



ASCA Position Statements

The School Counselor and ...

Academic Development	1	Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections	60
Annual Performance Appraisal	4	Promotion of Safe Schools through Conflict Resolution and Bullying/Harassment Prevention	62
Anti-Racist Practices	5	Retention, Social Promotion and Age-Appropriate Placement	64
Career and Technical Education	9	Safe Schools and Crisis Response	67
Career Development	11	School Counseling Preparation Programs	70
Character Education	14	School Counseling Programs	72
Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention	16	School Counselor Supervision	75
Children Experiencing Homelessness	18	School-Family-Community Partnerships	78
College Access Professionals	20	Social/Emotional Development	80
Confidentiality	22	Student Mental Health	82
Corporal Punishment	24	Student Postsecondary Recruitment	84
Credentialing and Licensure	26	Student Safety and the Use of Technology	86
Cultural Diversity	28	Students with Disabilities	88
Discipline	31	Suicide Prevention/Awareness	90
Equity for All Students	33	The School Counselor and Suicide Risk Assessment	92
Gender Equity	35	Supporting Students in Foster Care	94
Gifted and Talented Student Programs	37	Test Preparation Programs	96
Group Counseling	40	Transgender/Gender-nonconforming Youth	98
High-Stakes Testing	42	Trauma-Informed Practice	100
Identification, Prevention and Intervention of Behaviors That Are Harmful and Place Students At-Risk	44	Use of Non-School-Counseling-Credentialed Personnel in Implementing School Counseling Programs	102
Individual Student Planning for Postsecondary Preparation	46	Use of Support Staff in School Counseling Programs	104
Letters of Recommendation	48	Virtual School Counseling	106
LGBTQ Youth	50	Working with Students Experiencing Issues Surrounding Undocumented Status	108
Multitiered Systems of Support	52		
Peer Support Programs	55		
Prevention of School-Related Gun Violence	57		

The School Counselor and Academic Development

(Adopted 2017)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors deliver programs that have an impact on student growth in three domain areas: academic development, career development and social/emotional development (ASCA, 2019). School counselors recognize students should demonstrate growth in these domains equally to be successful. School counselors understand these domains are not considered separate but are intertwined, each affecting the other (Schenck, Anctil, & Smith, 2010, p. 16). Although this statement focuses on academic development, it is understood career development and social/emotional development need to be considered with equal diligence.

The Rationale

Recent educational initiatives (e.g., No Child Left Behind [NCLB]; Every Student Succeeds Act [ESSA]) have stressed academic achievement as a measure of school success. As a result, school counseling programs align their annual student outcome goals with that of the institution, emphasizing academic achievement. School counselors contribute to the educational and academic outcomes of the school by enhancing student engagement and performance (Carey & Harrington, 2010a; Carey & Harrington, 2010b) through designing, implementing and assessing school counseling programs (ASCA, 2019).

School counseling programs use data to understand student needs, provide school counseling classroom, group and closing-the-gap interventions and remove systemic barriers to ensure all students as early as preschool and kindergarten have opportunity to develop academic goals at all grade levels reflecting their abilities and academic interests and can access appropriate rigorous, relevant coursework and experiences. Because of their unique position within a school and their unique training, school counselors can work with students facing mental health issues, family and social problems as well as career exploration and course planning to make school relevant (Howe, 2009).

School counselors play a critical role in ensuring schools provide a safe, caring environment and that students have the necessary mindsets and behaviors to advance academic achievement outcomes. School counselors work collaboratively with stakeholders to ensure equity, access and academic success of all students (ASCA, 2019).

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors support students' academic success by:

- Leading development of a safe and caring school culture
- Delivering a school counseling program based on data identifying student needs
- Delivering information to students and teachers within the school counseling curriculum on best practices in mindsets and behaviors (i.e., learning strategies, self-management skills, social skills) and metacognition skills (McGuire, 2015) critical in academic success
- Providing relevance to academic effort and educational pursuits by assisting in students' career planning and future career-related goals
- Working with administration, teachers and other school staff to create a school environment encouraging academic success and striving to one's potential (Stone & Clark, 2001)
- Working to remove barriers to access and provide students with the opportunity for academic challenge in the most rigorous coursework possible
- Establishing data analysis methods to identify and target systemic barriers deterring equitable access
- Providing opportunities for students to:
 - Enhance their self-efficacy beliefs and competence
 - Develop attributional beliefs
 - See value in tasks related to achievement
 - Develop mastery/learning goals
 - Develop autonomy
 - Relate to others (Rowell & Hong, 2013)

- Working to establish student opportunities for academic remediation as needed
- Emphasizing family-community-school relationships in addressing academic needs (Brown, 1999)

Summary

Educational institutions are evaluated on student outcomes, especially academic achievement. School counselors working in this educational environment play a critical role in ensuring students have the academic development (in addition to the social/emotional and career development) knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to be successful. School counselors can assist schools in providing an environment conducive to and supportive of academic success.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2019). *ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.

American School Counselor Association. (2014). *Mindsets & behaviors for student success: K-12 college- and career-readiness standards for every student*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Brown, D., (1999). Improving academic achievement: What school counselors can do. Eric Digest, U.S. Department of Education.

Carey, J.C., & Harrington, K.M. (2010a). *Nebraska school counseling evaluation report*. Amherst, MA: Center for School Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation.

Carey, J.C., & Harrington, K.M. (2010b). *Utah school counseling evaluation report*. Amherst, MA: Center for School Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation.

Howe, Sally A. (2009). School counseling services and student academic success. *Counselor Education Master's Theses*. Paper 54.

McGuire, S.Y. (2015). *Teach student how to learn: Strategies you can incorporate into any course to improve student metacognition, study skills, and motivation*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing,

Rowell, L., & Hong, E. (2013). Academic motivation: Concepts, strategies, and counseling approaches. *Professional School Counseling, 16*(3), 158-171. Retrieved from <https://cochise.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1368152287?accountid=7278>

Schenck, P., Anctil, T., & Smith, C.K. (2010). Career counseling identity of professional school counselors. *Career Developments, 26*, 16-17.

Stone, C. & Clark, M. (2001). *School counselors and principals: Partners in support of academic achievement*. NASSP Bulletin.

Resources

American School Counselor Association. (2016). *Ethical standards for school counselors*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Berger, C. (2013). Bring out the brilliance: A counseling intervention for underachieving students. *Professional School Counseling, 17*(1), 86-96. Retrieved from <https://cochise.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1558312662?accountid=7278>

Bryan, J., et al. (2012). The effects of school bonding on high school seniors' academic achievement. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 90*(4), 467-80.

Dahir, C. A., Burnham, J. J., Stone, C. B., & Cobb, N. (2010). Principals as partners: Counselors as collaborators. *National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, 94*(4), 286-305. Retrieved from <https://cochise.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/863827836?accountid=7278>

Hines, E., et al. (2017). Making student achievement a priority: The role of school counselors in turnaround schools. *Urban Education*, 1-22.

Johnson, K., & Hannon, M. D. (2015). Measuring the relationship between parent, teacher, and student problem behavior reports and academic achievement: Implications for school counselors. *Professional School Counseling*, 18(1), 38-48.
Retrieved from <https://cochise.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1654434926?accountid=7278>

The School Counselor and Annual Performance Appraisal

(Adopted 1978; reaffirmed 1984; revised 1986, 1993, 2003, 2009, 2015; reviewed 1999; 2021)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

The annual performance appraisal of school counselors should accurately reflect the unique professional training and practices of school counselors working within a pre-K–12 school counseling program. These written appraisals should use forms and tools specifically designed for school counselors, based on documents such as the ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies and the School Counselor Performance Appraisal from the ASCA National Model.

The Rationale

The primary purposes of the annual performance appraisal are not only to ensure the school counselor's effectiveness, impact, high-level performance and continued professional growth (Dimmitt, 2009) but also to demonstrate school counselors' effectiveness and impact on student success as a part of the mission of their respective schools (ASCA, 2019a). School counselor appraisal should be based on professional standards of practice defined by school, district or state guidelines (ASCA, 2019a). The appraisal should include the components of self-evaluation, administrative evaluation and assessment of goal attainment (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012). In addition, those who evaluate school counselors' performance should be trained to understand school counselor evaluation (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012).

Because many administrators have not received training on how to evaluate school counselor performance, school counselors educate administrators about the appropriate role of the school counselor, ultimately to improve the school counseling program (Hatch et al., 2019). Annual agreements between administrators and school counselors can be mutually beneficial for understanding the school counselor role (Duslak & Geier, 2016). The ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies (2019b) and School Counselor Performance Appraisal template are designed to be used as planning tools when developing a sound school counselor assessment tool (ASCA, 2019a).

The School Counselor's Role

The key purpose of the school counselor performance appraisal is to enhance the positive effect the school counselor and the school counseling program have on students and school stakeholders (Studer, 2016). The school counselor:

- initiates and documents the annual administrative conference with administrators, to be referenced during the annual performance appraisal
- consults with administrators regarding approved standards and competencies for school counselors and school counseling programs
- advocates for the integration of the ASCA National Model School Counselor Performance Appraisal and ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies as tools in the appraisal process
- presents outcome data to demonstrate effectiveness and accountability as a part of program evaluation
- educates stakeholders about the importance of appropriate school counselor appraisal tools and advocates for their use if such tools are not being used (ASCA, 2019a)
- collaborates with personnel across the school district (e.g., other school counselors, district-level student support services personnel, administrators, union representatives) to align actual school counseling roles with the evaluation tool (Young & Kaffenberger, 2018)
- collaborates with administrators and departments of education to develop appropriate tools to use in the evaluation of the school counselor and the school counseling program (Dollarhide & Saginak, 2017) (See examples at www.schoolcounselor.org/templates).

Summary

The annual performance appraisal of the school counselor should use criteria reflecting the current standards, competencies and performance appraisals of the school counseling profession. Annual performance forms and tools should also reflect these criteria.

References

- American School Counselor Association. (2019a). *ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.
- American School Counselor Association. (2019b). *ASCA school counselor professional standards & competencies*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Dollarhide, C.T. & Saginak, K.A. (2017). *Comprehensive School Counseling Programs: K-12 Delivery Systems in Action, Ed 3*. Pearson.
- Dimmitt, C. (2009). Why evaluation matters: Determining effective school counseling practices. *Professional School Counseling, 12*(6), 395-399.
- Duslak, M., & Geier, B. (2016). Communication factors as predictors of relationship quality: A national study of principals and school counselors. *Professional School Counseling*. <https://doi.org/10.5330/1096-2409-20.1.115>
- Gysbers, N. C., & Henderson, P. (2012). *Developing and managing your school guidance and counseling program* (5th ed.). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Hatch, T., Triplett, W., Duarte, D., & Gomez, V. (2019). *Hatching Results for Secondary School Counseling*. Corwin: USA.
- Studer, J.R. (2016). *Practicum and Internship for School Counselors-in-training, Ed. 2*. Routledge: NY, NY.
- Young, A., & Kaffenberger, C. (2018). School Counseling Professional Development: Assessing the use of Data to Inform School Counseling Services. *Professional School Counseling, 19*(1).

The School Counselor and Anti-Racist Practices

(Adopted 2021)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors work toward cultural competence and engage in anti-racist actions by advocating to change racist policies, procedures, practices, guidelines and laws contributing to inequities in students' academic, career and social/emotional development.

The Rationale

Racism remains a part of society in the United States and exists throughout all of our institutions. Unfortunately, the education system, as a subset of society, has contributed to the continuation of inequities specific to the school setting (LaForett & De Marco, 2020). The U.S. education system contributes to maintaining systems of oppression through racist policies, practices and guidelines that negatively affect all students but especially students from racially diverse backgrounds, including Black and Indigenous students, who historically have been distinctly affected by white supremacy in the United States (Steward, 2019). By supporting anti-racist policies through their actions and expressed anti-racist ideas, school counselors embrace their roles as social justice advocates and change agents who examine and dismantle systems of oppression (Kendi, 2019). It is essential for school counselors to engage in these leadership roles to address issues within education that promote inequity in achievement, access and opportunity, specifically for students from racially diverse backgrounds.

The ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (2016) call for school counselors to be systemic change agents who embrace their roles as advocates, leaders and collaborators by providing “equitable educational access and success” (p.1). All educators, especially school counselors, have an obligation to work toward mitigating and/or ending racism and bias (ASCA, 2020) in an effort to lessen the impact of systemic racism on student development. Kohli et. al (2017) recognized the gaps in research related to the mechanisms (policies and procedures) of racial oppression in education. Still today these gaps exist, underscoring the need for school counselors to be intentional in examining and exploring data that uncovers disproportionality and racial inequities. To actively dismantle racist policies, procedures and practices within education, school counselors must embrace their ethical responsibilities within roles as social justice advocates, leaders and change agents to ensure all students, specifically students from racially diverse backgrounds, develop in healthy and successful ways in their academic, career and social/emotional development.

The School Counselor's Role

The role of the school counselor in ensuring anti-racist practices is to enhance awareness, obtain culturally responsive knowledge and skills, and engage in action through advocacy. As such, school counselors are called to:

Awareness/Reflection

- Reflect regularly on their cultural worldviews (values, beliefs, assumptions, biases), seeking to understand how these views influence their practice
- Engage in the personal work necessary to identify and acknowledge blind spots, uncover and mitigate the influence of all biases, particularly implicit biases, and act for real change
- Initiate and/or participate in “courageous conversations” that move to discomfort on topics of injustice, racism, privilege, oppression and related issues
- Reflect on feelings and sources of personal resistance that might arise in exploring topics of racism, privilege, oppression, marginalization and bias

Knowledge/Skills

- Participate regularly in school/district, independent and community-based professional development opportunities (ASCA, 2021)
- Consult and collaborate with people and organizations representative of the communities their schools serve
- Participate in supervision to obtain and refine culturally competent delivery and programmatic skills

- Engage in personal study of institutional and systemic racism in credible sources of research such as peer-reviewed journal articles and other scholarly literature
- Consult with professionals and community representatives to identify and engage in immersive experiences focused on obtaining knowledge and understanding in honoring cultures, languages, and traditions (Levy & Adjapong, 2020)

Action/Advocacy

School counselors work to end racism and bias by applying school counseling standards in practice (ASCA, 2020), such as:

- Collect and report data exposing inequitable outcomes
- Deliver lessons in classroom, small-group or individual settings that teach the ASCA Student Standards: Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success and address racism and bias
- Recognize and respond to incidents of racism and bias among students and staff
- Collaborate with families, educators, businesses and community organizations focused on anti-racism/bias
- Serve on school/district committees focused on anti-racism/bias, including committees addressing academic content
- Present workshops for parents/families on how to foster and support respectful student behaviors
- Lead efforts to challenge policies, procedures, practices, traditions or customs perpetuating intentional or unintentional racist and biased behaviors and outcomes (ASCA, 2021)
- Advocate for policies, practices and guidelines to dismantle racism and bias and promote equity for all
- Advocate for school counseling program resources and practices that acknowledge students from racially diverse backgrounds, and provide equitable opportunities for increased access to resources and support systems (ASCA, 2021)
- Advocate for and present anti-racism professional development opportunities within schools, districts and professional associations (ASCA, 2021)
- Advocate for change in policies, practices and procedures that have historically marginalized and oppressed groups, resulting in injustice, disproportionate outcomes, bias and the perpetuation of racist policies
- Provide appropriate services and supports for students from racially diverse backgrounds and their families who may demonstrate symptoms of racial trauma as a result of racist policies and practices (Atkins & Oglesby, 2019)
- Advocate for learning materials and resources in all content areas promoting diversity and inclusion, addressing ways students from racially diverse backgrounds have been harmed and oppressed, and considering the impact white supremacy and inequitable learning opportunities continue to have on American and global societies (Atkins & Oglesby, 2019)

Summary

School counselors continually work toward cultural competence and address racism and bias through the implementation of a data-informed school counseling program. Guided by the ASCA National Model (2019), school counselors shape ethical, equitable and inclusive school environments. School counselors engage in self-reflection, develop knowledge and skills, and advocate for the equitable treatment of all students through action to address broader issues of systemic and institutional racism. They seek to address policies, practices and guidelines contributing to the inequities experienced by students from racially diverse backgrounds in the pre-K–12 setting.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2016). *ASCA ethical standards for school counselors*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

American School Counselor Association (2021). Anti-Racism Resources. <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/Publications-Research/Publications/Free-ASCA-Resources/Anti-Racism-Resources>

American School Counselor Association. (2020). *Standards in practice: Eliminating racism and bias in schools: The school counselor's role*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Atkins, R., & Oglesby, A. (2019). *Interrupting racism: Equity and social justice in school counseling*. Routledge.

Kendi, I. X. (2019). *How to be an anti-racist*. One World.

Kohli, R., Pizarro, M., & Nevárez, A. (2017). The “New Racism” of K-12 schools: Centering critical research on racism. *Review of Research in Education*, 41(1), 182–202. <https://doi-org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.3102/0091732X16686949>

LaForett, D. R., & De Marco, A. (2020). A logic model for educator-level intervention research to reduce racial disparities in student suspension and expulsion. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 26*(3), 295–305. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cdp0000303>

Levy, I. P., & Edmund S. Adjapong, E. S. (2020). Toward culturally competent school counseling environments: Hip-hop studio construction. *The Professional Counselor, 10*(2), 266–284. <http://doi:10.15241/ipl.10.2.266>

Steward, D. L. (2019). Envisioning possibilities for innovations in higher education research on race and ethnicity. *Journal Committed to Social Change on Race and Ethnicity, 5*(1), 7-32.

The School Counselor and Career and Technical Education

(Adopted 2018)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors provide all students with counseling that facilitates academic, career and social/emotional development, helping all students develop plans for choosing a career. School counselors demonstrate their understanding of rigorous career technical education (CTE) programs when they join with other CTE stakeholders to advocate for these programs, which are designed to guide students to success in their chosen careers.

The Rationale

Ferguson and Lamback (2014) noted that increased attention on career-focused education has been the objective of many education reform efforts striving to strengthen educational relevance, improve students' school and career preparation planning and increase student readiness for workplace demands. According to Advance CTE (n.d.), an association of CTE state directors dedicated to linking learning and work, more than 12 million high school and college students are enrolled in CTE programs across the nation. These students are learning academic and technical skills to prepare for the world of work through the introduction of workplace competencies that are most often provided through a hands-on environment.

Employers frequently express frustration that new hires often lack well-developed communication skills, problem-solving skills, motivation, persuasion and critical-thinking skills that define soft skills (MacDermott & Ortiz, 2017). DiBenedetto and Myers (2016) noted that CTE courses provide “contextual real-world learning experiences that have engaged students and exposed them to opportunities to transfer and apply those skills in occupational settings” (p. 31). School counselors agree with DiBenedetto and Myers (2016) that CTE courses help students develop core academic skills; employability skills; and job-specific, technical skills related to career pathways.

In their study on the influence of career-focused education on career planning and development, Mobley, Sharp, Hammond, Withington and Stipanovic (2017) observed that real-world experiences and hands-on projects are generally much more likely to happen in CTE courses. They noted that CTE students are more likely to have a clear understanding about their career goals, and they concluded that non-CTE students would benefit with advising, real-world experiences and hands-on integrated CTE/academic projects like those available to CTE students.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors play an integral role through the context of school counseling programs to facilitate students' acquisition of attitudes, knowledge and skills needed to achieve positive postsecondary and career outcomes. School counselors at all levels recognize that employability skills align well with ASCA's Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success (2014). Consequently, they integrate a structure for organizing and delivering information about various careers and corresponding clusters such as The National Career Clusters Framework (Advance CTE, 2018).

This national framework or a similarly developed local framework informs the use of career development interventions for all students to help them navigate their way to postsecondary training intended to foster greater career success. When school counselors provide all students with information about high-quality CTE programs, they help all students consider all of their options following high school completion, including directly entering the world of work.

School counselors are aware that preparing 21st-century students to be career-ready requires collaborative efforts. As concluded by Conneely, Fitzgerald, Cook and Vrbka (2009), “There are advantages for CTE and comprehensive school counseling programs to coordinate their efforts to better serve all students in achieving postsecondary and career readiness” (p. 4). When school counselors demonstrate a shared understanding of CTE programs with other CTE stakeholders (e.g., teachers, administrators, legislators and employers), they are better equipped to encourage all students and their families to consider the advantages of enrolling in rigorous and relevant CTE courses.

A brief, “School Counselors as CTE Stakeholders,” prepared as a collaborative effort with ASCA and the National Association of State Directors of CTE, noted that school counselors can explain CTE options to students in the framework of career clusters and programs of study to inform student planning (Conneely et al., 2009). Mobley et al. (2017) added that students are often more motivated to stay in school when enrolled in career-focused education. Additionally, their study provides evidence that “an emphasis on career-focused education for all students can result in less stigmatization of two areas that are often negatively viewed by students: taking CTE or career-focused classes and visiting the school counselor” (p. 70).

The findings by Mobley et al. (2017) underscore the importance of school counselors using their leadership and influencing skills to create awareness of CTE programming options for students and their families. School counselors also advocate for the continued growth, development and expansion of rigorous CTE programs. These efforts provide an increase in awareness of CTE opportunities prior to entering postsecondary endeavors in hopes that students will be more informed and focused, offering students and their families savings of time and money on postsecondary training.

Summary

School counselors improve their service to their students when they understand CTE offers numerous benefits, including rigorous programs of study, academic and CTE curriculum and productive relationships within the business community. These advantages serve as effective means that school counselors can use to help all students make informed career decisions. Comprehensive school counseling programs provide a way for school counselors to help students understand all of their options that lead to the world of work, including CTE courses, through organized and structured appraisal and advisement.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2014). *Mindsets & behaviors for student success: K-12 college- and career-readiness standards for every student*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Advance CTE. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://careertech.org/CTE>

Advance CTE. (2018). Retrieved from <https://careertech.org/career-clusters>

Conneely, N., Fitzgerald, A., Cook, J., & Vrbka, D. (2009). *School counselors as CTE stakeholders*. Retrieved from <https://cte.careertech.org/sites/default/files/CounselorsasCTEStakeholders-June2009.pdf>

DiBenedetto, C. A., & Myers, B. E. (2016). A conceptual model for the study of student readiness in the 21st century 1. *NACTA Journal*, 60(1), 28-35. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/docview/1791660471?accountid=39473>

Ferguson, R., & Lamback, S. (2014). *Creating pathways to prosperity: A blueprint for action*. Retrieved from <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/publications/creating-pathways-prosperity-blueprint-action>

MacDermott, C., & Ortiz, L. (2017). Beyond the business communication course: A historical perspective of the where, why, and how of soft skills development and job readiness for business graduates. *IUP Journal of Soft Skills*, 11(2), 7,9-24. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/docview/1916950578?accountid=39473>

Mobley, C., Sharp, J. L., Hammond, C., Withington, C., & Stipanovic, N. (2017). The influence of career-focused education on student career planning and development: A comparison of CTE and non-CTE students. *Career & Technical Education Research*, 42(1), 57–75. <https://doi.org/10.5328/cter42.1.57>

The School Counselor and Career Development

(Adopted 2017)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors deliver programs that have an impact on student growth in three domain areas: career development, academic development and social/emotional development (ASCA, 2019). School counselors recognize students should demonstrate growth in these domains equally to be successful. School counselors understand these domains are not considered separate but are intertwined, each affecting the other (Schenck, Anctil, & Smith, 2010). Although this statement focuses on career development it is understood academic development and social/emotional development need to be considered with equal diligence.

