



# ASCA Student Standards: Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success

K-12 College-, Career- and Life-Readiness Standards for Every Student

The ASCA Student Standards: Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success describe the knowledge, attitudes and skills students need to achieve academic success, college and career readiness and social/emotional development. The standards are based on a survey of research and best practices in student achievement from a wide array of educational standards and efforts.

## **ASCA Student Standards: Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success K-12 College-, Career- and Life-Readiness Standards for Every Student**

*Each of the following standards can be applied to the academic, career and social/emotional domains.*

### **Category 1: Mindset Standards**

School counselors encourage the following mindsets for all students.

- M 1.** Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional and physical well-being
- M 2.** Sense of acceptance, respect, support and inclusion for self and others in the school environment
- M 3.** Positive attitude toward work and learning
- M 4.** Self-confidence in ability to succeed
- M 5.** Belief in using abilities to their fullest to achieve high-quality results and outcomes
- M 6.** Understanding that postsecondary education and life-long learning are necessary for long-term success

### **Category 2: Behavior Standards**

School counselors provide culturally sustaining instruction, appraisal and advisement, and counseling to help all students demonstrate:

Learning Strategies	Self-Management Skills	Social Skills
<b>B-LS 1.</b> Critical-thinking skills to make informed decisions	<b>B-SMS 1.</b> Responsibility for self and actions	<b>B-SS 1.</b> Effective oral and written communication skills and listening skills
<b>B-LS 2.</b> Creative approach to learning, tasks and problem solving	<b>B-SMS 2.</b> Self-discipline and self-control	<b>B-SS 2.</b> Positive, respectful and supportive relationships with students who are similar to and different from them
<b>B-LS 3.</b> Time-management, organizational and study skills	<b>B-SMS 3.</b> Independent work	<b>B-SS 3.</b> Positive relationships with adults to support success
<b>B-LS 4.</b> Self-motivation and self-direction for learning	<b>B-SMS 4.</b> Delayed gratification for long-term rewards	<b>B-SS 4.</b> Empathy
<b>B-LS 5.</b> Media and technology skills to enhance learning	<b>B-SMS 5.</b> Perseverance to achieve long- and short-term goals	<b>B-SS 5.</b> Ethical decision-making and social responsibility
<b>B-LS 6.</b> High-quality standards for tasks and activities	<b>B-SMS 6.</b> Ability to identify and overcome barriers	<b>B-SS 6.</b> Effective collaboration and cooperation skills
<b>B-LS 7.</b> Long- and short-term academic, career and social/emotional goals	<b>B-SMS 7.</b> Effective coping skills	<b>B-SS 7.</b> Leadership and teamwork skills to work effectively in diverse groups
<b>B-LS 8.</b> Engagement in challenging coursework	<b>B-SMS 8.</b> Balance of school, home and community activities	<b>B-SS 8.</b> Advocacy skills for self and others and ability to assert self, when necessary
<b>B-LS 9.</b> Decision-making informed by gathering evidence, getting others' perspectives and recognizing personal bias	<b>B-SMS 9.</b> Personal safety skills	<b>B-SS 9.</b> Social maturity and behaviors appropriate to the situation and environment
<b>B-LS 10.</b> Participation in enrichment and extracurricular activities	<b>B-SMS 10.</b> Ability to manage transitions and adapt to change	<b>B-SS 10.</b> Cultural awareness, sensitivity and responsiveness



## Overview

The 36 ASCA Student Standards are broad standards that identify and describe the knowledge, attitudes and skills students should be able to demonstrate as a result of a school counseling program. School counselors use the standards to assess student growth and development, create culturally sustaining strategies and activities and build a program that helps students achieve their highest potential. The ASCA Student Standards can be aligned with initiatives at the district, state and national levels to reflect local priorities.

To operationalize the standards, school counselors write or select measurable learning objectives that align with specific mindsets or behaviors, which become the foundation for classroom instruction, appraisal and advisement, and counseling activities addressing student developmental needs. The learning objectives directly reflect the school counseling program's vision, mission and goals, as well as the school's academic mission.

## Research-Based Standards

The ASCA Student Standards are based on a review of research and college-, career- and life-readiness documents that identify strategies influencing student achievement and academic performance. The ASCA Student Standards are organized on the framework of noncognitive factors presented in the critical literature review "Teaching Adolescents to Become Learners," conducted by the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research (2012).

This literature review recognizes that content knowledge and academic skills are only part of the equation for student success. "School performance is a complex phenomenon, shaped by a wide variety of factors intrinsic to students and the external environment" (University of Chicago, 2012, p. 2). The ASCA Student Standards are based on the evidence of the importance of these factors.

