Board of Directors shall conduct the governance of ASCA but shall not take any action contrary to Bylaws adopted at the ASCA business meeting.
- V-2b. The Board of Directors shall create policies and procedures to carry out the mission of ASCA.

V-2c. The Board of Directors shall be voting members consisting of nine at-large Directors.

V-2d. The selection of the Board of Directors and the elected leaders of the Board (CGO & ACGO) will be in accordance with the policy and procedures that address Governance.



## 2025 ASCA BUSINESS MEETING

#### **ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES**

ARTICLE VII, SECTION 1. Committees. ASCA's committees shall be appointed to accomplish specific tasks within specific timeframes. If membership on a committee includes individuals who are not members of the Board of Directors, that committee shall function only as an advisory committee and shall not conduct any function reserved for the Board.

Article VII, SECTION 1: ASCA's Board of Directors will utilize and maintain committees for efficiency and the effective leadership of the organization. ASCA's committees shall be appointed to accomplish specific tasks within specific timeframes. If membership on a committee includes individuals who are not members of the Board of Directors, that committee shall function only as an advisory committee and shall not conduct any function reserved for the Board.

ARTICLE VII, SECTION 2. Standing Committees. The standing committees shall be the ASCA Bylaw Review Committee, the Nominations and Elections Committee, and the Membership Linkage Committee.

- VII-2a. ASCA Bylaws Review. The ASCA Bylaws Review Committee annually reviews the ASCA Bylaws and makes recommendations to the Board of Directors. The ASCA Bylaws Review Committee also reviews all proposed amendments to the ASCA Bylaws and makes recommendations to the Board of Directors. The ASCA Bylaws Review Committee is appointed annually by the Board of Directors.
- VII-2b. Nominations and Elections. The Nominations and Elections Committee develops policies and procedures for approval by the Board of Directors and conducts elections in accordance with ASCA policies and procedures that address Nominations and Elections. The Nominations and Elections Committee is appointed annually by the Board of Directors.
- VII-2c. Membership Linkage. The Membership Linkage Committee assists the board in its duty to proactively link with the ownership/members. To ensure transparency and accountability to ASCA members, the board will seek input and share results with the membership. The committee recommends the parliamentarian for the ASCA business meeting and coordinates the membership linkage activities. The Membership Linkage Committee is appointed annually by the Board of Directors.



## I. New Business

Delegates will have an opportunity to bring forward any new business.

## **Action Requested**

Delegates are asked to bring forward any new business for the Business Meeting.



# J. Recognitions and Awards

The ASCA Board of Directors will recognize exemplary state school counselor associations and individuals who have contributed to ASCA's success.