The Rationale

Workforce projections call for graduating secondary students to have at the least some postsecondary education to fulfill the demands of work (Carnevale, Smith, & Strohl, 2010). School counselors recognize that each student, regardless of background, possesses unique interests, abilities and goals, which will lead to future opportunities. Collaborating with students, families, educational staff and the community, the school counselor works to ensure all students select a postsecondary path to productive citizenry (e.g. military, career technical certificate or two-/four-year degree program) appropriate for the student.

ASCA recognizes career education begins in kindergarten and is exemplified by students who are knowledgeable about options and are prepared to enroll and succeed in any postsecondary experience without the need for remediation. ASCA recognizes all students possess the skills and knowledge needed to qualify for and succeed in their chosen field (Conley, 2013).

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors play a critical role in students' career development by:

- Introducing careers and the world of work beginning in lower elementary grades (pre-K–3)
- Providing opportunities to engage students in “life roles including learner and worker” (Gysbers, 2013)
- Providing learning and experiential opportunities for students to acquire behaviors and skills for career readiness (Gysbers, 2013)
- Working with students to identify their interests, abilities, specific career clusters (Stipanovic, 2010) and postsecondary plans (many states mandate an academic/career action plan as a graduation requirement)
- Helping students understand the connection between school and the world of work
- Helping students plan the transition from school to postsecondary education and/or the world of work (ASCA, 2014)
- Advising students on multiple postsecondary pathways (e.g., college, career-specific credentials and certifications, apprenticeships, military, service-year programs, full-time employment with a family-supporting wage) (Chicago Public Schools Multiple Postsecondary Pathways Framework)
- Connecting students to early college programs (e.g., dual credit/dual enrollment).
- Collaborating with administration, teachers, staff and decision makers to create a postsecondary-readiness and college-going culture
- Providing and advocating for individual pre-K through postsecondary students' college and career awareness through exploration and postsecondary planning and decision making, which supports students' right to choose from the wide array of options after completing secondary education
- Identifying gaps in college and career access and the implications of such data for addressing both intentional and unintentional biases related to college and career counseling
- Working with teachers to integrate career education learning in the curricula
- Providing opportunities for all students to develop the mindsets and behaviors necessary to learn work-related skills, resilience, perseverance, an understanding of lifelong learning as a part of long-term career success, a positive attitude toward learning and a strong work ethic
- Recognizing and supporting essential developmental factors key to future successes, such as self-efficacy and identity, motivation and perseverance (Savitz-Romer & Bouffard, 2013)

Summary

School counseling has seen many evolution changes to initiatives in career development. School counselors understand students should demonstrate growth in the career, academic and social/emotional domains equally to be successful. School counseling programs should strive to implement comprehensive, developmental programming addressing student needs. These programs should seek a balance in delivering instruction, appraisal and advisement and counseling enhancing the three domains.

References

- American School Counselor Association. (2019). *ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.
- American School Counselor Association. (2016). *Ethical standards for school counselors*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- American School Counselor Association. (2014). *Mindsets and behaviors for student success: K-12 college- and career-readiness standards for every student*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Carnevale, A. P., Smith, N., & Strohl, J. (2010). *Help wanted: Projections of jobs and education requirements through 2018*. Washington DC: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. Retrieved from <https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/fullreport.pdf>
- Conley, D. (2013). *Getting ready for college, careers, and the Common Core: What every educator needs to know*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Gysbers, N.C. (2013). Career-ready students: A goal of comprehensive school counseling programs. *The Career Development Quarterly* 61(3), 283-288.
- Savitz-Romer, M., & Boufford, S.M. (2013). *Ready, willing, and able: A developmental approach to college access and success*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Schenck, P., Anctil, T., & Smith, C.K. (2010). Career counseling identity of professional school counselors. *Career Developments*, 26, 16-17.
- Stipanovic, N. (2010). Providing comprehensive career guidance services through a career pathways framework. *Techniques*, 85(7), 32-35.
- ## Resources
- Anctil, T.M., Smith, C.K., Schenck, P., & Dahir, C. (2012). Professional school counselors' career development practices and continuing education needs. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 60(2), 109-121.
- Dahir, C. A., Burnham, J. J., Stone, C. B., & Cobb, N. (2010). Principals as partners: Counselors as collaborators. *National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin*, 94(4), 286-305. Retrieved from <https://cochise.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/863827836?accountid=7278>
- Lapan, R.T., Whitcomb, S.A., & Aleman, N.M. (2012). Connecticut professional school counselors: College and career counseling services and smaller ratios benefit students. *Professional School Counseling*, 16(2), 117-124.
- Morgan, L.W., Greenwaldt, M.E., & Gosselin, K.P. (2014). School counselors' perceptions of competency in career counseling. *The Professional Counselor*, 4(5), 481-496.
- Rowell, L., & Hong, E. (2013). Academic motivation: Concepts, strategies, and counseling approaches. *Professional School Counseling*, 16(3), 158-171. Retrieved from <https://cochise.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1368152287?accountid=7278>
- Schmidt, C.D., Hardinge, G.B., & Rokutani, L.J. (2012). Expanding the school counselor repertoire through STEM-focused career development. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 60(1), 25-35.

Schenck, P. M., Anctil, T. M., Smith-Klose, C., & Dahir, C. (2012). Coming full circle: Reoccurring career development trends in schools. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 60(3), 221-230.

Turner, S.L., & Conkel Ziebell, J.L. (2011). The career beliefs of inner-city adolescents. *Professional School Counseling*, 15(1), 1-14.

The School Counselor and Character Education

(Adopted 1998, revised 2005, 2011, 2016)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors endorse and actively support character education programs and include them in the implementation of a school counseling program. The school counselor also promotes the infusion of character education in the school curriculum by encouraging the participation of the entire school community.

The Rationale

Character education involves “how schools, related social institutions and parents/guardians can support the positive character development of children and adults” (U.S. Department of Education, 2008, p.1). The school counselor understands that teaching students concepts and skills that help people live and work together promotes healthy student development and academic achievement through reduced problem behavior, lower discipline rates and improvement in student self-concept (Parker, Nelson, & Burns, 2010; Skaggs & Bodenhorn, 2006; U.S. Department of Education, 2008; Watson, 2006).

The School Counselor’s Role

School counselors, along with teachers, administrators, family and the community, share the responsibility of teaching character education values. School counselors encourage character education activities by means of:

- developing a school philosophy and mission statement supporting positive character development
- establishing positive family-school-community partnerships
- implementing school counseling curriculum activities that promote positive character development while helping all students develop clear academic, career and social/emotional goals
- advocating for discipline policies that nurture the development of appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes
- utilizing proactive counseling methods that reinforce character education and lead to an increase in positive school climate
- encouraging student participation in extracurricular activities that include the involvement of students, school staff, parents/guardians and community members
- teaching skills in decision-making, conflict resolution, leadership and problem solving
- teaching communication etiquette in the technological world
- involving students in the development of school rules
- integrating multicultural competence and diversity appreciation into curriculum and activities
- developing student recognition programs focused on character traits
- involving families and communities in the character education program

School counselors work with teachers, administrators, families and the community to teach and model behaviors that enhance each student’s academic, career and social/emotional development essential to making appropriate, healthy decisions.

Summary

Character education helps students achieve academic, career and social/emotional development goals to become positive contributors to society. Effective character education programs require the entire community’s participation and must be integrated throughout the entire school curriculum and culture through curriculum development, consensus building, community engagement, technology and professional development (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). The school counselor provides leadership and collaborates with teachers, administrators and the school community to promote character education for all students as an integral part of school curriculum and activities.

References

Parker, D. C., Nelson, J. S., & Burns, M. K. (2010). Comparison of correlates of classroom behavior problems in schools with and without a school-wide character education program. *Psychology in Schools, 47*(8), 817-827.

Skaggs, G. & Bodenorm, N. (2006). Relationships between implementing character education, student behavior, and student achievement. *Journal of Advanced Academics, 18*, 82-114.

U. S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Character Education and Civic Engagement Technical Assistance Center. (2008). *Partnerships in character education state pilot projects, 1995-2001, Lessons Learned*. Washington, D.C.: Author.

Watson, M. (2006). Long-term effects of moral/character education in elementary school. *Journal of research in character education, 4*(1&2), 1-18.

The School Counselor and Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention

(Adopted 1981; revised 1985, 1993, 1999, 2003, 2015, 2021)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

It is the school counselor's legal, ethical and moral responsibility to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to the proper authorities. School counselors work to identify the behavioral, academic and social/emotional impact of abuse and neglect on students and ensure the necessary supports for students are in place.

The Rationale

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (2021) notes that most states recognize four major types of maltreatment: "neglect, physical abuse, psychological maltreatment and sexual abuse" (n.p.) and also points to medical neglect and sex trafficking as other forms of abuse identified by some states. The National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, 2021) indicates the incidents of child abuse and neglect continue to be a significant concern. Child abuse and neglect is a public mental health issue that must be addressed through intervention and advocacy. A child who is a victim of abuse or neglect may experience consequences including, but not limited to, immediate physical, emotional or psychological harm; future victimization or perpetration; substance abuse; lower self-worth; and lower educational attainment.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors are among those mandated by the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act of 1974, Public Law 93-247 to report suspected abuse and neglect to proper authorities and are critical in early detection and recognition of abuse. It is imperative that school counselors gain essential knowledge of policies and referral procedures by staying current on reporting requirements and state laws. Laws and definitions pertaining to child abuse and neglect vary among states; therefore, school counselors should commit themselves to become familiar with and abide by child protective services laws in their respective state (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau, 2021b).

In addition to mandated reporting, school counselors:

- Understand child abuse and neglect and its impact on children's academic, career and social/emotional development
- Provide interventions promoting resiliency, healthy interpersonal and communication skills and self-worth
- Make referrals to outside agencies when appropriate
- Engage families in the school community
- Identify barriers and limitations that affect healthy family functioning and may lead to child abuse or neglect
- Identify instances of child abuse and neglect and respond on both individual and systemic levels
- Provide professional development in consultation on child abuse to school staff, families and the school community

School counselors serve as child advocates (ASCA, 2019), recognizing and understanding the problem, knowing the reporting procedures and participating in available child abuse information programs. School counselors play an integral role in helping promote child welfare by providing direct and indirect student services. Those services include advocating for students' needs by addressing issues that could affect their academic, career and social/emotional development.

Summary

School counselors are a key link in the child abuse prevention network. School counselors are responsible for reporting suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. School counselors must be able to guide and assist abused and neglected students by providing appropriate services. School counselors are committed to providing high-quality services, with research-based intervention techniques, to children who are victims of abuse and neglect.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2019). *ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs, 4th edition*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) with amendments made by the Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment for Patients and Communities Act or the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act, Public Law (P.L.) 115-271, enacted October 24, 2018. Section 7065(a) of P.L. 115-271 amended section 105 of CAPTA and section 7065(b) repealed the Abandoned Infants Assistance Act of 1988 (42 U.S.C. 5117aa et seq.). <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/law-regulation/child-abuse-prevention-and-treatment-act-capta>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. (2021a). *Child Maltreatment 2019*.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau (2021b). *State statutes search*. Child Welfare Information Gateway. <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/state/>

Resources

American School Counselor Association. (2016). *ASCA ethical standards for school counselors*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Barrett, K. M., Lester, S. V., & Durham, J. C. (2011). Child maltreatment and the advocacy role of professional school counselors. *Journal for Social Action in Counseling and Psychology*, 3(2), 86-103.

Center for Disease Control (2021). *Preventing child and neglect*. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/fastfact.html>

The School Counselor and Children Experiencing Homelessness

(Adopted, 2010; revised, 2018)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors recognize that homelessness/displacement may greatly affect the whole child, encompassing mental, physical, social/emotional and academic development. School counselors help to identify students who are experiencing homelessness. As social justice advocates, it is school counselors' duty to recognize and work with students around their specific strengths. School counselors collaborate with community stakeholders to connect students and their families who are experiencing homelessness to community supports, work to remove barriers to academic success and implement responsive prevention and intervention programs for children experiencing homelessness.

The Rationale

Homelessness is defined by the McKinney-Vento Act as youth who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence (for complete definition, see U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Census data from the U.S. Department of Education notes 2,483,539 children or one in every 30 children experienced homelessness in the United States in 2013 (American Institutes for Research, 2014). Students experiencing homelessness have increased concerns for developmental issues pertaining to physical development, mental health and school success (Tobin, 2016) as well as social/emotional development (Haskett, Armstrong, & Tisdale, 2016).

Researchers have found that students experiencing homelessness are more likely to be retained and perform below their peers in grades earned and test scores (Masten, Fiat, Labella, & Strack, 2015). They have a significantly higher prevalence of developmental delays in communication (Tobin, 2016) as well as social/emotional development (Haskett et al., 2016). Homelessness in youth may also affect neurocognitive functioning (e.g., poor decision making, recklessness behaviors, risk taking and emotional outbursts), academic achievement and may lead to an increased likelihood of facing adverse childhood experiences such as trauma and abuse (Edidin, Ganim, Hunter, & Karnik, 2012). Close to 75 percent of homeless students drop out before graduating from high school (Abdul Rahman, Fidel Turner & Elbedour, 2015).

The McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), outlines the rights of homeless students and creates directives for schools to ensure students are able to enroll and succeed in school (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). This charge includes removal of institutional barriers within schools, such as transportation, immunization and physical examination requirements, fees, residency and birth certificate requirements and lack of school records impeding homeless families' ability to enroll their children in schools.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors:

- Advocate for students and collaborate with their parents/guardians to reduce barriers related to school enrollment, academic success and appropriate educational placement
- Recognize the strengths of the individual student and all of those who have experienced homelessness
- Attain knowledge for assisting unaccompanied youth per specific state guidelines, following legal and ethical codes
- establish educational and preventive programs for homeless parents and children
- Collaborate with school and community personnel and coordinate appropriate support services specific to basic, academic and social/emotional needs
- Increase stakeholder awareness and understanding of the McKinney-Vento Act, ESSA and the rights of homeless students
- Assess students for common associated concerns such as adverse childhood experiences and refer students for additional support as appropriate.

Summary

School counselors promote awareness and understanding of the issues students face when experiencing homelessness. School counselors recognize the strengths these students bring to school from experiencing homelessness. School counselors collaborate with students, parents/guardians and community stakeholders to overcome the barriers to academic, career and social/emotional success associated with homelessness.

References

- Abdul Rahman, M., Fidel Turner, J., & Elbedour, S. (2015). The U.S. homeless student population: Homeless youth education, review of research classifications and typologies, and the U.S. federal legislative response. *Child & Youth Care Forum, 44*(5), 687-709. doi:10.1007/s10566-014-9298-2
- American Institutes for Research. (2014) America's youngest outcasts: A report card on child homelessness. Retrieved from <https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Americas-Youngest-Outcasts-Child-Homelessness-Nov2014.pdf>
- Edidin, J. P., Ganim, Z., Hunter, S. J., & Karnik, N. S. (2012). The mental and physical health of homeless youth: A literature review. *Child Psychiatry and Human Development, 43*(3), 354-375.
- Haskett, M., Armstrong, J., & Tisdale, J. (2016). Developmental status and social-emotional functioning of young children experiencing homelessness. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 44*(2), 119-125.
- Masten, A. S., Fiat, A. E., Labella, M. H., Strack, R. A. (2015). Educating homeless and highly mobile students: Implications of research on risk and resilience. *School Psychology Review, 44*(3), 315-330.
- Tobin, K.J. (2016) Homeless students and academic achievement: Evidence from a large urban area. *Urban Education, 5*(2), 194-220.
- U.S. Department of Education. (2017). *Education for homeless children and youths program non-regulatory guidance: Title VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended by The Every Student Succeeds Act*. Retrieved from: <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/160240ehcyguidance072716updated0317.pdf>

Resources

- Department of Education Releases Guidance on Homeless Children and Youth. (2016). Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/education-department-releases-guidance-homeless-children-and-youth>
- Improving Graduation Rates in Students with Homelessness, <https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/recordingView?webinarKey=5929145428874061059®istrant>

The School Counselor and College Access Professionals

(Adopted 2016)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors play a critical role in preparing all students for life-long learning and success in a global environment. To ensure students have opportunity to reach their full potential, school counselors collaborate with community-based organizations, including college access organizations and college access professionals, within the framework of a school counseling program.

The Rationale

Implementation of a school counseling program includes working collaboratively with community-based organizations, including college access organizations and college access professionals, to help meet students' academic and career developmental needs. Community-based organizations often have expertise and time to work with hard-to-serve populations and should be part of the total communitywide approach to postsecondary education. Community-based organizations can provide tremendous value to the work school counselors do in the context of improving school-based programs and student outcomes. College access professionals might include the following: college advisors, professional/trained mentors, career advisors and other specialists trained to serve students in navigating their college and career pathway. Clear agreements between the school and the college access professional or community-based organization should be in place. The agreements should outline:

- a definition and delineation of functions and responsibilities of the college access professional with particular focus on the limitations college access professionals must have in students' social/emotional developmental needs
- clear language stating the college access professionals' role is in support of the work of the school counselor rather than a replacement for the role/function of the school counselor
- which student records or personal information college access professionals are permitted access
- expectations that college access professionals must maintain the highest level of confidentiality related to student records or personal information
- the responsible supervisory entity for the college access professional, which includes a statement indicating the need for college access professionals to make referrals to this entity in the event students present issues beyond the scope of their college access training and skills
- the responsible compensation entity

College access professional can be employed by schools, housed in school facilities or be based in off-campus facilities. School counselors serve as a catalyst in building collaborative partnerships with college access professionals, identifying community needs in college access and assisting in the identification of students/student groups who would benefit from the expertise and time provided by college access professionals (Bruce & Bridgeland, 2012). Benefits from this collaboration may include:

- increasing students' postsecondary attainment rates, particularly among low-income and underserved student populations (Perna 2002).
- financial incentives, mentoring opportunities, individualized needs-based services and academic remediation to assist students in accessing postsecondary opportunities
- opportunities for students to enroll in postsecondary courses or programs to prepare for postsecondary education.
- partnering with college access programs, scholarship programs, the Department of Education and mentoring services that raise awareness of the importance of postsecondary training

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors define collaborative partnerships with community-based organizations within the framework of a comprehensive program. School counselors actively seek to assist students in preparing for postsecondary success. Through collaboration with college access professionals, school counselors can increase the scope of their work and provide communitywide benefits within a school counseling program approach by:

- beginning conversations regarding community needs with community stakeholders
- planning a communitywide response to college preparation and access

- setting communitywide goals and action plans for college access
- sharing common data with community stakeholders
- implementing collaborative interventions in college access
- assisting students in completing the steps necessary for participating in college access programs or postsecondary programs, such as registering for tests or applying for financial aid
- referring/nominating students for programs

Summary

College access organizations and professionals can provide beneficial academic and career opportunities for students by extending the reach of school counseling programs. Effective collaborations include a clear delineation of function and roles. School counselors are the catalyst for establishing the collaborative partnerships that help students receive these benefits.

References

Bruce, M., & Bridgeland, J. (2012). *The 2012 survey of school counselors, True North: Charting the course to college and career readiness*. New York, NY: College Board.

Perna, L. W. (2002). Precollege outreach programs: Characteristics of programs serving historically underrepresented groups of students. *Journal of College Student Development, 43*(1), 64–84.

Resources

Barnett, E. (2016). *Building Student Momentum from High School into College: Ready or Not: It's Time to Rethink the 12th Grade*. Jobs for the Future. Retrieved from <http://www.jff.org/sites/default/files/publications/materials/Building-Student-Momentum-021916.pdf>

Pathways to College Network. (2011). *The role of mentoring in college access and success*. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED520415.pdf>

Tierney, W. G., Corwin, Z. B., & Colyar, J. E. (2005). Counseling matters: Knowledge, assistance and organizational commitment in college preparation. In *Preparing for college: Nine elements of effective outreach* (pp. 69-88). Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

The School Counselor and Confidentiality

(Adopted 1974; reviewed and reaffirmed 1980; revised 1986, 1993, 1999, 2002, 2008, 2014, 2018)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors recognize their primary obligation regarding confidentiality is to the student but balance that obligation with an understanding of the family or guardians' legal and inherent rights to be the guiding voice in their children's lives (ASCA, 2016).

The Rationale

ASCA and its members affirm their belief in the student's right to be treated with respect and dignity (ASCA, 2016, A.1.a). It is the school counselors' responsibility to fully respect the right to privacy of those with whom they enter a counseling relationship and to provide an atmosphere of trust and confidence (Lazovsky, 2008; ASCA, A.2.).

A school counselor, who is in a counseling relationship with a student, has an ethical and legal obligation to keep information contained within that relationship. Confidentiality is the ethical and legal term ascribed to the information communicated within the counseling relationship, and it must be maintained unless keeping that information confidential leads to foreseeable harm. "Serious and foreseeable harm is different for each minor in the school setting and is determined by students' developmental and chronological age, the setting, parental rights and the nature of harm" (ASCA, 2016, A.2.e).

Exceptions to confidentiality exist, and students should be informed when situations arise in which school counselors have a responsibility to disclose information obtained in counseling relationships to others to protect students, themselves or other individuals. Privileged communication between a school counselor and a student is a legal term granting protection to information shared in a counseling relationship only if said privilege is granted by federal or state statute. If privilege applies it can provide additional safeguards to confidential information.

The School Counselor's Role

The role of the school counselor regarding confidentiality is:

- To support the students' right to privacy and protect confidential information received from students, the family, guardians and staff members
- To explain the meaning and limits of confidentiality to students in developmentally appropriate terms
- To provide appropriate disclosure and informed consent regarding the counseling relationship and confidentiality
- To inform students and the family of the limits to confidentiality when:
 - the student poses a danger to self or others
 - there is a court-ordered disclosure
- consulting with other professionals, such as colleagues, supervisors, treatment teams and other support personnel, in support of the student
- privileged communication is not granted by state laws and local guidelines (e.g., school board policies)
- the student participates in group counseling
- substance use and treatment are concerns (CFR 42, Part 2; 2017)
- To keep personal notes separate from educational records and not disclose their contents except when privacy exceptions exist
- To seek guidance from supervisors and appropriate legal advice when their records are subpoenaed
- To communicate highly sensitive student information via face-to-face contact or phone call and not by e-mail or inserting into the educational record
- To request to a court of law that a student's anonymity be used if records are subpoenaed
- To be aware of federal, state and local security standards related to electronic communication, software programs and stored data
- To advocate for security-level protocols within student information systems allowing only certain staff members access to confidential information

- To assert their belief that information shared by students is confidential and should not be revealed without the student's consent
- To adhere to all school board policy and federal and state laws protecting student records, health information and special services (i.e., HIPAA, FERPA, IDEA)

Summary

The counseling relationship between students and their school counselor requires an atmosphere of trust and confidence. Students must trust the school counselor to be able to enter into a meaningful and honest dialogue with the school counselor (Iyer & Baxter-MacGregor, 2010). However, students should be informed that exceptions to confidentiality exist in which school counselors must inform others of information they obtained in the counseling relationship to prevent serious and foreseeable harm to students themselves or others and if it is legally required.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2016). *Ethical standards for school counselors*. Retrieved from <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Ethics/EthicalStandards2016.pdf>

Iyer, N. N., & Baxter-MacGregor, J. (2010). Ethical dilemmas for the school counselor: Balancing student confidentiality and parents' right to know. *NERA Conference Proceedings 2010*. Paper 15. Retrieved from https://opencommons.uconn.edu/nera_2010/15/?utm_source=digitalcommons.uconn.edu%2Fnera_2010%2F15&utm

Lazovsky, R. (2008). Maintaining confidentiality with minors: Dilemmas of school counselors. *Professional School Counseling, 11*, 335-346.