All 36 standards can be applied to any of the three school counseling domains of academic, career and social/emotional development. The school counselor selects a domain and standard based on the needs of the school, classroom, small group or individual.

The standards are arranged within general categories of noncognitive factors related to academic performance as identified in the University of Chicago 2012 literature review. These categories synthesize the "vast array of research literature" (p. 8) on noncognitive factors including mindsets, learning strategies, self-management skills and social skills for success.

**Category 1: Mindset Standards** – Includes standards related to students' psycho-social attitudes or beliefs about themselves in relation to academic work. These make up the student's belief system as exhibited in behaviors.

**Category 2: Behavior Standards** – These standards include behaviors commonly associated with being a successful student. The behaviors are visible, outward signs that a student is engaged as well as putting forth effort to learn. The behaviors are grouped into three subcategories.

- a. **Learning Strategies:** Processes and tactics students employ to aid in the cognitive work of thinking, remembering or learning.
- b. **Self-management Skills:** Continued focus on a goal despite obstacles and avoidance of distractions or temptations to prioritize higher pursuits over lower pleasures.
- c. **Social Skills:** Acceptable behaviors that improve social interactions, such as those among peers or between students and adults.

## Grade-Level Learning Objectives

Grade-level learning objectives are specific, measurable expectations that students attain as they make progress toward the standards. As the school counseling program's vision, mission and annual student outcome goals are aligned with the school's academic mission, school counseling standards and learning objectives are also aligned with academic content standards at the state and district level.

Grade-level learning objectives are housed in the ASCA Student Standards database at [www.schoolcounselor.org/learningobjectives](http://www.schoolcounselor.org/learningobjectives). School counselors can search the database by keyword to quickly and easily identify learning objectives that will meet student developmental needs and align with specific ASCA Student Standards. The database also allows school counselors to contribute to the learning objectives by sharing other ways to meet or align with a specific standard.

## Domains

The ASCA Student Standards can be applied to three broad domains: academic, career and social/emotional development. These domains promote mindsets and behaviors that enhance the learning process and create a culture of college-, career- and life-readiness for every student. The domain definitions are as follows:

*Academic Development* – Standards guiding school counseling programs to implement strategies and activities to support and maximize each student's ability to learn.

*Career Development* – Standards guiding school counseling programs to help students 1) understand the connection between school and the world of work and 2) plan for and make a successful transition from school to postsecondary education and/or the world of work and from job to job across the lifespan.

*Social/Emotional Development* – Standards guiding school counseling programs to help students manage emotions and learn and apply interpersonal skills.

## Resources Used in Development of ASCA Student Standards (2021)

The following documents were the primary resources that informed ASCA Student Standards.

Document	Organization	Description
ACT National Career Readiness Certificate	ACT	Offers a portable credential that demonstrates achievement and a certain level of workplace employability skills in applied mathematics, locating information and reading for information.
Building Blocks For Change: What it Means to be Career Ready	Career Readiness Partner Council	Defines what it means to be career-ready and highlights the outcome of collaborative efforts of the Career Readiness Partner Council to help inform policy and practice in states and communities.
Career and Technical Education Standards	National Board of Professional Teaching Standards	Defines the standards that lay the foundation for the Career and Technical Education Certificate.
Cross Disciplinary Proficiencies in the American Diploma Project	Achieve	Describes four cross disciplinary proficiencies that will enable high school graduates to meet new and unfamiliar tasks and challenges in college, the workplace and life.
Framework for 21st Century Learning	Partnership for 21st Century Skills	Describes the skills, knowledge and expertise students must master to succeed in work and life; it is a blend of content knowledge, specific skills, expertise and literacies.
ISTE Standards for Students	International Society for Technology in Education	Describes the standards students need to be prepared to thrive in a constantly evolving technological landscape.
Social Justice Standards: The Teaching Tolerance Anti-Bias Framework	Learning for Justice	Presents anchor standards and age-appropriate learning outcomes that allow educators to engage a range of anti-bias, multicultural and social justice issues.
Social and Emotional Learning Core Competencies	CASEL	Identifies five interrelated sets of cognitive, affective and behavioral competencies through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions.
Teaching Adolescents to Become Learners: The Role of Non-Cognitive Factors in Shaping School Performance	The University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research	Presents a critical literature review of the role of noncognitive factors in shaping school performance.
What is "Career Ready"?	ACTE	Defines what it means to be career-ready, involving three major skill areas: core academic skills, employability skills, and technical and job-specific skills.

### Citation Guide

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