Resources

Akos, P., & Pizzolato, S. (2017). Defining the school counseling relationship: Confidentiality revisited. *Journal of Ethics in Mental Health, 10*, 1-1.

Cottone, R. R., & Tarvydas, V. M. (2016). *Ethics and Decision Making in Counseling and Psychotherapy*, 4th edition. New York: Springer Publishing Company.

Hicks, J. F., Noble, N., Berry, S., Talbert, S., Crews, C., Li, J., & Castillo, Y. (2014). An ethics challenge for school counselors: Part 2. *Journal of School Counseling, 12*(1). Retrieved from: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1034758>.<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1034758>.

Linde, L. E., & Erford, B. T. (2016). Ethical and legal foundations of group work in schools. In B. T. Erford (Eds.), *Group work in schools* (pp. 28-42). New York, NY, US: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.

Remley, T. P., Jr., & Herlihy, B. (2013). *Ethical, legal and professional issues in counseling* (4th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Trice-Black, S., Riechel, M. K., & Shillingford, M. A. (2013). School counselors' constructions of student confidentiality. *Journal of School Counseling, 11*(12). Retrieved from: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1034752>

Online Resources

Confidentiality of Substance Use Disorder Patient Records, Rule CFR 42, Part 2 (2017). Retrieved from <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2017-title42-vol1/xml/CFR-2017-title42-vol1-part2.xml>

U.S. Department of Education. (2017). *Individuals with Disabilities Act*. Retrieved from <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/>

U.S. Department of Education Family Policy Compliance Office. (2015). *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)*. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2017). Your rights under HIPAA. Retrieved from <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-individuals/guidance-materials-for-consumers/index.html>

The School Counselor and Corporal Punishment

(Adopted 1995, Revised 2000, 2006, 2012, 2019)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors oppose the use of corporal punishment and advocate for trauma-sensitive discipline policies and procedures.

The Rationale

Even though corporal punishment has been on a steady decline since the 1970s and has notable negative effects, it is still legal and used in several of the United States (Gershoff & Font, 2016). School counselors recognize the use of corporal punishment is likely to teach children that violence is an acceptable way to resolve differences. Research shows physical punishment to be ineffective in teaching new behaviors, and it is detrimental in teaching problem-solving skills. Corporal punishment is not considered a trauma-sensitive approach to discipline in schools (Afifi et al., 2017) and can have negative effects for students including:

- Increased antisocial behavior such as lying, stealing, cheating, bullying, assaulting a sibling or peers and lack of remorse for wrongdoing
- Increased risk of child abuse
- Erosion of trust between an adult and child
- Adverse effects on cognitive development
- Increased likelihood of suffering from depression and other negative social and mental health outcomes.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors have a responsibility to protect students and to promote healthy student development using multitiered systems of support that incorporate evidence-based practices and strategies in administering discipline and teaching new behaviors promoting positive social/emotional development (Cowan, Vaillancourt, Rossen & Pollitt, 2013). Recognizing culture influences on views of corporal punishment, the school counselor serves as a resource to school personnel and families for the use of effective intervention and alternative discipline strategies. School counselors encourage public awareness of the consequences of corporal punishment, provide strategies on alternatives to corporal punishment and encourage legislation prohibiting the continued use of corporal punishment.

School counselors collaborate with families and school staff to build positive relationships between students and adults with effective alternatives to corporal punishment including but not limited to:

- using behavioral contracts
- setting realistic expectations
- enforcing rules consistently
- creating appropriate and logical consequences for inappropriate behavior
- conferencing with students and/or families with school personnel for planning and reinforcing acceptable behavior
- emphasizing students' positive behaviors
- teaching pro-social, mediation and resolution skills as methods of problem solving
- providing information on parenting programs
- promoting emotional regulation
- teaching and implementing mindfulness practices

Summary

Research shows corporal punishment increases students' anti-social 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 adamantly oppose the use of corporal punishment and advocate for its elimination.

References

- Affi, T.O., Ford, D., Gershoff, E.T., Merrick, M., Grogan-Kaylor, A., Ports, K.A., MacMillan, H.L., Holden, G.W., Taylor, C.A., Lee, S.J., & Bennett, R.P. (2017). Spanking and adult mental health impairment: The case for the designation of spanking as an adverse childhood experience, *Child Abuse & Neglect*, *71*, 24-31, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2017.01.01>
- Cowan, K. C., Vaillancourt, K., Rossen, E., & Pollitt, K. (2013). A framework for safe and successful schools [Brief]. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.
- Gershoff, E. T., & Font, S. A. (2016). Corporal punishment in U.S. public schools: Prevalence, disparities in use, and status in state and federal policy. *Social policy report*, *30*, 1.

The School Counselor and Credentialing and Licensure

(Adopted 1990; revised 1993, 1999, 2003, 2009, 2015, 2021)

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

Effective school counselor credentialing or licensing laws include a definition of the profession, minimum qualifications for entry into the profession and requirements for continuing professional development. All state education certification or licensure agencies are encouraged to adopt the ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies for school counselor credentialing or licensing.

The Rationale

Legislation and/or regulation for school counselor credentialing or licensure ensure students and stakeholders are served by highly qualified and trained professionals. Such legislation should include:

- a description of the role of the school counselor as defined in the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2019b)
- standards for entry into the profession that require, at minimum, a master's degree in school counseling or the substantial equivalent
- requirements for continuing education to further develop skills as a school counselor

Similarly, effective legislation for school counselor certification or licensure reflects the ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies (ASCA, 2019b), includes a description of roles for school counselors as defined in the ASCA National Model (2019a) and establishes state standards for school counselor preparation programs aligned with the ASCA School Counselor Preparation Program Standards (ASCA, 2019c).

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors must be professionally credentialed or licensed in the state in which they practice. School counselors work with state school counseling associations, school counseling preparation program and legislative bodies to advocate for alignment of credentialing or licensing requirements (Carey, et al., 2019) with the ASCA Professional Standards & Competencies for School Counselors. All school counselors are expected to:

- be culturally competent (Ratts & Greenleaf, 2017)
- have skills in evidence-based educational and school counseling practices (ASCA, 2019b; Zyromski, et al., 2018)
- focus on the mindsets and behaviors for student success, including K–12 college- and career- readiness standards for every student, with specific attention to academic, career and social/emotional needs (ASCA, 2019a)
- possess leadership and advocacy skills (Havlik, et al., 2019)
- engage in professional development to maintain credentials and licensure to stay current with best practices in school counseling (ASCA, 2016; ASCA, 2019a)
- have consultation skills and the ability to work collaboratively with educational professionals and stakeholders in the school and community (Bryan, et al., 2017)
- be able to develop, implement and assess school counseling programs (Young & Kaffenberger, 2015)

School counselors collaborate with district and state education personnel and local or state school counselor associations to provide ongoing professional development specifically for school counselors, aligned with the ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies (2019b).

Summary

Effective state school counselor credentialing/licensing laws and regulations align with the ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies (2019b) to ensure highly qualified and trained school counselors.

References

American School Counselor Association (2016). *ASCA ethical standards for school counselors*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

American School Counselor Association (2019a). *ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

- American School Counselor Association (2019b). *ASCA professional standards & competencies*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- American School Counselor Association (2019c). *ASCA school counselor preparation standards*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Baker, S. B., Robichaud, T. A., Dietrich, V. C., Wells, S. C., & Schreck, R. E. (2009). School counselor consultation: A pathway to advocacy, collaboration, and leadership. *Professional School Counseling, 12*(3), 200-206.
- Bryan, J.A., Young, A., Griffin, D., & Holcomb-McCoy, C. (2017). Leadership Practices Linked to Involvement in School-Family-Community Partnerships: A National Study. *Professional School Counseling,* <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X18761897>
- Carey, J. C., & Martin, I. (2015). A review of the major school counseling policy studies in the United States: 2000-2014. Amherst, MA: The Ronald H. Fredrickson Center for School Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation.
- Carey, J.C., Martin, I., Harrington, K., and Trevisan, M.S. (2019). Competence in program evaluation and research assessed by state school counselor licensure examinations, *Professional School Counseling, 22*(1), <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X18793839>
- Havlik, S.A., Malott, K., Yee, T., DeRosato, M. & Crawford, E., (2019) School counselor training in professional advocacy: The role of the counselor educator, *Journal of Counselor Leadership and Advocacy, 6*(1), 71-85, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2326716X.2018.1564710>
- Ratts, M.J., & Greenleaf, A.T. (2017). Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies: A leadership framework for professional school counselors. *Professional School Counseling,* <http://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X18773582>
- Young, A., & Kaffenberger, C. (2015). School counseling professional development: Assessing the use of data to inform school counseling services. *Professional School Counseling,* <https://doi.org/10.5330/1096-2409-19.1.46>
- Zyromski, B., Dimmitt, C., Mariani, M., & Griffith, C. (2018). Evidence-based school counseling: Models for integrated practice and school counselor education. *Professional School Counseling,* <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X1800184>

The School Counselor and Cultural Diversity

(Adopted 1988; revised 1993, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2015, 2021)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors have a professional and ethical responsibility to expand personal multicultural and social justice advocacy, awareness, knowledge and skills to be an effective, culturally competent school counselor. School counselors work toward cultural competence and cultural humility to provide culturally sustaining school counseling. School counselors demonstrate responsiveness by collaborating with students and stakeholders in support of a school and community climate that embraces cultural diversity and helps to promote all students' academic, career and social/emotional development.

The Rationale

Diversity is a “range of cultures and subcultures that represent attitudes, beliefs, values, rituals, symbols, norms and conventions, customs, behaviors and ideologies” (Stone & Dahir, 2016, p. 294). Culture is a powerful and pervasive influence on the attitudes and behaviors of students, stakeholders and school counselors. In response to cultural diversification in schools and communities, school counselors must be more globally responsive and culturally sustaining in the educational and social environment than ever before.

As a part of this charge, school counselors need to continue to enhance knowledge and awareness of prejudice, power and various forms of oppression and utilize culturally responsive skills to support ever-changing student needs (ASCA Ethical Standards, B.3.i, 2016). In support of students, school counselors implement “equitable academic, career and social/emotional developmental opportunities for all students” (ASCA Ethical Standards, 2016, A.3.b.). It is an “expectation, not the exception” for school counselors to integrate multiculturalism and social justice perspectives into their work as advocates and leaders (Ratts and Greenleaf, 2017, p.8).

The School Counselor's Role

The ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (2016) and a “host of voices in school counseling literature point to school counselor advocacy as a key factor in making progress toward this vision of equitable schools and communities. Our vision for equitable, inclusive and culturally sustaining schools can inform our advocacy goals as people and as professionals” (Grothaus, et al., 2020, p. 26).

School counselors can provide culturally responsive counseling by:

- exploring their personal knowledge, attitudes and beliefs about working with diverse student populations
- ensuring each student has access to a school counseling program that advocates for all students in diverse cultural groups
- addressing the impact poverty and social class have on student achievement
- identifying the impact of family culture upon student performance
- delivering culturally sensitive instruction, appraisal and advisement, and counseling
- ensuring all students' rights are respected and all students' needs are met
- consulting and collaborating with stakeholders to create a school climate that welcomes and appreciates the strengths and gifts of culturally diverse students
- using data to measure access to programs and to close disproportionate gaps in opportunity, information and resources that affect achievement among diverse student populations (Henfield et al., 2014)
- enhancing their own cultural competence and facilitating the cultural awareness, knowledge and skills of all school personnel (Ratts & Greenleaf, 2017; Ratts, et al., 2015)

A culturally sustaining school counseling program includes a school counseling program advisory council that incorporates diverse perspectives and has representation reflecting the school's cultural census. Advisory councils can support the school counseling program in the development of goals, culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy. and strategic planning, as well as community bridging, awareness and advocacy (Grothaus, et al., 2020).

Summary

School counselors implement a culturally sustaining school counseling program that creates systematic change through growth, self-awareness, humility, knowledge of worldviews and cultural identities (Grothaus, et al., 2020). School counselors collaborate with all stakeholders to provide relevant interventions and strategies that advocate for and promote social justice for all students (Ratts, 2015, as cited in Grothaus, et al., 2020). Through their school counseling programs, school counselors are positioned to actively become a part of the solution where cultural diversity is fully embraced in schools (ASCA, 2020).

References

- American School Counselor Association. (2016). *ASCA ethical standards for school counselors*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- American School Counselor Association. (2020) *Standards in practice: Eliminating racism and bias in schools: The school counselor's role*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Grothaus, T., Johnson, K. F., & Edirmanasinghe, N. (2020). *Culturally sustaining school counseling*. Alexandria: VA: American School Counseling Association.
- Henfield, M. S., Washington, A. R., & Byrd, J. A. (2014). Addressing academic and opportunity gaps impacting gifted Black males: Implications for school counselors. *Gifted Child Today*, 37(3), 147–154. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/1076217514530118>
- Lekas, H. M., Pahl, K., & Fuller Lewis, C. (2020). Rethinking cultural competence: Shifting to cultural humility. *Health Services Insights*, 13, 1178632920970580. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1178632920970580>
- Ratts, M. J., & Greenleaf, A. T. (2017). Multicultural and social justice counseling competencies: A leadership framework for professional school counselors. *Professional School Counseling*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X18773582>
- Ratts, M., Singh, A., Nassar-McMillian, S., Butler, S. & McCullough, J. (2016). Multicultural and social justice counseling competencies: Guidelines for the counseling profession. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*. 44. 28-48. 10.1002/jmcd.12035.
- Stone, C.B., & Dahir, C.A. (2016). *The transformed school counselor* (3rd ed.). Cengage Learning.

Resources

- American School Counselor Association (2019). *ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs*. Alexandria, VA.
- American School Counselor Association (2019). *ASCA Standards for School Counselor Preparation Programs*. Alexandria, VA.
- Atkins, R., & Oglesby, A. (2019). *Interrupting racism: Equity and social justice in school counseling*. Routledge.
- Chu-Lien Chao, R. (2013). Race/ethnicity and multicultural competence among school counselors: Multicultural training, racial/ethnic identity, and color-blind racial attitudes. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 91, 140-151.
- Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP; 2016). *Social and cultural diversity professional counseling identity*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Frances, D. (2020). *Multicultural counseling: Understanding bias and practicing humility* [Webinar]. American School Counseling Association. <https://videos.schoolcounselor.org/cross-cultural-counseling-understand-bias-and-practice-humility>.
- Guzman, M. R., Calfa, N. A., Kerne, V., McCarthy, C. (2013). Examination of multicultural counseling competencies in school counselors. *Journal of School Counseling*, 11(7), 1-27.
- Howard, T. (2020). *Why race and culture matter in schools: Closing the achievement gap in America's classrooms*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Merlin, C. (2016). *Build multiculturally aware students* [Webinar]. American School Counseling Association. <https://videos.schoolcounselor.org/build-multiculturally-aware-students>.

Merlin-Knoblich, C., Moss, L., Cholewa, B., & Sringer, S. I. (2019). A consensual qualitative research exploration of school counselor multicultural education behaviors. *Professional School Counseling*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X20940637>

Nieto, S & Bode, P. (2018). *Affirming diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural education*. Pearson.

Owens, D., Bodenhorn, N., Bryant, R. M. (2010). Self-efficacy and multicultural competence of school counselors. *Journal of School Counseling*, 8(17), 1-20.

Studer, J. R. (2015). *The essential school counselor in a changing society*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Shure, L., West-Oltunji, C., & Cholewa, B. (2019). Investigating the relationship between school counselor recommendations and student cultural behavioral styles. *Journal of Negro Education*, 88(4), 454-466.

The School Counselor and Discipline

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

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors have specialized training and skills in promoting appropriate student behavior and preventing disruptive student behavior. School counselors are not disciplinarians but should be a resource for school personnel in developing individual and schoolwide discipline procedures. School counselors collaborate with school personnel and other stakeholders to establish policies encouraging appropriate behavior and maintaining safe schools where effective teaching and learning can take place.

The Rationale

Disruptive student behavior is one of the most serious, ongoing problems confronting school systems today (Diliberti, Jackson, & Kemp, 2017). Research suggests such behavior negatively affects classroom learning and school climate (Kremer, Flower, Huang & Vaughn, 2018). To establish and maintain safe and respectful learning environments, school systems must employ adequate mental health personnel and seek effective discipline programs with the commitment and input of all school personnel, including school counselors (Cowan, Vaillancourt, Rossen & Pollitt, 2013). To most effectively promote student achievement and development, school counselors must maintain strength-based relationships with students and, therefore, are not involved in administering discipline. The school counselor should be, by policy, designated as a neutral and resourceful consultant, mediator and student advocate.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors promote positive student behaviors to create a safe, effective learning environment for all students. It is not the school counselor's role to mete out punishment but instead to help create effective behavior change focused on positive, healthy behaviors. Within multitiered systems of support, school counselors:

- Promote wellness and lead prevention efforts to create safe and supportive school environments
- Lead individual and small-group counseling that encourages students to make positive behavior choices and accept responsibility for their actions
- Provide school counselor curriculum and contribute to safe classrooms through appropriate classroom management strategies
- Consult with families, teachers, administrators and other school personnel to understand developmentally appropriate student behavior and promote positive student behavior
- Design and implement positive behavior and intervention support plans for individual students in collaboration with classroom teachers and other school behavior specialists
- Collaborate with school stakeholders to develop, implement and maintain a developmentally appropriate schoolwide discipline program
- Serve as a mediator for student/student, student/teacher and student/family conflicts
- Coordinate and facilitate programs (mentor, peer support, conflict resolution and anger management programs) to assist students in developing pro-social behaviors
- Provide staff development on classroom management, student behavior and discipline strategies such as trauma-sensitive approaches (Reinbergs & Fefer, 2018), restorative practices (Smith, 2017) and emotional regulation of adults and students (Bowers, Lemberger-Truelove, & Brigman, 2017)
- Keep informed of school, district and state policies related to student discipline
- Advocate for best practices for schoolwide discipline, including ensuring objective and equitable disciplinary practices

Summary

School counselors have specialized training and skills in promoting appropriate student behavior and preventing disruptive student behavior. School counselors maintain nonthreatening relationships with students to best promote student achievement and development and serve as a resource for school personnel in developing individual and schoolwide discipline procedures. School counselors should be, by policy, designated as neutral and resourceful consultants, mediators and student advocates. It is not the school counselor's role to serve as an enforcement agent for the school but rather be a significant contributor to the development of the prevention and intervention programs through which problem behaviors are managed and positive behaviors are nurtured.

References

Bowers, H., Lemberger-Truelove, M. E., & Brigman, G. (2017). A social-emotional leadership framework for school counselors. *Professional School Counseling, 21*(1b), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X18773004>

Cowan, K. C., Vaillancourt, K., Rossen, E., & Pollitt, K. (2013). *A framework for safe and successful schools [Brief]*. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Diliberti, M., Jackson, M., and Kemp, J. (2017). Crime, Violence, Discipline, and Safety in U.S. Public Schools: Findings from the School Survey on Crime and Safety: 2015–16 (NCES 2017-122). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC. Retrieved [date] from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch>.

Kremer, K. P., Flower, A., Huang, J., & Vaughn, M. G. (2016). Behavior problems and children’s academic achievement: A test of growth-curve models with gender and racial differences. *Children & Youth Services Review, 67*, 95–104. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2016.06.003>

Reinbergs, E. J., & Fefer, S. A. (2018). Addressing trauma in schools: Multitiered service delivery options for practitioners. *Psychology in the Schools, 55*(3), 250–263. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.22105>

Smith, L. C.; Garnett, B. R.; Herbert, A., Grudev, N., Vogel, J., Keefner, W., Barnett, A., Baker, T. (2017). *Professional School Counseling, 21*(1), 1-10. doi: 10.1177/2156759X18761899

Resources

Intervention Central: Your source for RTI resources. Retrieved from <https://www.interventioncentral.org/>

Institute of Education Sciences. *What Works Clearinghouse*. Retrieved from: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>

The School Counselor and Equity for All Students

(Adopted 2006, revised 2012, 2018)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors recognize and distinguish individual and group differences and strive to equally value all students and groups. School counselors are advocates for the equitable treatment of all students in school and in the community.

The Rationale

According to the U.S. Department of Education, in 2014, the number of students of color in U.S. public schools surpassed that of white students (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). However, white students continue to graduate from high school at higher rates than black and Hispanic students (Kena et al., 2015). In addition, an achievement gap exists along socioeconomic lines.

Many students of color, first-generation and low-income students aspire to college; however, the college application process can present significant obstacles (Page & Scott, 2016). Some students in schools report there is no adult in the school with whom they feel they can discuss these issues, and many of these students come from underrepresented social or cultural groups. These students cannot always rely on their parents for college information and must instead turn to their high schools, where school counselors are in a position proven to increase access for students. School counselors can also play a role in assisting students in identity development contributing to their success (Maxwell & Henriksen, 2012).

Historically, underrepresented populations have faced barriers to participating in a rigorous curriculum and higher-level classes (Vazquez & Altshuler, 2017). School counselors, teachers, administrators and other school staff can be involuntary gatekeepers of access to these classrooms. Research finds that when students and school counselors are able to connect, school counselors have the potential to become empowering agents (Emde, 2015). When students feel like they are being treated in a biased or negative manner, they often exhibit self-destructive behaviors such as truancy, withdrawal, acting out and nonparticipation in class activities. Conversely, when students believe they are treated fairly, they are more likely to be engaged in school, talk about pressing issues and participate in class activities.

Family participation in the college-going decision-making process is critical (Bryan et al., 2011). School counselors are in a position to seek family engagement in the college-going process to ensure students from diverse backgrounds are included. The ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (2016) supports this concept, stating that all students have the right to a school counselor who acts as a social-justice advocate, supporting students from all backgrounds and circumstances and consulting when the school counselor's competence level requires additional support.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors develop and implement a school counseling program promoting equity and access for students. School counselors work to help close achievement, opportunity, attainment and funding gaps in their schools, districts and communities. School counselors are mindful of school and community perceptions of the treatment of underrepresented groups and understand the importance of collaborating with school and community groups to help all students succeed. School counselors demonstrate cultural competence.

School counselors promote equitable treatment of all students by:

- Using data to identify gaps in achievement, opportunity and attainment
- Advocating for rigorous course and higher education for underrepresented groups.
- Maintaining professional knowledge of the ever-changing and complex world of students' culture
- Maintaining knowledge and skills for working in a diverse and multicultural work setting
- Informing school staff of changes regarding different groups within the community
- Promoting the development of school policies leading to equitable treatment of all students and opposing school policies hindering equitable treatment of any student

- Promoting access to rigorous standards-based curriculum, academic courses and learning paths for college and career for all students
- Developing plans to address over- or underrepresentation of specific groups in programs such as special education, honors, Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate
- Creating an environment that encourages any student or group to feel comfortable to come forward with problems
- Collaborating with families in seeking assistance services for financial literacy, job skills and placement and free services (such as childcare assistance) as well as providing parents educational opportunities to assist them in supporting their students' education
- Acting as a liaison between home and school promoting an understanding and encouraging creative solutions for students handling multiple responsibilities beyond a typical load

Summary

School counselors recognize and distinguish individual and group differences and strive to value all students and groups equally. School counselors promote the equitable treatment of all students in school and the community.

References

- American School Counselor Association. (2016). *Ethical standards for school counselors*. Retrieved from <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Ethics/EthicalStandards2016.pdf>
- Bryan, J., Moore-Thomas, C., Day-Vines, N., & Holcomb-McCoy, C. (2011). School counselors as social capital: The effects of high school college counseling on college application rates. *Journal of Counseling and Development: JCD*, 89(2), 190-199. Retrieved from <https://cochise.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/858390747?accountid=7278>
- Emde, R.J. (2015). Parents perceptions of professional school counselors. *Pro-Quest Dissertation Publishing*. 3712287.
- Kena, G., Musu-Gillette, L., Robinson, J., Wang, X., Rathbun, A., Zhang, J. ... Velez, E.(2015). The condition of education 2015 (NCES 2015-144). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch>
- Maxwell, M. J., & Henriksen, R. C., Jr. (2012). Counseling multiple heritage adolescents: A phenomenological study of experiences and practices of middle school counselors. *Professional School Counseling*, 16(1), 18-28. Retrieved from <https://cochise.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/1312675899?accountid=7278>
- Page, L. C. & Scott-Clayton, J. (2016). Improving college access in the United States: Barriers and policy responses. *Economics of Education Review*, 51, 4–22.
- Sterzing, P.R. & Gartner, R. E., Woodford, M. R. & Fisher, C. M. (2017). Sexual orientation, gender, and gender identity microaggressions: Toward an intersectional framework for social work research. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 26(1-2), 81-94, DOI: 10.1080/15313204.2016.1263819
- U.S. Department of Education. (2014). Guiding principles: A resource guide for improving school climate and discipline, Washington, D.C. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/guiding-principles.pdf>

The School Counselor and Gender Equity

(Adopted 1983; revised 1993, 1999, 2002, 2008, 2014, 2020)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors are committed to creating an emotionally, intellectually and physically safe environment for all students and to using inclusive language and positive modeling of gender equity. Creating this environment facilitates and promotes the development of each individual by removing bias and stereotypes for all students in school.

The Rationale

To expand the range of options available to students, it is important that school counselors become acutely aware of ways in which language, organizational structures, leader selection, expectations of individuals and activity implementation affect opportunities based on gender. Many federal and state laws have been passed protecting individuals from gender discrimination in education and work (e.g., Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; Civil Rights Act of 1964; Equal Pay Act of 1963; Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009; Taylor, 1989; Title IX, 2018; Vocational Amendments of 1976; Women’s Educational Equity Act of 1974). These important legal mandates ensure equal treatment under the law but do not necessarily change ingrained attitudes and behaviors.

The School Counselor’s Role

School counselors’ knowledge of human development and skills in assisting students and families in overcoming barriers to learning positions them to teach children healthy interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, to make strong connections with educational opportunities in schools and to ensure every child learns in a safe, healthy and supportive environment. School counselors use inclusive language to reflect identities across the gender spectrum and have equitable expectations of all students. School counselors are sensitive to those aspects of interpersonal communication and organization that provide working models of gender equity and equality. They also promote gender equity through large- and small-group instruction.

School counselors are vigilant to the harmful effects of stereotypical gender-role expectations. As an example, research indicates young children demonstrate basic knowledge about gender stereotypes as they engage in gender segregation as early as preschool in their play and activities that guide their preferences for occupations and career goals (Mulvey & Killen, 2015). Also, school counselors are aware that as children develop their self-concept, they begin to rule out occupations considered incompatible and usually never reconsider them unless they are encouraged to pursue them (Gottfredson, 1996; Gottfredson & Lapan, 1997; Oliveira et al., 2020).

School counselors proactively seek to counter negative or limiting messages and work to prevent bullying and discrimination through direct and indirect student services. Consequently, school counselors emphasize a person’s competence and model positive gender equity while assisting students in positive gender identity as each student currently identifies. In regard to gender expression, Anderson (2020) notes the importance of autonomy of adolescents in developing healthy familial relationships; thus, the school counselor works with families to support the autonomy of the student while recognizing the rights of parents/guardians to guide their children. School counselors become sensitive to ways in which interpersonal attitudes and behaviors can have negative effects on others and provide constructive feedback on negative and positive use of inclusive language and organizational structure.

Summary

School counselors are committed to equity and support consciousness-raising within their profession. School counselors support equal opportunity for all to break through stereotypical gender-based behaviors and expectations. School counselors model inclusive language reflecting identities across the gender spectrum. School counselors actively advocate for equitable policies, procedures, practices and attitudes embracing equity in opportunities and access to resources for all students and colleagues.

References

Age Discrimination in Employment Act: 29 U.S.C. § 621 (1967).

Anderson, J. R. (2020). Inviting autonomy back to the table: The importance of autonomy for healthy relationship functioning. *Journal of Marital & Family Therapy*, 46(1), 3–14. doi:10.1111/jmft.12413.

Civil Rights Act of 1964, Pub.L. 88-352, 78 Stat. 241 (1964).

Education Amendments Act of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §§1681 - 1688 (2018).

Equal Pay Act of 1963, amending section 6 of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as amended, Public Law 88-38, 88th Congress, H.R. 6060 and S. 1409. Washington: U.S. G.P.O.

Gottfredson, L.S. (1996). Gottfredson's theory of circumscription and compromise. In D. Brown & L. Brooks (Eds.), *Career choice and development* (3rd ed.), pp. 179-232. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Gottfredson, L. S., & Lapan, R. T. (1997). Assessing gender-based circumscription of occupational aspirations. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 5(4), 419-441.

Mulvey, K. L., & Killen, M. (2015). Challenging gender stereotypes: Resistance and exclusion. *Child Development*, 86(3), 681-694. doi:10.1111/cdev.12317

Public Law 112-2, 123 Stat.5 (2009). Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act.

Oliveira, Í.M., Porfeli, E. J., Céu Taveira, M., & Lee, B. (2020). Children's career expectations and parents' jobs: Intergenerational (dis)continuities. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 68(1), 63-77. doi:10.1002/cdq.12213

Taylor, D.A. (1989) Affirmative action and presidential executive orders. In: *Affirmative Action in Perspective. Recent Research in Psychology*. Springer, New York, NY

Vocational Education Amendments, H.R. 12835, 94th Cong. (1976). Women's Educational Equity Act, H.R. 12344, 93rd Cong. (1974).

Resources

Human Rights Campaign Welcoming Schools

www.welcomingschools.org/

The School Counselor and Gifted and Talented Student Programs

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

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

The school counselor delivers a school counseling program to meet students' academic, career and social/emotional needs. Gifted and talented students have unique and diverse developmental needs that are addressed by school counselors within the scope of the school counseling program and in collaboration with other educators and stakeholders.

The Rationale

Research suggests gifted and talented students may share common personality characteristics, such as perfectionism, sensitivity and idealism (Mammadov, Cross & Ward, 2018). Within the school counseling program, school counselors create an environment in which the academic, career and social/emotional development of all students, including gifted and talented students, is fostered (Kennedy & Farley, 2018).

Purposeful gifted and talented education programs include several benefits: assisting the gifted student in college and career goals, defining postsecondary and career plans and increasing achievement levels. (Colangelo, Assouline & Gross, 2004; Delcourt, 1993; Hébert, 1993; Taylor, 1992). School counselors consider these needs when implementing developmentally appropriate activities as a part of a school counseling program (ASCA, 2019).

Research also suggests that ongoing exposure to micro-aggressions directed at marginalized students creates an environment where students fear the label of gifted and talented (Staumbaugh & Ford, 2014). The issue of overrepresentation of Asian and white students in gifted education programs was described in a data collection from the Office of Civil Rights (OCR). The data reveals American Indian, Hispanic and African American student groups have been underrepresented in elementary and secondary school gifted education programs since 1978 (US OCR, 2004).

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors provide consultation in the identification of gifted and talented students when appropriate through the use of a districtwide, multiple-criterion system (i.e., intellectual ability; academic performance; visual and performing arts ability; practical arts ability; creative-thinking ability; leadership potential; parent, teacher, peer nomination; expert assessment) when appropriate. The definition of gifted and talented requirements differs by state and district. School counselors are involved in the analysis of data obtained from multi-criterion sources and are not responsible for the coordination, collection, and/or administration of the multi-criterion system or any assessment used in the selection process.

School counselors advocate for the inclusion of, and the participation in, activities that effectively address the academic, career, and social/emotional needs of gifted and talented students at all academic levels. School counselors assist in promoting understanding and awareness of the unique issues that may both positively and negatively affect gifted and talented students including:

- accelerated learning
- advocacy for access to rigorous and appropriately challenging programs
- meeting expectations
- perfectionism
- stress management
- depression
- anxiety
- underachievement
- dropping out
- delinquency
- difficulty in peer relationships
- twice exceptional (e.g., identified as gifted and talented and an identified disability; Foley Nicpon & Cederberg, 2015)
- advanced talent in various fields
- intellectual abilities
- high-achieving outcomes

School counselors provide individual and group counseling for gifted and talented students as needed and serve as a resource for gifted and talented students and their families in meeting the students' needs. School counselors are aware of students who are gifted and culturally diverse. Consequently, school counselors seek to identify marginalized students, students of color, English-language learners and first-generation students in order for them to have the most academically aligned experience (Mitcham-Smith, 2007). School counselors are prepared to address the needs of culturally diverse students in a holistic manner to incorporate effective and relevant strategies for students' success. School counselors also seek to keep current on the latest gifted and talented programming research and recommendations to employ best practices to meet the needs of identified students and collaborate with other school personnel to maximize opportunities for all gifted and talented students.

Summary

School counselors deliver a school counseling program to meet students' academic, career and social/emotional needs. Students identified as gifted and talented have unique developmental needs and special abilities, which are considered when implementing a school counseling program. Specifically planned educational experiences can greatly enhance the continued development of gifted and talented students (Sohailat, Soua'd & Mouhamed, 2013). School counselors work in collaboration with other school personnel to maximize opportunities for gifted and talented students.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2019). *ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.

Colangelo, N., Assouline, S., & Gross, M. (Eds). (2004). *A nation deceived: How schools hold back America's brightest students*. Iowa City, IA: The University of Iowa, pp. 109-117.

Colangelo, N. & Davis, G. (2003). *Handbook of Gifted Education*, Third edition. Boston, Allyn & Bacon.

Delcourt, M. A. B. (1993). Creative productivity among secondary school students: Combining energy, interest, and imagination. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 37, 23-31.

Foley Nicpon, M., & Cederberg, C. (2015). Acceleration practices with twice-exceptional students. In S. G. Assouline, N. Colangelo, J. VanTassel-Baska, A. Lupinski-Shoplik (Eds.) *A Nation Empowered*. Iowa City, IA: Belin-Blank Center.

Hébert, T. P. (1993). Reflections at graduation: The long-term impact of elementary school experiences in creative productivity. *Roeper Review*, 16, 22-28.

Kennedy, K. & Farley, J. (2018). Counseling gifted students: School-based considerations and strategies. *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education*, 10(3), 363–367. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.26822/iejee.2018336194>

Mammadov, S., Cross, T. L., & Ward, T. J. (2018). The big five personality predictors of academic achievement in gifted students: Mediation by self-regulatory efficacy and academic motivation. *High Ability Studies*, 29(2), 111–133. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/13598139.2018.1489222>

Mitcham-Smith, M. (2007). Advocacy-professional school counselors closing the achievement gap through empowerment: A response to Hipolito-Delgado and Lee. *Professional School Counseling*, 10(4), 341-343.

Sohailat M. B., Soua'd, M. G., & Mouhamed, S. B. (2013). The reality of counseling services provided by the school counselor for gifted and talented students in the Jordanian government school. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Studies*, 7(2), 151-166. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.24200/jeps.vol7iss2pp151-166>

Stambaugh, T., & Ford, D. Y. (2015). Microaggressions, multiculturalism, and gifted individuals who are Black, Hispanic, or low income. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 93(2), 192–201. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2015.00195.x>

Taylor, L. A. (1992). The effects of the Secondary Enrichment Triad Model and a career counseling component on the career development of vocational-technical school students. Storrs, CT: The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented, University of Connecticut.

U.S. Office for Civil Rights. (2004). Office for civil rights elementary and secondary school survey projections and documentation. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Author.

Wood, S. (2010). Best practices in counseling the gifted in schools: What's really happening? *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 54, 42-58.

Resources

Bakar, A. Y. A. & Ishak, N. M. (2014). Counseling services for Malaysian gifted students: An initial study. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counseling*, 36(4), 372- 383.

Greenspon, T. S. (2014). Is there an antidote to perfectionism? *Psychology in the Schools*, 51(9), 986-999.
doi:10.1002/pits.21797

Hogan, T.P. (2015). *Psychological testing: A practical introduction* (3rd Ed.). Hoboken, JJ: John Wiley & Sons.

McClain, M., & Pfeiffer, S. (2012). Identification of gifted students in the United States today: A look at state definitions, policies, and practices. *Journal of Applied School Psychology*, 28, 59-88. doi:10.1080/15377903.2012.643757

Zeidner, M., & Shani-Zinovich, I. (2013). Research on personality and affective dispositions in gifted children: The Israeli scene. *Gifted and Talented International*, 28(1), 35-50.

The School Counselor and Group Counseling

(Adopted 1989; revised 1993, 2002, 2008; reviewed 1999, 2008, 2014, 2020)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

Group counseling is a vital direct service to students and is an effective part of a school counseling program. It has a positive effect on academic, career and social/emotional development and should be supported by school administration and school districts.

The Rationale

Group counseling, which involves a number of students working on shared tasks and developing supportive relationships in a group setting, is an efficient, effective and positive way of providing direct service to students with academic, career and social/emotional developmental issues and situational concerns. Group counseling has been shown to be effective in improving study skills (Kayler & Sherman, 2018), underachievement (Berger, 2018) and school adjustment (Steen, Liu, Shi, Rose, & Merino, 2018). Group counseling can help reduce social isolation and negative emotions, as well as increase positive peer relations and a sense of belonging. In group counseling, affect, cognition and behavior are emphasized. The group creates a climate of trust, caring, understanding and support that enables students to share their concerns with peers and the school counselor. Group work in schools represents an integral domain in the ASCA National Model (Erford, 2019; ASCA, 2019).

The School Counselor's Role

The school counselor's training in group facilitation is unique to the school setting. School counselors provide group counseling services to students and utilize their specialized training to educate and inform school staff and administration on relevant professional group issues or topics. Group counseling services are based on individual student, school and community needs, which are assessed through student data, a referral process or other relevant data.

School counselors prioritize group offerings based on school data analysis. Group counseling should be available to all students in a pre-K–12 setting using data to inform decisions about group availability. School counselors have a responsibility to screen potential group members and address informed consent, purpose of the group, goals, limits to confidentiality and voluntary participation. Best practice will include parental/guardian consent and student agreement to participate (Falco 2011).

School counselors provide counseling sessions in small-group settings that:

- help students overcome issues impeding achievement or success
- help students identify problems, causes, alternatives and possible consequences so they can make decisions and take appropriate action
- are planned, goal-focused, evidenced-based and short-termed in nature

School counselors do not provide therapy or long-term counseling in schools to address psychological disorders. However, school counselors are prepared to recognize and respond to student mental health crises and needs. School counselors address those barriers to student success by offering instruction that enhances awareness of mental health and short-term intervention to include small-group counseling until the student is connected with available community resources. When students require long-term counseling or therapy, school counselors make referrals to appropriate community resources (ASCA, 2019) and maintain collaborative relationships with providers to align service coordination.

Summary

Group counseling is an efficient and effective way to meet students' academic, career and social/emotional needs. Group counseling makes it possible for students to achieve healthier academic and personal growth in a rapidly changing global society. Group counseling is an integral part of a school counseling program and should be supported by school administrators and school districts. The school counselor's training in group process benefits students, families, school staff and administration. Group counseling has a positive effect on academic achievement and personal growth.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2019). *ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.

Bore, S., Armstrong, S., & Womack, A. (2014). School counselors' experiential training in group work. *GROUP Counseling*. Retrieved from <http://jsc.montana.edu/articles/v8n26.pdf>

Berger, C. (2018). Bringing out the brilliance: A counseling intervention for underachieving students. *Professional School Counseling, 17*(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X0001700102>

Erford, B.T. (2019). *Transforming the School Counseling Profession*. (5th ed.) Boston, MA/Pearson Merrill.

Erford, B.T. (2019). *Group work: Process an application* (2nd. Ed.). Columbus, OH: Pearson Merrill.

Falco, L. D. (2011). Why groups? The importance of group counseling in schools. *School Counseling Research and Practice, Journal of the Arizona School Counselors' Association, 3*, 17-23.

Kayler, H., & Sherman, J. (2009). At-risk ninth-grade students: A psychoeducational group approach to increase study skills and grade point averages. *Professional School Counseling, 12*(6). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X0901200608>

Steen, S., Liu, X., Shi, Q., Rose, J. & Merino, G. (2018). Promoting school adjustment for English-language learners through group work, *Professional School Counseling, 21*(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X18777096>

The School Counselor and High-Stakes Testing

(Adopted 2002, Revised 2007, 2014, 2017)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors recognize that standardized test results are one of many measures that can be used to assess student learning and performance across standards. School counselors advocate for the use of multiple criteria when educational decisions such as course enrollment and admissions are made about student performance and oppose the use of a single test to make important educational decisions affecting students, teachers and schools.

The Rationale

High-stakes testing, which refers to the use of standardized test scores to make important decisions about students, schools and districts, was a prominent part of the No Child Left Behind Act passed in 2001 (NCLB, 2002). High-stakes test results have been used as a method to determine a student's: academic placement, promotion and retention, graduation and intervention services. Other decisions made using standardized test results for schools and districts include:

- increased or reduced funding at the state or local level
- revision of curriculum
- revision of teacher certification standards
- appropriate accommodations for students with exceptional learning needs and English-language learners
- decisions about school closings
- evaluation of instructional personnel

When high-stakes assessments are used in this manner, they have a direct and significant effect on the academic future of the student being assessed and, increasingly, on the teacher's career and reputation and the school's status in the community, as well as access to local, state and federal school funding (Duffy, Giordano, Farrell, Paneque, & Crump, 2008). When results from standardized tests are the only factors used to make educational decisions, these decisions may not be fully informed and could lead to biased decision-making. It is important to consider all factors that can provide additional information related to student achievement.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), enacted in 2015, represents a legislative move toward identifying multiple measures to assess student success. The act encourages an approach to testing that moves away from a sole focus on standardized tests to drive decisions around the quality of schools to multiple measures of student learning and progress, including other indicators of student success to make school accountability decisions (White House, 2015). School counselors continue to advocate for reasonable use of multiple measures to assess student achievement and determine need for school improvement at the local and state levels.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors recognize that standardized test results provide valuable information related to student achievement. However, school counselors also understand that some students struggle with standardized test practices that prevent these tests from providing an accurate reflection of their capabilities. Additionally, school counselors recognize that standardized tests only provide a partial picture of student learning. When important educational decisions are made, school counselors advocate for the use of multiple criteria in the decision-making process. These criteria may include but are not limited to:

- Standardized tests results
- Teacher input
- Portfolios
- Projects
- Work samples
- Classroom performance
- Recommendation letters
- Personal statement
- Student access to curriculum and courses

School counselors support the school's educational initiatives by organizing and implementing a school counseling program aligned with the school's academic mission and providing support to students, teachers and administrators by:

- Monitoring student achievement data and achievement-related data (e.g., grades, attendance, school engagement, discipline referrals, retention rates, SAT/ACT)
- Disaggregating data to inform instruction and strengthen curriculum
- Providing support to teachers through collaboration and teaming
- Providing direct student services in the areas of study skills, test-taking skills, stress reduction and test anxiety among other topics
- Working with administrators on home-school communication to aid in maintaining a healthy school and classroom assessment environment (Cizek & Burg, 2006)
- Advocating to postsecondary institutions that students should be considered holistically throughout the admissions process

School counselors recognize some of the unintended consequences as a result of mandated, high-stakes assessments include: a redirection of time and resources away from innovative, creative learning programs and school counseling programs toward strict emphasis on basic skills (McReynolds, 2006); the belief that student achievement is best measured by a standardized assessment as compared with multiple and culturally contextual criteria; and student and family anxiety and stress, as well as educator stress and burnout (Duffy et al., 2008). In collaboration with other educators, school counselors also advocate for:

- appropriate testing conditions and administration of standardized tests with solid psychometric properties
- opportunities to retake a test when a student is unsuccessful in one administration
- opportunities to take comparable tests when a student is unsuccessful in one administration
- the use of standardized tests norm-referenced with representative student populations
- discontinuation of standardized tests that show socioeconomic or cultural bias

The school counselor's role should not include clerical or administrative activities that take the school counselor away from implementing a school counseling program (i.e., test coordination or monitoring make-up tests). Research has shown that serving in these capacities is not compatible with the school counselor's role and prevents the school counselor from having a positive impact on student achievement, school climate and the school's academic mission directly (Mullen & Lambie, 2016). When these roles are inappropriately assigned, school counselors should employ advocacy skills (e.g., outlining the distribution of time in the school counselor/administrator annual administrative conference) to respectfully help administrators understand that school counselors' time should be invested in working with students and staff on issues such as test-taking skills, time-management skills and stress management within the framework of a school counseling program.

Summary

School counselors work with staff and students in implementing strategies that support students in the test-taking process. School counselors recognize the use of standardized test results as one of many measures of student achievement and success. School counselors reject the use of high-stakes tests or the use of any other single measurement instrument as the only indicator of student success. The school counselor encourages multiple measures when life-influencing decisions are being made.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2019). *ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.

Duffy, M., Giordano, V. A., Farrell, J. B., Paneque, O. N., & Crump, G. B. (2008). No child left behind: Values and research issues in high-stakes assessments. *Counseling and Values, 53*, 53-66.

McReynolds, K. (2006). The No Child Left Behind Act raises growing concerns. *Encounter: Education for Meaning and Social Justice, 19*, 33-36.

Mullen, P. R., & Lambie, G. W. (2016). The contribution of school counselors' self-efficacy to their programmatic service delivery. *Psychology in the Schools, 53*(3), 306-320. doi:10.1002/pits.21899

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Pub. L. No. 107-110, 20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq. (2002).

Whitehouse. FACT SHEET: Congress Acts to Fix No Child Left Behind. December 02, 2015. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/12/03/fact-sheet-congress-acts-fix-no-child-left-behind>

The Professional School Counselor and the Identification, Prevention and Intervention of Behaviors That Are Harmful and Place Students At-Risk

(Adopted 1989-90; revised 1993, 1999, 2004, 2011, 2017)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors work collaboratively with students, families, school administration and community members to implement a preventive, school counseling program, which includes early warning systems for identifying students who may be engaging in harmful or risky behaviors, as well as developmentally appropriate, culturally sensitive interventions and supports addressing those behaviors and promoting student resilience and success.

The Rationale

All schools and communities have students who could potentially drop out of school and/or engage in destructive behaviors such as absenteeism, performing below their potential academically, substance abuse, bullying, cyberbullying, suicidal ideation, physical violence or engaging in self-harm and other destructive or dangerous behaviors. Additionally, schools and communities may have environmental, resource or policy issues inadvertently contributing to student failure and harmful behaviors (Holcomb-McCoy, 2007). These behaviors can have devastating lifelong implications and often stem from social/emotional concerns including: low self-esteem, family and relationship problems, grief, trauma, neglect, abuse and/or substance use. Implementing trauma-informed practices may help staff with interventions while maintaining sensitivity to students (Haviland, 2017).

The School Counselor's Role

The school counselor advocates for school-based interventions and mental health referrals before moving toward expulsion or other disciplinary measures and provides proactive leadership in identifying, preventing and intervening with student at-risk behaviors. Using data to develop and assess preventive and responsive services to address these risks is an integral part of a school counseling program. The school counselor collaborates with staff, schoolwide teams, parents/guardians and the community to identify students who are participating in harmful behaviors and intervenes with these students to limit or eliminate the risk of harm or negative consequences. White and Kelly (2010) delineated many evidence-based practices school counselors can use to address protective and risk factors. School counselors take a leadership role in enhancing students' strengths and reducing their risk factors by:

- enhancing social support through a peer mentoring or buddy system
- assigning adults as monitors or mentors for students, clearly delineating roles that specify how to address any mental health issues or concerns
- providing school counseling classroom and group lessons to increase student knowledge and awareness of the dangers of harmful behaviors as well as cultivating attitudes and skills that promote success such as resiliency, grit and a growth mindset
- providing responsive services, including short-term individual and group counseling
- referring students and families to appropriate support services and community agencies
- collaborating with school staff to identify and assist students in crisis
- conducting staff development for school and district staff
- providing information, consultation and support to parents/guardians to increase familial involvement
- advocating for changes in the school and community to promote resilience, success and equitable access to needed resources

Summary

By implementing a school counseling program, school counselors collaborate with other educators and stakeholders to provide prevention, early identification and trauma-informed interventions for all students to minimize or eliminate harmful behaviors placing students at risk.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2016). *ASCA ethical standards for school counselors*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Haviland, S. (2017). A districtwide effort. *ASCA School Counselor*, 54(3), 14-18.

Holcomb-McCoy, C. (2007). *School counseling to close the achievement gap: A social justice framework for success*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

White, S., & Kelly, F. (2010). The school counselor's role in school dropout prevention. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 88(2), 227-235.

Resources

O'Grady, K. (2017). Transforming schools with trauma-informed care. *ASCA School Counselor*, 54(3), 8-13.

Internet Resource Links

http://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/PositionStatements/PS_MultitieredSupportSystem.pdf

<https://www.pbis.org/school/mtss>

<http://dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies/>

<https://acestoohigh.com/2015/05/31/resilience-practices-overcome-students-aces-in-trauma-informed-high-school-say-the-data/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/>

http://www.nhstudentwellness.org/uploads/5/3/9/0/53900547/fact-sheet-adverse-childhood-experiences_final.pdf

The School Counselor and Individual Student Planning for Postsecondary Preparation

(Adopted 1994, Revised 2000, 2006, 2012, 2013, 2017)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors recognize that each student possesses unique interests, abilities and goals, which will lead to various future life and career opportunities. Collaborating with students, families, educational staff and the community, the school counselor works to ensure all students develop an academic and career plan reflecting their interests, abilities and goals and including rigorous, relevant coursework and experiences appropriate for the student.

Rationale

Academic and college/career planning provides all students with the opportunity to identify strengths, areas in need of improvement and areas of interest early in their education, so students and their families can set postsecondary goals and make informed choices to support students in achieving their desired goals (Conley, 2013; Darling-Hammond, Wilhoit, & Pittenger, 2014). The focus of academic and career planning is threefold: to help students acquire the skills to achieve academic success, to make connections between school and life experiences and to acquire knowledge and skills to be college and/or career ready upon high school graduation. According to Savitz-Romer and Bouffary (2013), academic and career planning includes supporting a variety of developmental processes (e.g., self-concept, motivation, goal setting, self-regulation, identity development and relationship development).

ASCA recognizes college and career readiness begins as early as preschool or kindergarten, is exemplified by students who are prepared for any postsecondary experience without the need for remediation and ensures all students possess the attitudes, skills and knowledge needed to qualify for and succeed in their chosen field.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors understand national, state and local requirements and programs that may affect future opportunities for college and career readiness and therefore play a critical role in academic and career planning. The school counselor takes a proactive role in assisting students, families and staff as they assess student strengths and interests and encourage the selection of a rigorous and relevant educational program supporting all students' college and career goals. School counselors provide all students the opportunity to:

- Demonstrate skills needed for school success
- Demonstrate the connection between coursework and life experiences
- Make course selections that allow them the opportunity to choose from a wide range of postsecondary options
- Explore interests and abilities in relation to knowledge of self and the world of work
- Identify and apply strategies to achieve future academic and career success
- Demonstrate the skills for successful goal setting and attainment
- Develop a portfolio to highlight strengths and interests

Summary

School counselors collaborate with administrators, teachers, staff, families and the communities to ensure all students have the opportunity to design a rigorous and relevant academic and career program preparing them to be college and career ready. School counselors design and implement a school counseling program that includes educational and career planning activities for all students designed to assist students in reaching academic, career and social/emotional goals.

References

American School Counselor Association (2019). *ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.

Conley, D. (2013). *Getting ready for college, careers, and the Common Core: What every educator needs to know*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Darling-Hammond, L., Wilhoit, G., & Pittenger, L. (2014). Accountability for college and career readiness: Developing a new paradigm. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 22(86), 1-35.

Savitz-Romer, M. & Bouffard, S.M. (2013). *Ready, willing, and able: A developmental approach to college access and success*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

The School Counselor and Letters of Recommendation

(Adopted 2020)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors work ethically when writing letters of recommendation for students. To guide their work, school counselors rely on the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (2016) and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA; 1974), which is a federal statute protecting parents' and students' rights regarding educational records (Stone, 2014).

The Rationale

In their role as student advocates, school counselors use best practices to help all students achieve their aspirations. They recognize that letters of recommendation play a significant role in admissions decisions; notably, they are the third most-used predictor of college success following the GPA and test scores (Kuncel, Kochevar & Ones, 2014). In addition, it has been found that often “the letters are used not only to determine admissibility, but also to determine eligibility for scholarships and honors invitations” (Akos and Kretchmar, 2016, p. 102).

School counselors help students and their families understand the value of letters of recommendation and the positive impact these letters can provide all students in the postsecondary planning process. School counselors are familiar with inequities in higher education such as wealthier families enrolling their students in college at higher rates than lower-income families, particularly in highly selective institutions (Harris, 2019). Also noted by the National Center for Education Statistics, “The percentage of the lowest SES students who were neither enrolled [in postsecondary education] nor employed was roughly five times as large as the corresponding percentage for the highest SES students” (NCES, 2019, para. 5). In recognition of the disparities that exist in admission to postsecondary institutions and employment opportunities by race, ethnicity and geography (Brainerd, 2017), school counselors work to mitigate the impact of injustice and inequity and support all students in achieving their goals beyond high school.

The School Counselor's Role

When requested by students to write letters of recommendation, school counselors must balance their support for students by using a strengths-based approach (beneficence) while maintaining honest, conscientious communication without harm to students (nonmaleficence). Additionally, as school leaders and advocates, school counselors help school staff, students, and their families understand the legal and ethical practices having an impact on letters of recommendation as well as the role these letters play in admission processes and future employment opportunities.

School counselors understand that offering to provide letters of recommendation cannot be made conditional on waiving ones' rights afforded them under FERPA (Family Policy Compliance Office [FPCO], 2005). They also understand that an educational agency or institution may not require parents or students to waive the protections and rights afforded them under FERPA (U.S. Department of Education, 2009) as a condition for acceptance into an institution or receipt of educational services.

In regard to letters of recommendation, school counselors:

- Maintain familiarity of federal and state laws and local school board policies concerning personal identifiable information
- Include personal identifiable information only with dated, written consent of student and/or parents/guardians
- Educate students and their families on the impact of waiving rights to view recommendations sent to potential postsecondary institutions and/or employers
- Advise students on appropriate content for admissions applications
- Provide teachers and administrators with training, orientation and consultation about considerations in writing letters of recommendation (National Association for College Admission Counseling, 2012)
- Promote ethical administration of standardized exams and reporting of test scores and other records
- Consider implications of releasing disciplinary records as a part of a final transcript
- Work to gather ample information before writing a letter of recommendation about a student they do not know well
- Do not sign letters of recommendation they have not written

Summary

There are many legal and ethical implications associated with writing letters of recommendation for students. School counselors are aware of these implications, apply them in their practice and communicate them to students, their families and educators to best support students as they seek employment and postsecondary opportunities.

References

Akos, P., & Kretchmar, J. (2016). Gender and ethnic bias in letters of recommendation: Considerations for school counselors. *Professional School Counseling, 20*(1), 102. doi:10.5330/1096-2409-20.1.102

American School Counselor Association. (2016). *ASCA ethical standards for school counselors*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Brainard, L. (2017). Why persistent employment disparities matter for the economy's health. Retrieved from <https://www.federalreserve.gov/newsevents/speech/brainard20170926a.htm>

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g (1974). Retrieved from <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/20/1232g>

Family Policy Compliance Office. (2005). *Letter to College of Southern Maryland*. Retrieved from <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/letter-college-southern-maryland>

Harris, A. (2019). The education scandal that's bigger than Varsity Blues. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved June 7, 2019, from: <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2019/05/education-scandals-bigger-varsity-blues/590137/>

Kuncel, N. R., Kochevar, R. J., & Ones, D. S. (2014). A meta-analysis of letters of recommendation in college and graduate admissions: Reasons for hope. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment, 22*(1), 101-107. doi:10.1111/ijsa.12060

National Center for Education Statistics. (2019). The condition of education: Young adult educational and employment outcomes by family socioeconomic status. Retrieved June 7, 2019, from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_tbe.asp

National Association for College Admissions Counseling. (2012). *Fundamentals of college admissions counseling* (3rd ed.). Arlington, VA: Author.

Stone, C. (2014). *Negligence in writing letters of recommendation*. Retrieved from <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/magazine/blogs/march-april-2014/negligence-in-writing-letters-of-recommendation>

Resources

National Association for College Admission Counseling. (2019). *Recs that change lives*. Retrieved June 7, 2019, from <https://www.nacacnet.org/news--publications/journal-of-college-admission/recs-that-change-lives/>

National Association for College Admission Counseling. (2017). *Step by step: College awareness and planning for families, counselors and communities*. Retrieved June 7, 2019, from <https://www.nacacnet.org/advocacy--ethics/initiatives/steps/>

The School Counselor and LGBTQ Youth

(Adopted 1995, Revised 2000, 2005, 2007, 2013, 2014, 2016)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors promote equal opportunity and respect for all individuals regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. School counselors recognize the school experience can be significantly more difficult for students with marginalized identities. School counselors work to eliminate barriers impeding LGBTQ student development and achievement.

The Rationale

Despite widespread efforts, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) students continue to face challenges that threaten their academic and social/emotional development in schools. Students report feeling unsafe in school due to their sexual orientation, perceived orientation, gender identity or gender expression and report experiencing homophobic remarks, harassment and bullying (GLSEN, 2012). LGBTQ individuals often face multiple risk factors that may place them at greater risk for suicidal behavior (CDC, 2011). School counselors realize these issues affect healthy student development and psychological well-being.

The School Counselor's Role

The school counselor works with all students through the stages of identity development and understands this may be more difficult for LGBTQ youth. It is not the school counselor's role to attempt to change a student's sexual orientation or gender identity. School counselors recognize the profound harm intrinsic to therapies alleging to change an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity (SAMHSA, 2015) and advocate to protect LGBTQ students from this harm. School counselors provide support to LGBTQ students to promote academic achievement and social/emotional development. School counselors are committed to the affirmation of all youth regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression and work to create safe and affirming schools. School counselors:

- counsel students with feelings about their sexual orientation and gender identity as well as students' feelings about the identity of others in an accepting and nonjudgmental manner
- advocate for equitable educational and extracurricular opportunities for all students regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression
- advocate for gender-nonconforming students in regard to access of building facilities (e.g., ensuring a safe environment for restroom use and changing) and gender presentation (e.g., wearing a dress or pants for an orchestra or vocal performance)
- promote policies that effectively reduce the use of offensive language, harassment and bullying and improves climate
- address absenteeism, lowered educational aspirations and academic achievement and low psychological well-being as a result of victimization and feeling unsafe at school (GLSEN, 2012)
- provide a safe space for LGBTQ students and allies such as Gay and Straight Alliance Clubs
- promote sensitivity and acceptance of diversity among all students and staff to include LGBTQ students and diverse family systems
- advocate for the rights of families to access and participate in their student's education and school activities without discrimination (GLSEN, 2009)
- support an inclusive curriculum at all grade levels
- model language that is inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity
- advocate for adoption of school policies addressing discrimination and promoting violence-prevention programs to create a safe and supportive school environment (Robinson & Espelage, 2012)
- support students in addressing possible discrimination by staff members
- encourage staff training on inclusive practices, creating an affirming school environment, accurate information and risk factors for LGBTQ students (Russell et al. 2010)
- know the impact of family acceptance on student well-being and ability to thrive (Ryan, 2014)
- support families whose children are coming out by helping them navigate these important developmental milestones in ways that protect LGBTQ students from harm and help families stay together (Ryan, 2014)
- identify LGBTQ community resources for students and families and assess the quality and inclusiveness of these resources before referring to such resources

Summary

School counselors promote affirmation, respect and equal opportunity for all individuals regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. School counselors promote awareness of and education on issues related to LGBTQ students and encourage a safe and affirming school environment. School counselors work to eliminate barriers impeding student development and achievement and are committed to the academic, career and social/emotional development of all students.

References

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2011). Sexual identity, sex of sexual contacts, and health-risk behaviors among students in grades 9-12 — youth risk behavior surveillance, selected sites, United States, 2001-2009. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report: Surveillance Summaries*, 60(7), 1-133.
- Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network. (2012). *Playgrounds and prejudice: Elementary school climate in the United States*. New York, NY: GLESEN and Harris Interactive.
- Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network. (2009). *Harsh Realities: The Experiences of Transgender Students in Our Nation's Schools*. Retrieved from <http://www.glsen.org/learn/research/national/report-harsh-realities>
- Hatzenbuehler, M. L. (2011). The social environment and suicide attempts in lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth. *Pediatrics*. Published online April 18, 2011.
- Robinson, J. P., & Espelage, D. L. (2012). Bullying explains only part of LGBTQ heterosexual risk disparities: Implications for policy and practice. *Educational Researcher*, 41(8), 309-319.
- Russell, S., Koslow, J., Horn, S., & Saewyc, E. (2010). Social policy report, safe schools policy for LGTBQ students. *Sharing Child and Youth Development Knowledge*, 24(4). Retrieved from http://srcd.org/sites/default/files/documents/spr_24_4_final.pdf
- Ryan, C. (2014). *A practitioner's resource guide: Helping families to support their LGBT children*. HHS Publication No. PEP14-LGBTKIDS. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2015). *Ending conversion therapy: Supporting and affirming LGBTQ youth*. HHS Publication No. (SMA) 15-4928. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
- Resources**
- APA Task Force on Appropriate Therapeutic Responses to Sexual Orientation. (2009). *Report of the task force on appropriate therapeutic responses to sexual orientation*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Kosciw, J. G., Greytak, E. A., Palmer, N. A., & Boesen, M. J. (2014). *The 2013 National School Climate Survey: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth in our nation's schools*. New York, NY: GLESEN.
- Movement Advancement Project. (2012). *An ally's guide to issues facing LGBT Americans*. Denver, CO: Author.

The School Counselor and Multitiered System of Supports

(Adopted 2008, revised 2014, 2018, revised 2021)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors are stakeholders in the development and implementation of multitiered system of supports (MTSS), including, but not limited to, response to intervention and responsive positive behavioral interventions and supports. School counselors align their work with MTSS through the implementation of a school counseling program designed to affect student development in the academic (achievement), career (career exploration and development) and social/emotional (behavior) domains.

The Rationale

MTSS is a culturally sustaining, evidence-based framework implemented in pre-K–12 schools using data-based problem-solving to integrate academic and behavioral instruction and intervention at tiered intensities to improve the learning and social/emotional functioning of all students (Sink, 2016). Guided by student-centered data, MTSS teams engage in cyclical data-based problem solving; make informed decisions about general, compensatory and special education; and assist in the creation of a well-integrated and seamless system of instruction and intervention (Ehren, Montgomery, Rudebush, & Whitmire, 2006).

Within the framework of a data-informed school counseling program, school counselors augment their collaboration, coordination and leadership skills (Shepard et al., 2013) to meet the needs of all students and identify students who are at risk for not meeting academic and behavioral expectations. School counselors collaborate across student service disciplines with teachers, administrators and families to design and implement plans to address student needs and to promote students' academic, career and social/emotional success (ASCA, 2019). Data is collected and analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the learning supports for continual improvement efforts over time.

MTSS offers school counselors opportunities to have a lasting impact on student academic success and behavior development while integrating the framework within a school counseling program (Ziomek-Daigle, Goodman-Scott & Donohue, 2016). The application of MTSS aligns with the role of school counseling at any grade level and can be used across the academic, college/career and/or social/emotional domains established in the ASCA National Model (Goodman-Scott et al., 2020).

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors enhance student academic, career and social/emotional development through the implementation of a school counseling program based on the ASCA National Model (2019). Through these programs, school counselors align with the school's MTSS by:

- providing all students with standards-based school counseling instruction to address universal academic, career and social/emotional development
- analyzing academic, career and social/emotional development data to identify students who need support
- identifying and collaborating on research-based intervention strategies implemented by school staff
- evaluating academic and behavioral progress after interventions
- revising interventions as appropriate
- referring to school and community services as appropriate
- collaborating with administrators, teachers, other school professionals, community agencies and families in MTSS design and implementation
- advocating for equitable education for all students and working to remove systemic barriers

School counselors align their school counseling program with MTSS by providing direct and indirect student services including:

- Tier 1 interventions in the form of classroom instruction and schoolwide programming and initiatives
- Tier 2 interventions including small-group and individual counseling, consultation and collaboration with school personnel, families and community stakeholders
- Tier 3 indirect student support services through consultation, collaboration and facilitation of referrals (Goodman-Scott, et al., 2020).

Additionally, school counselors provide Tier 1 services by emphasizing the use of data and collaboration (Betters-Bubon et al., 2016; Betters-Bubon & Donohue, 2016; Goodman-Scott et al., 2016) and engage in evidence-based prevention work (Goodman-Scott et al., 2014). In Tier 2, school counselors provide direct services such as targeted group counseling (Sherrod et al., 2009) and individualized interventions (e.g., check in, check out; Dart et al., 2012) (Goodman-Scott, et al., 2020). In Tier 3, typically school counselors only provide indirect services as supporters through consultation, collaboration and facilitation of referrals as members of the MTSS team (Goodman-Scott, et al., 2020).

School counselors collaboratively support the process of MTSS universal screening for mental health (Donohue et al., 2016), academic and behavioral supports. The school counselor may also provide indirect student service by presenting data or serving as a consultant to a student support team. The school counselor engages as part of the leadership team in MTSS but “should not be the sole leader of MTSS in our buildings” (Goodman-Scott, et al., 2020, p. 33).

Summary

School counselors implement school counseling programs addressing the needs of all students. Guided by review of student data, school counselors deliver instruction, appraisal and advisement to students in Tier 1 and 2 and collaborate with other specialist instructional support personnel, educators and families to provide appropriate instruction and learning supports for students in Tier 2 within the school’s MTSS program. School counselors also work collaboratively with other educators to remove systemic barriers for all students and implement specific learning supports that assist in academic and behavioral success.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2019). *ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.

Betters-Bubon, J., Brunner, T., & Kansteiner, A. (2016). Success for all? The role of the school counselor in creating and sustaining culturally responsive positive behavior interventions and supports programs. *Professional Counselor, 6*(3), 263–277.

Betters-Bubon, J., & Donohue, P. (2016). Professional capacity building for school counselors through school-wide positive behavior interventions and supports implementation. *Journal of School Counseling, 14*(3).

Donohue, P., Goodman-Scott, E., & Betters-Bubon, J. (2016). Using universal screening for early identification of students at risk: A case example from the field. *Professional School Counseling, 19*(1), 133–143.
<https://doi-org.wsuproxy.mnpals.net/10.5330/1096-2409-19.1.133>

Dart, E. H., Cook, C. R., Collins, T. A., Gresham, F. M., & Chenier, J. S. (2012). Test driving interventions to increase treatment integrity and student outcomes. *School Psychology Review, 41*, 467-481.

Ehren, B., Montgomery, J., Rudebusch, J., & Whitmire, K. (2006). *New roles in response to intervention: Creating success for schools and children*. Retrieved from <https://www.asha.org/uploadedFiles/slp/schools/prof-consult/rtiroledefinitions.pdf>

Goodman-Scott, E., Betters-Bubon, J., Olsen, J., & Donohue, P. (2020). *Making MTSS Work*. American School Counselor Association.

Goodman-Scott, E., Doyle, B., & Brott, P. (2013). An action research project to determine the utility of bully prevention in positive behavior support for elementary school bullying prevention. *Professional School Counseling, 16*(1), 1-10.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X1301700101>

Sherrod, M.D., Getch, Y., & Ziomek-Daigle, J. (2009). The impact of positive behavior support to decrease discipline referrals with elementary students. *Professional School Counseling, 12*, 421-427.

Shepard, J.M., Shahidullah, J.D., & Carlson, J.S. (2013). *Counseling Students in Levels 2 and 3: A PBIS/RTI Guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin/Sage.

Sink, C. (2016). Incorporating a multi-tiered system of supports into school counselor preparation. Retrieved from <http://tpcjournal.nbcc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Pages203-219-Sink.pdf>

Ziomek-Daigle, J., Goodman-Scott, E., Cavin, J., & Donohue, P. (2016). Integrating a multi-tiered system of supports with comprehensive school counseling program. <http://tpcjournal.nbcc.org/integrating-a-multi-tiered-system-of-supports-with-comprehensive-school-counseling-programs/>

Resources

Bettters-Bubon, J., Donohue, P., Edirmanasinghe, N., Goodman-Scott, E., Olsen, J., Pianta, R. & Sweeney, D. (2021). School counselors for MTSS. <https://www.schoolcounselors4mtss.com/>

McIntosh, K. & Goodman, S. (2016). *Integrated Multi-Tiered System of Supports: Blending RTI and PBIS*. Guilford Press.

The School Counselor and Peer Support Programs

(Adopted 1978; Revised 1984, 1993, 1999, 2002, 2008, 2015, 2021)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

Peer support programs help students develop an improved sense of well-being, social confidence and health behaviors (Curren & Wexler, 2016). The informed implementation of peer support programs enhances the effectiveness of school counseling programs and provides increased outreach and expansion of services.

The Rationale

Development of relational peer networks in schools can improve students' academic achievement and social supports (Williams et al., 2018). Specifically, peer support programs can be defined as peer-to-peer interaction in which individuals who are of approximately the same age take on a helping role, assisting students who may share related values, experiences and lifestyles. Peer support programs include activities such as assistance in one-to-one and group settings, academic/educational help, new student aid and other diverse activities of an interpersonal helping nature.

School counselors are aware that students often communicate more readily to peers than adults. Peer support programs can enhance the effectiveness of school counseling programs by increasing outreach and raising student awareness of services. Through proper selection, training and supervision, peer support can be a positive influence within the school and community. Research indicates peer support programs are helpful when focused on assisting students with social/emotional or academic problems and disabilities (Logsdon, et al., 2018), while promoting protective factors (e.g., developmental assets determined by the Search Institute). Peer support programs can also help create a positive school culture and connectedness to the school community for both mentors and mentees (Voight & Nation, 2016) as well as safer schools (Walker, 2019).

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors are responsible for determining the needs of the school population and for implementing interventions designed to meet those needs, such as peer support programs. In collaboration with school staff, school counselors:

- follow the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors as they relate to peer support programs, including safeguarding the welfare of students participating in peer support programs and providing appropriate training and supervision for peer helpers (ASCA, 2016; QPR, 2019)
- use best practices when developing and implementing peer support programs (Berger, et al., 2018)
- create a selection plan for peer helpers reflecting the diversity of the population to be served
- develop a support system for the program that communicates the program's goals and purpose through positive public relations
- monitor, assess and adjust the program and training on a continual basis to meet the assessed needs of the school population the program serves
- report results to all school stakeholders (e.g., students, teachers, administrators, parents, community)

Summary

School counselors understand and build upon the positive effects of peer support programs on students, the school climate and culture, as well as the school connectedness of students involved. School counselors also understand their unique responsibilities when peer-support programs are implemented, including ensuring students are properly trained, supervised and supported in their role.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2016). *ASCA ethical standards for school counselors*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Berger, J., Black, D.R., & Routson, S. (2018). 2018 revised NAPPP programmatic standards rubric. *Perspectives in Peer Programs*, 28(1), 18-59. Retrieved from: http://www.peerprogramprofessionals.org/uploads/3/4/7/4/34744081/persinpeerprogv28_1_.pdf.

Curran, T., & Wexler, L. (2017). School-based positive youth development: A systematic review of the literature. *Journal of School Health, 87*(1), 71-80.

Logsdon, P., Samudre, M., Kleinert, H., & University of Kentucky, H. D. I. (2018). A Qualitative Study of the Impact of Peer Networks and Peer Support Arrangements in Project Pilot Schools. Research Brief. Winter 2018. Human Development Institute.

QPR Institute (2019). QPR Training for Youth Guidelines: Policies and Procedures. <https://qprinstitute.com/uploads/instructor/QPR-Training-for-Youth-Guidelines-2019.pdf>

Search Institute. (2006). Developmental Assets. <https://www.search-institute.org/our-research/development-assets/developmental-assets-framework/>

Voight, A. & Nation, M. (2016). *Practices for improving secondary school climate: A systematic review of the research literature*. *American Journal of Community Psychology 58*, 174-191.

Walker, T. (2019, November 14). *Peer programs helping schools tackle student depression, anxiety*. National Education Association. <https://www.nea.org/advocating-for-change/new-from-nea/peer-programs-helping-schools-tackle-student-depression-anxiety>

Williams, J.M., Greenleaf, A. T., Barnes, E. F., & Scott, T. R. (2019). High-achieving, low-income students' perspectives of how schools can promote the academic achievement of students living in poverty. *Improving Schools, 22*(3), 224-236. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1365480218821501>

The School Counselor and Prevention of School-Related Gun Violence

(Adopted 2018; revised 2019)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors collaborate with school staff and the community to ensure students attend schools where the environment is conducive to teaching and learning. To support the work of school counselors and school staff, schools and communities should be free from gun violence and threats. School counselors support safe schools and are responsive in crises as emphasized in the *Safe Schools and Crisis Response* (2019) position statement.

The Rationale

Gun violence is the leading cause of premature death in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2018) reported that an average of seven children and teens are killed with guns in the United States every day. The Interdisciplinary Group on Preventing School and Community Violence in a Call for Action to Prevent Gun Violence in the United States of America (2018) outlined three levels of prevention. Those recommendations related to school counseling include:

- **Level 1.** Universal approaches promoting safety and well-being, including requirement for all schools to assess school climate and maintain physically and emotionally safe conditions and positive school environments that protect all students and adults from bullying, discrimination, harassment, and assault (e.g., Donohue, Goodman-Scott, & Betters-Bubon, 2015).
- **Level 2.** Practices for reducing risk and promoting protective factors for persons experiencing difficulties, including adequate staffing of school counselors, psychologists, and social workers to provide coordinated school- and community-based mental health services for individuals with risk factors for violence, recognizing violence is not intrinsically a product of mental illness (e.g., Levine & Tamburrino, 2014); and reformation of school discipline policies to reduce exclusionary practices and foster positive social, behavioral, emotional and academic success for students (e.g., Goodman-Scott, Betters-Bubon & Donohue, 2015).
- **Level 3.** Interventions for individuals where violence is present or appears imminent, including training and maintaining school- and community-based threat assessment teams that include mental health and law enforcement partners with channels of communication for persons to report potential threats as well as interventions to resolve conflicts and assist troubled individuals (e.g., Helgeson & Schneider, 2015).

Research has shown that positive school climate is tied to high or improving attendance rates, test scores, promotion rates and graduation rates. Conversely, negative school climate can harm students and raise liability issues for schools and districts. Negative school climate is linked to lower student achievement and graduation rates, and it creates opportunities for violence, bullying and even suicide (NCSSL, 2018). Research on the increasing trend calling for armed school personnel has demonstrated that armed personnel may create a negative school climate (Rajan & Branas, 2018; Swartz, Osborne, Dawson-Edwards, & Higgins, 2016; Weiler & Armenta, 2014).

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors are educational leaders and advocates of safe-school initiatives and are a vital resource in the creation, development and implementation of best-practice strategies designed to improve school climate fostering engagement, support, and acceptance of all students (MacNeil, Prater & Busch, 2009). Consequently, school counselors should advocate for school counseling programs fostering all students' social/emotional and academic well-being. According to Cowan, Vaillancourt, Rossen and Pollitt (2013), school counselors support a comprehensive approach to safe schools by:

- supporting proactive principal leadership
- allowing school leaders to deploy human and financial resources in a manner that best meets school and community needs
- providing a team-based framework to facilitate effective coordination of services and interventions
- balancing the needs for physical and psychological safety
- employing the necessary and appropriately trained school-employed mental health and safety personnel
- providing relevant and ongoing professional development for all staff
- integrating a continuum of mental health supports within a multitiered systems of support
- engaging families and community providers as meaningful partners
- remaining grounded in teaching and learning (the mission and purpose of schools)

ASCA joins more than 75 national education, medical, health, public health and research organizations in a call to action to address the epidemic of gun violence in our communities. All school counselors are encouraged to advocate for recommendations adopted by other national organizations representing education stakeholders and the safety of all students. Additionally, school counselors are encouraged to advocate for implementation of the following recommendations at the federal level rather than state-by-state in an effort to prevent interstate gun sales and transport:

- Support a ban on military-style weapons, high-capacity ammunition clips and products that modify semi-automatic firearms to enable them to function like automatic firearms
- Support closing loopholes for gun purchases at gun shows and online
- Support requirements for thorough background checks for all gun purchases and strengthen background check criteria to prevent purchases by high-risk individuals
- Oppose any efforts to arm educators (including teachers, school counselors and administrators)

Summary

Through the implementation of a school counseling program, school counselors promote school safety through advocacy efforts. Advocating for schools that are free from gun violence and threats can assist school counselors in supporting safe schools.

References

AASA Position Paper on School Safety. (2013). A response to the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary, Approved by the AASA Governing Board.

American School Counselor Association. (2019). *The School Counselor and Safe Schools and Crisis Response*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Call for Action to Prevent Gun Violence in the United States of America. (2018). Retrieved from <https://curry.virginia.edu/prevent-gun-violence>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2018). Fatal injury data. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal.html>

Cowan, K. C., Vaillancourt, K., Rossen, E., & Pollitt, K. (2013). A framework for safe and successful schools [Brief]. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Donohue, P., Goodman-Scott, E., & Betters-Bubon, J. (2015). Using universal screening for early identification of students at risk: A case example from the field. *Professional School Counseling, 19*(1), 133–143. <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/10.5330/1096-2409-19.1.133>

Goodman-Scott, E., Betters-Bubon, J., & Donohue, P. (2015). Aligning comprehensive school counseling programs and positive behavioral interventions and supports to maximize school counselors' efforts. *Professional School Counseling, 19*(1), 57–67. <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/10.5330/1096-2409-19.1.57>

Helgeson, S., & Schneider D. (2015). Authentic community-based youth engagement: Lessons from across the nation and through the lens of violence prevention. *National Civic Review, 104*(3), 16–23. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ncr.21234>

Levine, E., & Tamburrino, M. (2014). Bullying among young children: Strategies for prevention. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 42*(4), 271–278. <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/10.1007/s10643-013-0600-y>

MacNeil, A. J., Prater, D. L., & Busch, S. (2009). The effects of school culture and climate on student achievement. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 12*(1), 73–84.

Miller, T. W., & Kraus, R. F. (2008). School-related violence: Definition, scope, and prevention goals. In *School Violence and Primary Prevention* (pp. 15–24). Springer, New York, NY. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-77119-9_2

National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments. (2018). Retrieved from: <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/safe-and-healthy-students/school-climate>

Rajan, S., & Branas, C. C. (2018). Arming school teachers: What do we know? Where do we go from here? *American Journal of Public Health, 108*(7), 860–862. Retrieved January 18, 2019 from <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2018.304464>

Swartz, K., Osborne, D. L., Dawson-Edwards, C., & Higgins, G. E. (2016). Policing schools: Examining the impact of place management activities on school violence. *American Journal of Criminal Justice, 41*(3), 465–483. Retrieved January 18, 2019 from <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12103-015-9306-6>

Weiler, S. C., & Armenta, A. D. (2014). The fourth r—revolvers: Principal perceptions related to armed school personnel and related legal issues. Retrieved January 18, 2019 from *Clearing House, 87*(3), 115–118. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00098655.2014.891891>

The School Counselor and Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections

(Adopted 1988; revised 1993, 1999, 2001, 2006, 2012, 2018)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

The school counselor supports educational efforts related to the prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), through engagement with students, families, school staff and the community to prevent infection and the spread of these infections. The school counselor collaborates with other school health personnel in these efforts, while recognizing the importance of student/family confidentiality. The school counselor provides support, counseling and referral services to students and their families affected by these infections.

The Rationale

Current research suggests that formal sex education addressing topics such as the prevention of STIs has been in decline since 2011 (Lindberg, Maddow-Zimet, & Boonstra, 2016); yet, we know that lack of information about STIs may put adolescents' health at risk as they explore multiple facets of their identities. As a part of a student support services team, school counselors have the opportunity and responsibility to provide students with developmentally appropriate, accurate and current health information regarding STIs and to help them develop healthy attitudes and habits. Risk can be reduced when adolescents understand the causes and potential consequences of sexual behaviors and experimentation and learn multiple ways to prevent acquiring and spreading of STIs (Chin et al., 2012). School counselors are poised within the schools to provide this education and prevention information to students and their families. Students and families affected by STIs have a right to confidentiality and equitable treatment in schools (ASCA, 2016).

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors collaborate with school health personnel (e.g., school nurse, health instructors, physical education instructors and life science instructors) to provide counseling, support and educational programs for students, staff and families. As a part of the school counseling program, the school counselor addresses STIs not as a moral issue but through prevention and nonbiased support efforts. The school counselor strives through professional development to maintain a current understanding of the recommendations and resources regarding the nature of STIs and appropriate means of prevention.

The school counselor is familiar with and complies with school policy and federal, state and local laws as well as the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (2016) regarding STIs. The school counselor understands and upholds HIPAA and FERPA laws protecting confidentiality of students and families affected by STIs. The school counselor is alert to any form of discrimination on the basis of a student's STI status. The school counselor advocates on behalf of students and families affected by STIs for equity and access to educational opportunities and health care, maintenance of confidentiality and referrals to available resources to assist them.

As a part of the school counseling program, the school counselor is an advocate and direct service provider for the implementation of an STI education curriculum in collaboration with the school's other health curriculum providers. The STI education curriculum includes instruction for students, families and staff promoting healthy living and responsibility to self, family and society. Preventive education is recommended for populations currently less likely to receive adequate STI education: males (Donaldson, Lindberg, Ellen, & Marcell, 2013), rural students (Lindberg et al., 2016) and LGBTQ groups (Gowen & Winges-Yanez, 2014).

Specific elements may include general information about STIs, including knowledge of:

- behaviors that put people at risk
- methods of transmission
- health risks to self and others
- related nondiscrimination and confidentiality policies
- prevention efforts
- accurate information dispelling myths and stereotypes
- referral information for health clinics providing testing and treatment

Summary

The school counselor promotes educational efforts related to STIs while providing support and counseling to students and families affected by these infections. The school counselor's approach to STI-related issues is through education and prevention efforts, by keeping abreast of current recommendations and resources in collaboration with health care professionals in the school and community.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2016). *ASCA ethical standards for school counselors*. Retrieved from: <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Ethics/EthicalStandards2016.pdf>

Chin, H. B., Sipe, T. A., Elder, R., Mercer, S. L., Chattopadhyay, S. K., Jacob, V., & ... Santelli, J. (2012). The effectiveness of group-based comprehensive risk-reduction and abstinence education interventions to prevent or reduce the risk of adolescent pregnancy, human immunodeficiency virus, and sexually transmitted infections: Two systematic reviews for the guide to community preventive services. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 42(3), 272-294. doi:10.1016/j.amepre.2011.11.006

Donaldson, A. A., Lindberg, L. D., Ellen, J. M. & Marcell, A. V. (2013). Receipt of sexual health information from parents, teachers, and healthcare providers by sexually experienced U.S. adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 53, 235-240.

Gowen, L. K., & Wings-Yanez, N. (2014). Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning youths' perspectives of inclusive school-based sexuality education. *Journal of Sex Research*, 51(7), 788-800. doi:10.1080/00224499.2013.806648

Harris, G.E., & Jeffrey, G. (2010). School counsellors' perceptions on working with student high- risk behavior. *Canadian Journal of Counselling*, 44(2), Article 531.

Lindberg, L. D., Maddow-Zimet, I., & Boonstra, H. (2016). Changes in adolescents' receipt of sex education, *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 58, 621-627.

Resources

Center for Disease Control and Prevention: Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH)
http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/about/hivstd_prevention.htm

Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA): <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/reg/ferpa/index.html>

Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN):
<https://www.glsen.org/article/call-action-youth-parents-community-members-educators-and-policymakers>

Guttmacher Institute State Laws and Policies: <https://www.guttmacher.org/state-policy/laws-policies>

Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule:
<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/administrative/privacyrule/index.html>

National Coalition of STD Directors Promoting Sex Healthy through STD Prevention Adolescent Sexual Health:
<http://www.ncsddc.org/resources/>

Sexually Transmitted Diseases – Prevention <https://www.cdc.gov/std/prevention/default.htm>

The School Counselor and the Promotion of Safe Schools through Conflict Resolution and Bullying/Harassment Prevention

(Adopted 1994/2000, Revised 2005, 2011, 2016)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors recognize the impact a safe, orderly and caring environment has on student achievement and social/emotional development. To promote this type of environment, school counseling programs promote the inclusion of anti-bullying/harassment and violence-prevention programs, schoolwide positive behavior interventions and support, along with comprehensive conflict-resolution programs to foster a positive school climate.

The Rationale

Research shows promoting a positive school climate and developing positive relationships with caring adults is key to improving school success and reducing bullying, harassment and excessive disciplinary problems (Davis, 2005). Academic success and test scores go up, and discipline problems go down when there is a positive school environment (Doll, 2010). Incidents involving bullying, harassment, violence, weapons or gang behavior threaten student and staff safety (Van Velsor, 2009). Students, parents/guardians, staff and policy makers recognize the need to provide a safe school environment.

Prevention activities are integral to creating a safe school environment that is free of fear, bullying, harassment and violence. Delivered by school counselors, teachers, administrators and qualified community experts, prevention programs increase the opportunity for improved academic achievement, appropriate behavior, positive relationships, successful resolution of conflicts, safe school climate and increased attendance. Participating in prevention activities empowers and encourages students to take responsibility for their behavior and for the climate of their school and community.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors collaborate with others in the school and community to promote safe schools and confront issues threatening school safety. School counselors encourage the development of local policies supporting a safe school environment, and they provide leadership to the school by assisting in the design and implementation of schoolwide prevention activities and programs. School counselors also advocate for state and national policies supporting these efforts. Additionally school counselors recognize differentiated interventions are needed for bullying and resolving a conflict. Comprehensive anti-bullying/anti-harassment/violence-prevention and conflict-resolution programs require data-informed decision making, coordination, instruction and program assessment. These programs are most effective when incorporated into the academic curriculum by all members of the school community (Young, Hardy, Hamilton, Biernesser, Sun, & Niebergall, 2009). The school counselor includes prevention programs as a part of the school counseling program and ensures these programs include training in key skills in peacefully resolving issues such as:

- communication skills
- conflict-resolution skills
- decision-making skills
- development of cultural competence
- acceptance of differences
- intervention strategies for bullying/harassment
- recognition of early warning signs of violence
- prevention/intervention services
- appropriate use of technology and social media
- community involvement
- parent/guardian and faculty/staff education
- assessment of program effectiveness
- building positive staff and student relationships
- mental health awareness training
- bystander training (e.g., QPR, SOS)

Summary

School counselors understand positive effects of a safe, orderly and caring school environment. Through participation in prevention programs and activities aimed at anti-bullying, anti-harassment and violence prevention, students learn communication, problem-solving and conflict resolution skills that help them achieve their goals and also establish successful relationships. School counselors collaborate with teachers, administrators, parents/guardians and the community to deliver prevention programs encouraging student growth and achievement and ensuring a safe school climate.

References

Davis, S. (2005). *Schools where everyone belongs*. Research Press: Champaign, IL.

Doll, B. (2010). Positive school climate. *Principal Leadership*. Retrieved from http://www.nasponline.org/resources/principals/School_ClimatePLDec10_ftsp.pdf.

Van Velsor, P. (2009). School counselors as social-emotional learning consultants: Where do we begin? *Professional School Counseling, 13*(1), 50-58.

Young, A., Hardy, V., Hamilton, C., Biernesser, K., Sun, L., & Niebergall, S. (2009). Empowering students: Using data to transform a bullying prevention and intervention program. *Professional School Counseling, 12*(6), 413-420.

The School Counselor and Retention, Social Promotion and Age-Appropriate Placement

(Adopted 2006, revised 2012, 2017)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors recognize that decisions on student retention, promotion and placement are best made when the student's needs are at the forefront of the decision and after multiple factors have been considered. School counselors oppose laws or policies requiring social promotion or retention and advocate for laws and policies that consider individual student needs with regard to age-appropriate placement. When laws and/or policies require social promotion or retention, school counselors refer to the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (2016) to support students' academic, career and social/emotional development.

The Rationale

Research has demonstrated that student educational success is hindered through the use of retention, and no evidence supports retention for struggling learners (Reschly & Christenson, 2013). Even though some states and school districts have instituted laws or policies requiring mandatory retention or promotion of students who do not achieve academic standards, other interventions such as transitional classes, frequent progress monitoring, peer tutoring and individualized interventions delivered through a multitiered system of support show more academic promise for students who have difficulty learning. School counselors advocate for alternate interventions first, before recommending retention of a student.

Research shows negative effects from retention as the student grows older (Vandecandelaere, Vansteelandt, De Fraine, & Van Damme, 2016). If a student is retained, he or she is likely to experience increased feelings of shame and stress as well as negative feelings toward self and school. These negative feelings toward school are often expressed as acts of aggression or despair and may lead to the student dropping out of school. These students tend to continue to have negative life issues. Math and reading scores, which initially rise after retention, decline over time with retained students demonstrating lower achievement scores compared with their grade-level peers. Research indicates students most often retained fall into one or more of these groups:

- racial or ethnic minority status, especially black or Hispanic
- male
- late birthday
- delayed development, particularly fine and gross motor development
- behavioral issues, such as attention difficulties
- limited English proficiency
- in an impoverished home
- in a single-parent household
- chronic absenteeism
- low parental educational attainment
- low parental educational involvement
- social/emotional issues
- highly mobile or transient family

Social promotion is defined as the practice of passing students along from grade to grade with peers even if the students have not satisfied academic requirements or met performance standards at designated grade levels. Although social promotion is intended to promote self-esteem, research on social promotion indicates it can lower the student's or others' expected standards of student achievement and/or can give students and their parents a false sense of accomplishment.

Neither retention nor social promotion has been proven to be effective in remediation of learning difficulties or in maintaining academic gains. In cases where students have academic difficulty, early intervention is crucial, as well as differentiating instruction to help students reach their potential. Additionally, improved teaching strategies, curriculum enhancements and focused, evidenced-based interventions have been demonstrated to be effective for student success and are less costly.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors have a professional and ethical obligation to protect students from practices hindering academic, career and social/emotional development. School counselors are aware of the detrimental effects of grade retentions and social promotions on students, schools and the community and advocate for the repeal of laws or policies promoting mandatory retentions or social promotion. School counselors share educational and social research with students, families, the community and decision makers so the decisions related to promotion and retention are made in the students' best interest.

School counselors promote alternatives to retention, social promotion and age-appropriate placement by supporting and advocating for:

- Research-based educational reforms that deliver best teaching and school counseling practice
- Comprehensive school counseling programs in all schools to address academic and social/emotional competence and behavioral obstacles to learning
- Early identification using available data to identify strengths and deficits to provide appropriate evidenced-based interventions
- A team approach to decision making that includes school counselors, teachers, administrators, student support workers and families to determine appropriate educational interventions
- Career and technical education opportunities for middle and high school students
- Literacy strategies to improve reading for all students
- Funding for prekindergarten programs taught by credentialed teachers
- Extended school year for remediation and curriculum enhancement for struggling learners and under-challenged learners
- Reduced class size
- Increased parent engagement and volunteer involvement in schools
- Education of families on research-based reading strategies to assist their children in developing academic skills

Summary

Research shows the negative impact retention and social promotion can have on student success. School counselors collaborate with students, families and educational leaders to consider the individual student's needs when making decisions on retention and social promotion and advocate to change laws or policies promoting mandatory retentions or social promotion.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2016). *ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors*. Alexandria, VA: American School Counselor Association.

Silberglitt, B., Jimerson, S. R., Burns, M. K., Appleton, J. J. (2006). Does the timing of grade retention make a difference? Examining the effects of early versus later retention. *General Issue*, 134-141.

Crego, A., Gershwin, D., Schuyler Ikemoto, G., Sloan McCombs, J., Le, V., Nataraj Kirby, S., Marsh, J.A., Mariano, L.T., Naftel, S., Setodji, C. M., and Xia, N. (2009). *Ending social promotion without leaving children behind: The case of New York City*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG894.html>. Also available in print form.

Jimerson, S., Pletcher, S., & Graydon, K. (2006). Beyond grade retention and social promotion: Promoting the social and academic competence of students. *Psychology in the Schools*, 43(1), 85-97.

Lynch, M. (2013). Alternative to social promotion and retention. *Interchange*, 44, 291.

Nagaoka, J. & Roderick, M. (2004) *Ending social promotion: The effects of retention*. Charting Reform in Chicago Series: Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Reschly, A. L. & Christenson, S. L. (2013). Grade retention: Historical perspectives and new research. *Journal of School Psychology*, 51(3), 319-322.

Vandecandelaere, M., Vansteelandt, S., De Fraine, B., & Van Damme, J. (2016). The effects of early grade retention: Effect modification by prior achievement and age. *Journal of School Psychology*, 54, 77-93. doi:10.1016/j.jsp.2015.10.004

Resources

Davoudzadeh, P., McTernan, M. L., & Grimm, K. J. (2015). Early school readiness predictors of grade retention from kindergarten through eighth grade: A multilevel discrete-time survival analysis approach. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 32, 183-192. doi:10.1016/j.ecresq.2015.04.005

Moser, S. E., West, S. G., & Hughes, J. N. (2012). Trajectories of math and reading achievement in low achieving children in elementary school: Effects of early and later retention in grade. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1037/a0027571

Internet Resource Links

Assessment Reform Network. <http://fairtest.org>

National Association of School Psychologists-Position Paper on Student Grade Retention and Social Promotion. Retrieved from <https://www.nasponline.org/x26820.xml>

Riley, Richard and others. Taking Responsibility for Ending Social Promotion: A Guide for Educators and State and Local Leaders. Retrieved from <http://standardizedtests.procon.org/sourcefiles/taking-responsibility-for-ending-social-promotion.pdf>

Brown, B., & Forchheh, N. (2014). Strategies to Achieve Congruence between Student Chronological Age and Grade Placement in the Compulsory Phase of Education in Botswana. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?q=%22%22&ff1=subAge+Grade+Placement&id=EJ1075813>

The School Counselor and Safe Schools and Crisis Response

(Adopted 2000; revised 2007, 2013, 2019)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors serve as leaders (ASCA, 2016; Oliver, Fleck, & Money-Brady, 2016) in safe-school initiatives. ASCA seeks to promote safe schools as can be noted in its many position statements, including Gun Safety, Promotion of Safe Schools through Conflict Resolution and Bullying/Harassment Prevention, Safe Schools and Crisis Response, and School Safety and the Use of Technology. Positive perceptions, school climate and overall school health are increased with schoolwide safety programming (Goodman-Scott & Grothaus, 2018).

The Rationale

All students need a safe, violence-free environment for learning. School counselors present themselves as a familiar, approachable resource to students, families and staff as they lead in schools, and they bridge communication between parties (Bray, 2016). Lapan, Wells, Petersen and McCann (2014) confirmed that the most positive protection for youth, both in and out of schools, is a connected school environment with responsive counseling services. Lapan et al. (2014) noted that this also helps to negate adverse effects of situations that could lead to risks. In their research of secondary students, Lapan et al. (2014) reported that those who felt their school counselor personally knew and responded to their concerns reported feeling safer and more connected in school.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors are vital resources in preventing violent incidents, intervening when concerns arise about potential violence and responding when violence occurs (Jonson, 2017). Through the implementation of a school counseling program, school counselors promote school safety, avail themselves for disclosure of threats, redirect students engaging in unhealthy or unsafe behaviors and make mental health referrals as needed (Duplechian & Morris, 2014; Nijs, Bun, Tempelaar, de Wit, Burger, Plevier & Boks, 2014; Kingston, Mattson, Dymnicki, Spier, Fitzgerald, Shipman & Elliott, 2018). School counselors are familiar with the school community and knowledgeable about the roles of community mental health providers and first responders such as law enforcement officials and emergency medical responders (Cowan, Vaillancourt, Rossen & Pollitt, 2013).

Safe school and crisis response literature (Garran & Rasmussen, 2014; Rajan & Branas, 2018; Swartz, Osborne, Dawson-Edwards & Higgins, 2016) suggests several important crisis prevention and response preparedness practices in which school counselors should engage, including:

- providing individual and group counseling
- advocating for student safety by recommending school personnel put consistent procedures, communication and policies in place
- providing interventions for students at risk of dropping out or harming self or others
- offering peer mediation training, conflict resolution programs and anti-bullying programs
- supporting student-initiated programs such as Students Against Violence Everywhere
- providing family, faculty and staff education programs
- facilitating open communication between students and caring adults
- defusing critical incidents and providing related stress debriefing
- participating in district and school response team planning and practices and helping ensure students and staff are able to process/understand crisis response drills
- promoting trauma-informed practices
- advocating for restorative justice programs
- partnering with community resources

School counselors engage in roles congruent with their training. When school counselors are screening students for mental health conditions as part of a student support services team, they should use caution as noted in the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors in the section discussing risk assessments (A.9.b.). School counselors should avoid engaging in roles during drills that are incompatible with the school counseling role, such as acting as the school shooter/invader and trying to get into locked rooms to test that teachers/students are following protocol.

Summary

School counselors are leaders in safe school initiatives and actively engage themselves in fostering safety and in responding to critical response situations in schools. School counselors are a vital resource in preventing, intervening, and responding to crisis situations.

References

- American School Counselor Association Position Statements. (2019). Retrieved May 10, 2019, from <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors-members/publications/position-statements>
- American School Counselor Association, (2016). *ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors*. Retrieved from <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Ethics/EthicalStandards2016.pdf>
- Bray, B. (2019, January 18). The counselor's role in ensuring school safety. Retrieved from <https://ct.counseling.org/2016/08/counselors-role-ensuring-school-safety/>
- Cowan, K. C., Vaillancourt, K., Rossen, E., & Pollitt, K. (2013). A framework for safe and successful schools [Brief]. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.
- Duplechian, R., & Morris, R. (2014). School violence: Reported school shootings and making schools safer. *Education*, 135(2), 145–150. Retrieved from <http://0-search.ebscohost.com.oak.indwes.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=100464126&site=ehost-live>
- Garran, A. M., & Rasmussen, B. M. (2014). Safety in the classroom: Reconsidered. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 34(4), 401–412. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/08841233.2014.937517>
- Goodman-Scott, E., & Grothaus, T. (2017). RAMP and PBIS: “They Definitely Support One Another”: The results of a phenomenological study (part one). *Professional School Counseling*. <https://doi.org/10.5330/1096-2409-21.1.119>
- Jonson, C. L. (2017). Preventing school shootings: The effectiveness of safety measures. *Victims & Offenders*, 12(6), 956–973. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/15564886.2017.1307293>
- Kingston, B., Mattson, S. A., Dymnicki, A., Spier, E., Fitzgerald, M., Shipman, K., & Elliott, D. (2018). Building schools' readiness to implement a comprehensive approach to school safety. *Clinical Child & Family Psychology Review*, 21(4), 433–449. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10567-018-0264-7>
- Lapan, R. T., Wells, R., Petersen, J., & McCann, L. A. (2014). Stand tall to protect students: school counselors strengthening school connectedness. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 92(3), 304–315.
- Nijs, M. M., Bun, C. J. E., Tempelaar, W. M., de Wit, N. J., Burger, H., Plevier, C. M., & Boks, M. P. M. (2014). Perceived school safety is strongly associated with adolescent mental health problems. *Community Mental Health Journal*, 50(2), 127–134. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10597-013-9599-1>
- Oliver, B., Fleck, M., & Money-Brady, J. (2016). *Superintendents & Principals: Partners in Success*, Indiana Chamber of Commerce Foundation Study. Retrieved January 20, 2019 from http://share.indianachamber.com/media/Partners_in_Success.pdf
- Rajan, S., & Branas, C. C. (2018). Arming school teachers: What do we know? Where do we go from here? *American Journal of Public Health*, 108(7), 860–862. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2018.304464>
- Swartz, K., Osborne, D. L., Dawson-Edwards, C., & Higgins, G. E. (2016). Policing schools: Examining the impact of place management activities on school violence. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 41(3), 465–483. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12103-015-9306-6>

Resources

Modzeleski, W., & Randazzo, M. R. (2018). School threat assessment in the USA: Lessons learned from 15 years of teaching and using the federal model to prevent school shootings. *Contemporary School Psychology, 22*(2), 109-115. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/10.1007/s40688-018-0188-8>

Weiler, S. C., & Armenta, A. D. (2014). The fourth r—revolvers: Principal perceptions related to armed school personnel and related legal issues. Retrieved January 18, 2019 from *Clearing House, 87*(3), 115–118. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/00098655.2014.891891>

Winer, J. P., & Halgin, R. P. (2016). Assessing and responding to threats of targeted violence by adolescents: A guide for counselors. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling, 38*(3), 248-262.
doi: <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/10.774/mehc.38.3.05>

Young, A., Dollarhide, C. T., & Baughman, A. (2015). The voices of school counselors: Essential characteristics of school counselor leaders. *Professional School Counseling, 19*(1), 36-45.

The School Counselor and School Counseling Preparation Programs

(Adopted 2008, Revised 2014, 2020)

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors are best prepared through master’s-level and doctoral-level programs that align with the philosophy and vision of the ASCA National Model (2019a), the ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies (2019b), the ASCA Standards for School Counseling Program Preparation (2019c), the ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success (2014) and the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (2016). These programs emphasize training in the implementation of a school counseling program that enhances student achievement and success.

The Rationale

School counselors are assuming an increasingly important role in education, and school counseling preparation programs are vital to the appropriate development of that role. School counselors significantly contribute to outcomes used to measure the success of students and schools; therefore, students in school counselor preparation programs need direct training and supervision in leadership and the implementation of a school counseling program (Cinotti, 2014).

The ASCA National Model (2019a), the ASCA Ethical Standards (2016), the ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies (2019b) and the ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors (2014) have significantly influenced school counselor preparation and practice. These initiatives have placed significant attention on the preparation of school counselors, ensuring graduates are well-prepared to design, implement and assess a school counseling program that is proactive, accountable and aligned with the school’s mission.

The Role of School Counselor Preparation Programs

Effective school counseling preparation programs provide coursework and training that teaches school counseling students to design and implement a school counseling program. These programs help school counseling students develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to:

- Understand the organizational structure and governance of the educational system, as well as cultural, political and social influences on current educational practices
- Address legal, ethical and professional issues in pre-K–12 schools
- Understand developmental theory, counseling theory, career counseling theory, social justice theory and multiculturalism
- Understand mental health and the continuum of services, including prevention and intervention strategies for addressing academic, career and social/emotional development to enhance student success for all students
- Deliver effective instruction, appraisal and advisement, and counseling
- Develop interventions aligned to the multitiered system of supports as described in the corresponding position statement, *The School Counselor and Multitiered System of Supports*
- Collaborate and consult with stakeholders (e.g., families/guardians, teachers, administration, community stakeholders) to create learning environments promoting student educational equity and success for all students
- Identify impediments to student learning, developing strategies to enhance learning and collaborating with stakeholders to improve student achievement
- Ensure equitable access to resources promoting academic achievement, social/emotional growth and career development for all students
- Use advocacy and data-informed school counseling practices to close achievement and opportunity gaps
- Understand how the school counseling programs relate to the educational program
- Understand outcome research data and best practices as identified in the school counseling research literature
- Understand the importance of serving on school leadership teams and acting as educational leaders

Field-based experiences are essential to the preparation of school counselors. These experiences should provide training that aligns with the school counselor preparation program and further develops the student’s knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to implement a school counseling program. Field-based experiences are supervised by a licensed or certified school counselor in the pre-K–12 setting and a university supervisor with the appropriate school counselor educator qualifications.

School counseling preparation programs are facilitated by school counselor educators who have the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to prepare school counselors to promote the academic, career and social/emotional development of all students. School counselor educators have appropriate preparation, including knowledge of the ASCA National Model, the ASCA School Counseling Professional Standards & Competencies, organization and administration of pre-K–12 schools, counseling children and adolescents, and current issues and trends in school counseling. School counselor educators should hold an earned doctoral degree in counselor education, counseling psychology, educational leadership or closely related field. Adjunct faculty/instructors will minimally have an earned master’s degree in school counseling and have school counseling experience. All university instructors should have experience as an employed school counselor in the field.

Summary

School counselor preparation programs emphasize development of the knowledge, attitudes and skills essential for the implementation of effective school counseling programs. These programs align with the philosophy and vision of the ASCA National Model (2019a), the ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies (2019b), the ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors (2014) and the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (2017), creating a program empowering all students to succeed and achieve in their pre-K–12 experiences. School counselor educators have the appropriate education, training, experience and commitment to prepare school counselors able to respond to the changing expectations and dynamics of students, families, schools and communities.

References

- American School Counselor Association. (2019a). *ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.
- American School Counselor Association. (2019b). *ASCA school counselor professional standards & competencies*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- American School Counselor Association. (2019c). *ASCA Standards for School Counseling Preparation*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- American School Counselor Association. (2016). *ASCA ethical standards for school counselors*. Alexandria, VA: Author
- American School Counselor Association. (2014). *ASCA Mindsets & behaviors for student success: K–12 college- and career-readiness standards for every student*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Cinotti, D. (2014). Competing professional identity models in school counseling: A historical perspective and commentary. *The Professional Counselor*, 4(5), 417-425. doi:10.15241/dc.4.5.417
- Janson, C., Stone, C., & Clark, M.A. (2009). Stretching leadership: A distributed perspective for school counselor leaders. *Professional School Counseling*, 13(2), 98-106. doi:10.5330/PSC.n.2010-13.98
- McMahon, G.H., Mason, E.C.M., & Paisley, P.O. (2009). School counselor educators as educational leaders promoting systemic change. *Professional School Counseling*, 13(2), 116-124. doi:10.5330/PSC.n.2010-13.116.
- Paisley, P.O., Bailey, D.F., Hayes, R.L., McMahon, G., & Grimmet, C.A. (2010). Using a cohort model for school counselor preparation to enhance commitment to social justice. *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 35(3), 262-270. doi:10.1080/01933922.2010.492903
- Thompson, J., & Moffett, N. (2010). Clinical preparation and supervision of professional school counselors. *Journal of School Counseling*, 8. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ895915.pdf>

The School Counselor and School Counseling Programs

(Adopted 1988; revised 1993, 1997, 2005, 2012, 2017)

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors design and deliver school counseling programs that improve a range of student learning and behavioral outcomes (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012). These programs are comprehensive in scope, preventive in design and developmental in nature. “The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs” (ASCA, 2019a) outlines the components of a school counseling program. The ASCA National Model brings school counselors together with one vision and one voice, which creates unity and focus toward improving student achievement and supporting student development.

The Rationale

The school counseling program is an integral component of the school’s mission. Informed by student data and based on the ASCA National Model, school counseling programs are provided by a state-credentialed school counselor and:

- are delivered to all students systematically
- include a developmentally appropriate curriculum focused on the mindsets and behaviors all students need for postsecondary readiness and success
- close achievement and opportunity gaps
- result in improved student achievement, attendance and discipline

Effective school counseling programs are a collaborative effort between the school counselor, families, community stakeholders and other educators to create an environment resulting in a positive impact on student achievement. Education professionals, including school counselors, value and respond to the diversity and individual differences in our societies and communities in culturally sensitive and responsive ways. School counseling programs in both the brick-and-mortar and virtual settings ensure equitable access to opportunities and rigorous curriculum for all students to participate fully in the educational process.

One study found that schools designated as Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP) schools had significantly higher schoolwide proficiency rates in English as compared with the control schools (Wilkerson, Perusse, & Hughes, 2013). This same study also found four-year longitudinal results indicating a significant positive difference between RAMP-designated elementary schools and their control schools in math. “Findings provide support for the impact of comprehensive, data-driven, accountable school counseling programs at the elementary level...” (Wilkerson et al., 2013, p. 172).

According to Lapan (2012), “When highly trained, professional school counselors deliver ASCA National Model comprehensive school counseling program services, students receive measurable benefit” (p. 88).

The School Counselor’s Role

School counselors focus their skills, time and energy on direct and indirect services to students. To achieve maximum program effectiveness, ASCA recommends a student-to-school-counselor ratio of 250:1. Although ratios vary across states, school districts and even grade levels, the growing body of research as summarized by Carey and Martin (2015) supports that implementation of school counseling programs positively affects outcome data (e.g., student achievement and discipline referrals) at all grade levels.

ASCA also recommends that school counselors spend 80 percent or more of their time in direct and indirect services to students. These direct and indirect activities should come from the ASCA National Model rather than inappropriate duties assigned to school counselors as listed in the ASCA National Model Executive Summary (2019b). The 20 percent or less of the school counselor’s time should be focused on program planning and school support including:

- Reviewing school data
- Developing annual student outcome goals
- Creating classroom, group and closing the gap action plans
- Reporting results of action plans to the school community
- Discussing the priorities of the school counseling program in the annual administrative conference

Duties that fall outside of the school counselor framework as described in the ASCA National Model should be limited and performed by other school staff to support a school's smooth operation and allow school counselors to continue to focus on students' academic, career and social/emotional needs. Fair-share responsibilities should not preclude implementing and managing a school counseling program.

School counselors participate as members of the educational team and use the skills of leadership, advocacy and collaboration to promote systemic change as appropriate. The framework of a school counseling program consists of the following four components: define, manage, deliver and assess. See "The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs" for more detailed information.

DEFINE

Three sets of school counseling standards define the school counseling profession. These standards help new and experienced school counselors develop, implement and assess their school counseling program to improve student outcomes.

Student Standards

- ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success: K–12 College- and Career-Readiness for Every Student

Professional Standards

- ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors
- ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies

MANAGE

To be delivered effectively, the school counseling program must be efficiently and effectively managed. The ASCA National Model provides school counselors with the following program focus and planning tools to guide the design and implementation of a school counseling program that gets results.

Program Focus

- Beliefs
- Vision Statement
- Mission Statement

Program Planning

- School Data Summary
- Annual Student Outcome Goals
- Action Plans
 - Classroom and Group
 - Closing the Gap
- Lesson Plans
- Annual Administrative Conference
- Use of Time
- Calendars
 - Annual
 - Weekly
- Advisory Council

DELIVER

School counselors deliver a school counseling program in collaboration with students, families, school staff and community stakeholders. The ASCA National Model (2019) and the ASCA National Model Implementation Guide (2019d) have specific details and examples about each of the following areas:

Direct Services With Students

Direct services are face-to-face or virtual interactions between school counselors and students and include the following:

- Instruction
- Appraisal and Advisement
- Counseling

Indirect Services for Students

Indirect services are provided on behalf of students as a result of the school counselors' interactions with others including:

- Consultation
- Collaboration
- Referrals

ASSESS

To achieve the best results for students, school counselors regularly assess their program to:

- determine its effectiveness
- inform improvements to their school counseling program design and delivery
- show how students are different as a result of the school counseling program

Annually a qualified administrator completes the school counselor performance appraisal to evaluate the school counselor's overall performance. Appraisal documents are often developed in alignment with state or district guidelines and may appear in a variety of frameworks selected by state and district leaders.

Essential components of performance appraisal include evidence of:

- Design of a school counseling program
- Data-informed annual goals along with the measured impact of direct services delivery
- Data-informed classroom, small-group and closing-the-gap activities and interventions
- Calendars reflecting appropriate use of time aligned with ASCA National Model recommendation of 80% of time in direct and indirect services to students
- Collection and analysis of results data from classroom, small-group and closing-the-gap activities and interventions

Summary

School counselors in both the brick-and-mortar and virtual/online environments develop and deliver school counseling programs supporting and promoting student achievement and standardizing the measurement of program effectiveness. As outlined in the ASCA National Model (2019a), these programs include a systematic and planned program delivery involving all students and enhancing the learning process. The school counseling program is supported by appropriate resources and implemented by a credentialed school counselor. The ASCA National Model brings school counselors together with one vision and one voice, which creates unity and focus toward improving student achievement and supporting student development.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2019a). *ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.

American School Counselor Association. (2019b). *ASCA National Model: Executive summary*. Alexandria, VA: Author. Retrieved from <https://schoolcounselor.org/Ascanationalmodel/media/ANM-templates/ANMExecSumm.pdf>

American School Counselor Association. (2019c). *ASCA school counselor professional standards & competencies*. Alexandria, VA: Author. Retrieved from <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/home/SCCompetencies.pdf>

American School Counselor Association. (2019d). *ASCA National Model implementation guide: Foundation, management and accountability*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Carey, J., & Dimmitt, C. (2012). School counseling and student outcomes: Summary of six statewide studies. *Professional School Counseling, 16*(2), 146-153. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2012-16.146

Carey, J. C., & Martin, I. (2015). A review of the major school counseling policy studies in the United States: 2000-2014. Amherst, MA: The Ronald H. Fredrickson Center for School Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation.

Lapan, R. (2012). Comprehensive school counseling programs: In some schools for some students but not in all schools for all students. *Professional School Counseling, 16*(2), 84-88.

Wilkerson, K., Perusse, R., & Hughes, A. (2013). Comprehensive school counseling programs and student achievement outcomes: A comparative analysis of RAMP versus non-RAMP schools. *Professional School Counseling, 16*(3), 172-184.

The School Counselor and School Counselor Supervision

(Adopted 2021)

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors engage in quality school counseling supervision during their training and professional practice to enhance the implementation of their school counseling program. Supervision by individuals who have a background in school counseling or certification in supervision enhances school counselors' professional growth and leadership development in their roles as practitioners and potential supervisors.

The Rationale

School counselors pursue consultation and supervision in their school counseling training program and throughout their professional career to strengthen their school counseling skills and remain culturally supportive and ethically compliant (ASCA, 2016; ASCA, 2019; ASCA, 2020). Supervision provides opportunities for novice and experienced school counselors to develop and refine the skills required to address the needs of pre-K–12 students through typical stages of development and as they navigate societal challenges (Bultsma, 2021). Supervision is also helpful in adapting to changing cultural and environmental demands.

To meet the needs of future students, to support current school counselors in the field, and to sustain the school counseling profession for the future, school counseling ethical and professional standards highlight the need for school counselors to seek supervision and training as supervisors (ASCA, 2016; ASCA, 2019; ASCA, 2020; CACREP, 2016). Effective supervision infuses knowledge of supervision models specific to school counseling, ethics, social justice, professional development, leadership, advocacy and other professional roles such as gatekeeping (ASCA, 2017; ASCA, 2019; ASCA, 2020; Levitt, et al., 2019). Trained school counseling supervisors provide necessary professional development to assist school counselors and school-counselors-in-training to be well-prepared, skilled and competent practitioners (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019; McCoy & Neale-McFall, 2017). As gatekeepers, supervisors also intervene with professional colleagues when the safety and welfare of pre-K–12 students is in jeopardy (ASCA, 2016; Schuermann, et al., 2018).

The Role of School Counselor Supervisors

Effective school counselor supervision is an intensive, interpersonally focused, individual or small-group intervention delivered by a more senior member of the profession to a junior member to facilitate continued professional growth (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). School counselor supervisors work to:

- support and encourage school counselor development
- foster the continued development of instruction, appraisal and advisement, and counseling skills
- facilitate personal and professional growth for operating in complex educational settings, including cultural competence and anti-racist work
- promote adherence to and integration of school counselor standards and competencies related to leadership, advocacy, collaboration and systemic change
- model the development of data-informed and accountable school counseling programs
- serve as gatekeepers for future professionals' entry into the school counseling profession
- safeguard students and families with whom the supervisees work
- promote ethical behavior of supervisees under their supervision
- remain current on trends, techniques and strategies within the field of school counseling
- obtain professional development in supervision (ASCA, 2016; ASCA, 2019; ASCA, 2020; Bernard & Goodyear, 2019)

School counseling site supervisors must adhere to the requirements and standards of integrity, leadership and professionalism while supervising practicum students and interns (ASCA, 2016). Graduate programs training school counselors are expected to assist in training site supervisors (CACREP, 2016).

School counseling supervisors must have the following qualifications:

- a minimum of a master's degree in school counseling or related profession with equivalent qualifications, including appropriate certifications and/or licenses
- a minimum of two years of professional experience within school counseling
- relevant training in school counseling supervision

(CACREP, 2016; Neyland-Brown, et al., 2019)

New school counselors should maintain professional supervision (McLain, 2019). Notwithstanding, all school counseling professionals benefit from formal or informal mentoring from those school counselors with specific experience and competencies (ASCA, 2019; Brott, et al., 2016; Tang, 2020).

Summary

School counselor supervision involves the continued personal and professional development of currently practicing school counselors and school-counselors-in-training regarding the knowledge and skills needed for providing effective school counseling programs. Supervision focuses on the development and growth of school counseling skills and the integration of school counselor standards and competencies in practice. School counselor supervisors have the appropriate background, experience and training needed to prepare school counselors to meet the ever-changing needs and challenges of students, families, schools and communities.

References

American School Counselor Association (2016). *ASCA Ethical standards for school counselors*. Alexandria, VA:Author.

American School Counselor Association. (2017). *The School Counselor and School Counseling Programs*. Retrieved from <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/Standards-Positions/Position-Statements/ASCA-Position-Statements/The-School-Counselor-and-School-Counseling-Program>

American School Counselor Association (2019). *ASCA Standards for School Counselor Preparation Programs (ASCA CAEP SPA)*. Retrieved from <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/getmedia/573d7c2c-1622-4d25-a5ac-ac74d2e614ca/ASCA-Standards-for-School-Counselor-Preparation-Programs.pdf>

American School Counselor Association (2020). *Making supervision work*. Alexandria, VA:Author.

Bernard, J.M. & Goodyear, R.K. (2019). *Fundamentals of clinical supervision* (6th ed.). Pearson.

Bledsoe, K. G., Burnham, J. J., Cook, R. M., Clark, M., & Webb, A. L. (2021). A phenomenological study of early career school counselor clinical supervision experiences. *Professional School Counseling*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X21997143>

Brott, P. E., Stone, V., & Davis, T. E. (2016). Growing together: A developmental model for training school counseling site supervisors. *Professional School Counseling*, 20(1), 139-148. doi:10.5330/1096-2409-20.1.139

Bultsma, S. A. (2021). Supervision experiences of new professional school counselors, *Michigan Journal of Counseling*, 39(1), 4-18. doi:10.22237/mijoc/1325376060

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs [CACREP]. (2016). 2016 CACREP standards. Retrieved from <http://www.cacrep.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/2016-Standards-with-citations.pdf>

Levitt, D., Ducaine, C.S., Greulich, K., Gentry, K., & Treweeke, L. (2019). *The Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision*, 12(3). <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/234958505.pdf>.

McCoy, V., & Neale-McFall, C. (2017). Online site supervisor training in counselor education: Using your learning management system beyond the classroom to provide content for site supervisors. *Vistas Online*, 4, 1–6. Retrieved from https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/vistas/online-site-supervisor-training.pdf?sfvrsn=6e9e4a2c_4

McLain, G. E. (2019). Mentor academy for school counselors: A model plan. *Journal of Professional Counseling: Practice, Theory, & Research*, 46, (1-2), 39-47. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15566382.2019.1671098>

- Neyland-Brown, L., Laux, J.M., Reynolds, J.L., Kozlowski, K., & Piazza, N. J. (2019). An exploration of supervision training opportunities for school counselors. *Journal of School Counseling, 17*(1), 1-2. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1203244.pdf>
- Schuermann, H., Avent Harris, J. R., & Lloyd, H. J. (2018). Academic role and perceptions of gatekeeping in counselor education. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 57*(1), 51–65. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/ceas.12093>
- Tang, A. (2020). The impact of school counseling supervision on practicing school counselors' self-efficacy in building a comprehensive school counseling program. *Professional School Counseling, 23*(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X20947723>
- Wilson, T. A., Schaeffer, S., & Bruce, M. A. (2018). Supervision experiences of rural school counselors. *The Rural Educator, 36*(2). <https://doi.org/10.35608/ruraled.v36i2.341>

The School Counselor and School-Family-Community Partnerships

(Adopted 2010, Revised 2016)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors have an essential and unique role in promoting, facilitating and advocating for collaboration with parents/guardians and community stakeholders. These collaborations are an important aspect of implementing equitable, data-informed, school counseling programs promoting all students' successful academic, career and social/emotional development .

The Rationale

Research indicates the school counselor investment in the partnership of school-family-community collaboration enhances student achievement (Bryan & Henry, 2012; Emde, 2015; Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2010; Griffin & Farris, 2010). Student achievement is defined by greater investment in academics, social/emotional well-being and college preparedness (Hann Morrison, 2011). School counselors enhance the collaboration of school-family-community stakeholders by being the catalyst through which these collaborations occur (Bryan & Henry, 2012). Family involvement benefits both the student and the school as it increases student achievement and attendance, promotes career development, enhances school climate and fosters student resilience (Epstein & Sheldon, 2006). School-family-community partnerships can support the effective and efficient delivery of school counseling program services to promote student success (Taylor & Adelman, 2000).

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors work with students, their families, school staff and community members in the implementation of a school counseling program in establishing school and community partnerships that:

- promote student academic, career and social/emotional development
- inform the school community about relevant community resources
- actively pursue collaboration with family members and community stakeholders
- remove barriers to the successful implementation of school-family-community partnerships (e.g., mistrust and miscommunication between parties, resistance to the concept and practice, transportation and childcare issues, accessible meeting times)

School counselors serve as an advocate, leader, facilitator, initiator, evaluator and collaborator to create, enrich and assess the effect of these partnerships on student success within the school counseling program.

Summary

School-family-community partnerships have increased the successful academic, career and social/emotional development of all students. School counselors are called on to create, lead, facilitate and assess these partnerships and work to remove barriers to these helpful collaborative relationships.

References

- Bryan, J., & Henry, L. (2012). A model for building school family community partnerships: Principles and process. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 90*(4), 408-420. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6676.2012.00052.x
- Emde, R., J. (2015). *Parents' perceptions of and experiences with professional school counselors*. Retrieved from Proquest; Ann Arbor, MI.
- Epstein, J. L., & Sheldon, S. B. (2006). Moving forward: Ideas for research on school, family, and community partnerships. In C. F. Conrad & R. Serlin (Eds.), *SAGE Handbook for Research in Education: Engaging Ideas and Enriching Inquiry* (pp. 117-138). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Epstein, J. L., & Van Voorhis, F. L. (2010). School counselors' roles in developing partnerships with families and communities for student success. *Professional School Counseling, 14*(1), 1-14.

Griffin, D., & Farris, A. (2010). School counselors and collaboration: Finding resources through community asset mapping. *Professional School Counseling, 13*(1), 248-256.

Hann Morrison, D. (2011). The varied roles of school counselors in rural settings. *Georgia School Counseling Association Journal, 18*(1), 26-33.

Taylor, L., & Aldeman, H. S. (2000). Connecting schools, families, and communities. *Professional School Counseling, 3*(5), 298-308.

Resources

Amatea, E., & West-Olatunji, C. (2007). Joining the conversation about educating our poorest children: Emerging leadership roles for school counselors in high-poverty schools. *Professional School Counseling, 11*(2), 81-89.

Bosworth, K., & Walz, G. (2005). *Promoting student resiliency*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Bryan, J. (2005). Fostering educational resilience and achievement in urban schools through school-family-community partnerships. *Professional School Counseling, 8*(3), 219-228.

Bryan, J. & Holcomb-McCoy, C. (2007). An examination of school counselor involvement in school-family-community partnerships. *Professional School Counseling, 10*(5), 441-454.

The School Counselor and Social/Emotional Development

(Adopted 2017)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors implementing programs strive to have an impact on student growth in three domain areas: academic, career and social/emotional development (ASCA, 2019). School counselors recognize students should demonstrate growth in these domains equally to be successful. School counselors understand these domains are not considered separate but are intertwined, each affecting the other (Schenck, Anctil, & Smith, 2010). Although this statement focuses on social/emotional development it is understood academic and career development need to be considered with equal diligence.

The Rationale

School counselors serve as a first line of defense in identifying and addressing student social/emotional needs within the school setting. School counselors have unique training in helping students with social/emotional issues that may become barriers to academic success. Within the context of a school counseling program school counselors develop school counseling curriculum, deliver small-group counseling and provide appraisal and advisement directed at improving students' social/emotional well being.

The social/emotional domain is composed of standards to help students manage emotions and learn and apply interpersonal skills as early as preschool and kindergarten (ASCA, 2014). School counselors promote mindsets and behaviors in all grade levels that enhance the learning process and create a culture of college and career readiness for all students in the area of social/emotional development.

According to a meta-analysis by Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor and Schellinger (2011), students who participated in social/emotional learning programs demonstrated significantly improved social/emotional skills, attitudes, behavior and academic performance that reflected an 11-percentile-point gain in academic achievement when compared with control groups. The American Enterprise Institute and the Brookings Institution (2015) concluded that social/emotional competencies are critically important for the long-term success of all students in today's economy.

The school counselor is key to identifying students' social/emotional needs (VanVelsor, 2009). Educational systems as a whole, including school counselors, should graduate students who are not only proficient in core academic subjects but demonstrate an ability to socially and emotionally practice healthy behaviors and behave respectfully when working with others from diverse backgrounds (ASCD, 2007).

School counselors play a role in creating an environment that produces engagement vital to students' social/emotional development. When students enter high school there is a 40 percent–60 percent chance they will disengage from school (Blum & Libbey, 2004; Klem & Connell, 2004). School performance can be negatively affected when students demonstrate high-risk behaviors such as substance abuse, sex, violence, depression and attempted suicide (Eaton et al., 2008). School counselors address the potential of disengagement by addressing students' social/emotional development.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors play a critical role in supporting social/emotional development as they:

- Collaborate with classroom teachers to provide the school counseling curriculum to all students through direct instruction, team-teaching or providing lesson plans for learning activities or units in classrooms aimed at social/emotional development (ASCA, 2019)
- Understand the nature and range of human characteristics specific to child and adolescent development
- Identify and employ appropriate appraisal methods for individual and group interventions that support K–12 students' social/emotional development
- Know and utilize counseling theories to inform both direct and indirect services providing support to K–12 students' social/emotional development

- Use assessment in the context of appropriate statistics and research methodology, follow-up assessment and measurement methods to implement appropriate program planning for social/emotional development
- Select and implement technology in a school counseling program to facilitate K–12 students’ social/emotional development
- Serve as a referral source for students when social/emotional issues become too great to be dealt with solely by the school counselor, including crisis interventions

Summary

School counselors are committed to supporting students’ social/emotional needs. As advocates for students, school counselors promote a positive environment that enhances students’ ability to properly manage the social/emotional demands of their lives. School counselors use appropriate appraisal methods to promote a school environment designed to propel students toward positive mindsets and behaviors supporting social/emotional development through direct (e.g., classroom curriculum, group counseling and individual counseling) and indirect (e.g., collaborating or consulting with staff, families or communities) services.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2019). *ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.

American School Counselor Association. (2014). *Mindsets & behaviors for student success: K-12 college- and career-readiness standards for every student*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. (2007). *The learning compact redefined: A call to action – A report of the Commission on the Whole Child*. Alexandria, VA: Author. Last retrieved January 21, 2017 from <http://www.ascd.org/learningcompact>

Blum, R. W., & Libbey, H. P. (2004). School connectedness—Strengthening health and education outcomes for teenagers. *Journal of School Health, 74*, 229–299.

Durlak, J.A., Weissberg, R.P., Dymnickie, A.B., Taylor R.D., & Schellinger, K.B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students’ social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development, 82*(1), 405-432. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x

Eaton, D. K., Kann, L., Kinchen, S., Shanklin, S., Ross, J., Hawkins, J., et al. (2008). Youth risk behavior surveillance—United States, 2007. *MMWR Surveillance Summaries, 57*(SS04), 1–131. Retrieved January 21, 2017, from http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss57_04a1.htm?s_cid=ss5704a1_e

Klem, A. M., & Connell, J. P. (2004). Relationships matter: Linking teacher support to student engagement and achievement. *Journal of School Health, 74*, 262–273.

Schenck, P., Anctil, T., & Smith, C. K. (2010). Career counseling identity of professional school counselors. *Career Development, 26*, 16-17.

VanVelsor, P. (2009). School counselors as social-emotional learning consultants: Where do we begin? *Professional School Counseling, 13*, 50-58.

The School Counselor and Student Mental Health

(Adopted 2009, Revised 2015, 2020)

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors recognize and respond to the need for mental health services that promote social/emotional wellness and development for all students. School counselors advocate for the mental health needs of all students by offering instruction that enhances awareness of mental health, appraisal and advisement addressing academic, career and social/emotional development; short-term counseling interventions; and referrals to community resources for long-term support.

The Rationale

Students' unmet mental health needs can be a significant obstacle to student academic, career and social/emotional development and even compromise school safety. Even so, most students in need do not receive adequate mental health supports (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2013). Research indicates 20% of students are in need of mental health services, yet only one out of five of these students receive the necessary services (Erford, 2019). Furthermore, students of color and those from families with low income are at greater risk for mental health needs but are even less likely to receive the appropriate services (Panigua, 2013) despite increased national attention to these inequities (Marrast, Himmelstein & Woolhandler, 2016).

Of school-age children who receive any behavioral and/or mental health services, 70%–80% receive them at school (Atkins et al., 2010). Preventive school-based mental health and behavioral services are essential. Without planned intervention for students exhibiting early-warning signs, setbacks in academic, career and social/emotional development can result during later school years and even adulthood.

The ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors (ASCA, 2014) identify and prioritize the specific attitudes, knowledge 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, guide the development of strategies and activities and create a program that helps students achieve to their highest potential. This includes offering instruction that enhances awareness of mental health and short-term counseling interventions designed to promote positive mental health and to remove barriers to success.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors focus their efforts on designing and implementing school counseling programs that promote academic, career and social/emotional success for all students. School counselors acknowledge they may be the only counseling professional available to students and their families. Thus, school counselors:

- Deliver instruction that proactively enhances awareness of mental health; promotes positive, healthy behaviors; and seeks to remove the stigma associated with mental health issues
- Provide students with appraisal and advisement addressing their academic, career and social/emotional needs
- Recognize mental health warning signs including
 - changes in school performance and attendance
 - mood changes
 - complaints of illness before school
 - increased disciplinary problems at school
 - problems at home or with the family situation (e.g., stress, trauma, divorce, substance abuse, exposure to poverty conditions, domestic violence)
 - communication from teachers about problems at school
 - dealing with existing mental health concerns
- Provide short-term counseling and crisis intervention focused on mental health or situational concerns such as grief or difficult transitions
- Provide referrals to school and community resources that treat mental health issues (suicidal ideation, violence, abuse and depression) with the intent of removing barriers to learning and helping the student return to the classroom
- Educate teachers, administrators, families and community stakeholders about the mental health concerns of students, including recognition of the role environmental factors have in causing or exacerbating mental health issues, and provide resources and information

- Advocate, collaborate and coordinate with school and community stakeholders to meet the needs of the whole child and to ensure students and their families have access to mental health services
- Recognize and address barriers to accessing mental health services and the associated stigma, including cultural beliefs and linguistic impediments
- Adhere to appropriate guidelines regarding confidentiality, the distinction between public and private information and consultation
- Help identify and address students' mental health issues while working within the:
 - ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors
 - ASCA Professional Standards & Competencies for School Counselors
 - National, state and local legislation, which guides school counselors' informed decision-making and standardizes professional practice to protect both the student and school counselor
- Seek to continually update their professional knowledge regarding the students' social/emotional needs, including best practices in universal screening for mental health risk
- Advocate for ethical use of valid and reliable universal screening instruments with concerns for cultural sensitivity and bias if state legislation or school board policy requires universal screening programs for mental health risk factors (ASCA, 2016)

Summary

Students' unmet mental health needs pose barriers to learning and development. Because of school counselors' training and position, they are uniquely qualified to provide instruction, appraisal and advisement and short-term counseling to students and referral services to students and their families. Although school counselors do not provide long-term mental health therapy in schools, they provide a school counseling program designed to meet the developmental needs of all students. As a component of this program, school counselors collaborate with other educators and community service providers to meet the needs of the whole child.

References

- Adelman, H. S., & Taylor, L. (2015). *Mental health in schools: Engaging learners, preventing problems, and improving schools*. United States: Skyhorse Publishing.
- American School Counselor Association. (2019). *ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.
- American School Counselor Association. (2014). *Mindsets & behaviors for student success: K-12 college- and career readiness standards for every student*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Atkins, M., Hoagwood, K. E., Kutash, K., & Seidman, E. (2010). Toward the integration of education and mental health in schools. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health, 37*, 40–47.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2013). Mental health surveillance among children – United States, 2005-2011. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/features/childrensmentalhealth>
- Counts, N., & Gionfriddo, P. (2016). Education, health and behavioral health: New policy priorities for their integration emerge for 2017, *Health Affairs Blog*, December 23, 2016. doi: 10.1377/hblog20161223.058080
- Erford, B. T. (2019). *Helping students with mental and emotional disorders*. In B. T. Erford (ed.) *Transforming the school counseling profession* (5th ed.) (pp. 382-405). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Erickson, A., & Abel, N. R. (2013). A high school counselor's leadership in providing school-wide screenings for depression and enhancing suicide awareness. *Professional School Counseling, 16*(5), 283-289. doi: 10.5330/psc.n.2013-16.283
- Marrast, L., Himmelstein, D. U., & Woolhandler, S. (2016). Racial and ethnic disparities in mental health care for children and young adults: A national study. *International Journal of Health Services, 46*(4), 810-24. doi: 10.1177/0020731416662736
- Panigua, F. A. (2013). *Assessing and treating culturally diverse clients: A practical guide* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

The School Counselor and Student Postsecondary Recruitment

(Adopted 2004; revised 2009, 2015, 2021)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors encourage and promote positive and equitable reception of career and postsecondary educational institution recruiters into the school setting. These recruiters may include individuals from organizations such as, but not limited to:

- apprenticeship programs
- athletic programs
- career and technical education institutions
- colleges and universities
- financial aid and scholarship programs
- military branches

The Rationale

The K–12 educational system is an important component of the national structure that prepares students for the world of work (Cushing et al., 2019) and is essential for students as they explore postsecondary career and educational options. Every student has the right to access instruction, appraisal and advisement, and counseling for postsecondary preparation, access and success (ASCA, 2019).

Through implementation of a school counseling program aligned with the ASCA National Model (2019), school counselors deliver information on postsecondary career and college options and collaborate with school staff, families and youth programs to maximize success (Bailey & Bradbury-Bailey, 2010; Bryan, et al., 2017; Holcomb-McCoy, 2010). School counselors help all students understand the benefits of completing their K–12 education including (a) exposure to and preparation for college and career opportunities, (b) support for navigating the financial aid process to ensure college is an affordable reality and (c) access to enrichment and extracurricular activities including summer learning opportunities.

The School Counselor’s Role

School counselors are advocates for students in the recruitment process and ensure students and their families are informed of their rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and in accordance with the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (2016). School counselors provide and advocate for postsecondary awareness, exploration and planning for each student, thereby supporting students’ rights to choose from a wide array of options when they leave secondary education. School counselors also examine data to ensure students from underrepresented groups, such as students of various racial and ethnic backgrounds, students with disabilities and students who are LGBTQ+ are provided equitable access to college and career programs and information.

Through instruction, appraisal and advisement, and counseling, school counselors guide all students through the postsecondary planning and recruitment process, helping them learn critical strategies and skills for success including:

- setting long- and short-term goals
- making informed decisions
- managing transitions (ASCA, 2019)

Through consultation and collaboration, school counselors play a critical role in bridging communication gaps between families and recruitment entities. School counselors consult and collaborate with stakeholders (ASCA, 2019), including:

- college access partners and recruiters to prepare information for students and families about the differences among public, independent and for-profit colleges and universities in relationship to the costs and outcomes
- recruiters to encourage them to create informational sessions and activities for families
- school administrators to develop and disseminate written information about the policies and procedures for obtaining student information as well as the rights of students and parents/guardians to withhold their information
- families to understand waivers for release of information
- families and students to encourage open conversation and communication about interests and goals
- recruiters and families to encourage them to work directly with students

Summary

School counselors assist students and their families as they make informed decisions about postsecondary options. School counselors collaborate with individuals involved in the student recruitment process to ensure the delivery of comprehensive, accurate information while protecting student rights as specified by state/federal law, school district policies and procedures, and the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2016). *ASCA ethical standards for school counselors*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

American School Counselor Association. (2019). *ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.

Bailey, D. F., & Bradbury-Bailey, M. E. (2010). Empowered youth programs: Partnerships for enhancing postsecondary outcomes of African American adolescents. *Professional School Counseling*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X1001400107>

Bryan, J., Farmer-Hinton, R., Rawls, A., & Woods, C. S. (2017) Social capital and college-going culture in high schools: The effects of college expectations and college talk on students' postsecondary attendance. *Professional School Counseling*. <https://doi.org/10.5330/1096-2409-21.1.95>

Cushing, D. E., Therriault, S., and Lavinson, R. (2019). *Building a System for Postsecondary Success: Developing a College and Career-Ready Workforce*. College & Career Readiness & Success Center at American Institutes for Research https://ccrcenter.org/sites/default/files/Career-ReadyWorkforce_Brief_Workbook.pdf

Holcomb-McCoy, C. (2010). Involving low-income parents and parents of color in college readiness activities: An exploratory study. *Professional School Counseling*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X1001400111>

The School Counselor and Student Safety and the Use of Technology

(Adopted 2000, revised 2006, 2012, 2017)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors encourage students to take advantage of the wealth of opportunities, information and resources available through technology usage. However, because students are vulnerable to the risks technology poses, school counselors, in collaboration with families, educators and law enforcement officials, alert students to these risks and encourage them to use technology responsibly.

The Rationale

School counselors recognize technology underpins the fastest-growing industries and high-wage jobs, provides the tools needed to compete in every business and drives growth in every industrialized nation. The ability to harness the power and promise of leading-edge technology often determines national prosperity, security and global influence as well as the standard of living and quality of life for all (National Science and Technology Council, 1996).

To be successful in school and prepared for postsecondary opportunities, students need to be proficient in the use of technology. However, when students access web-based and mobile technology, they leave a digital footprint that makes them vulnerable to privacy invasion. They are also exposed to negative content and significant risks that compromise their safety, security and reputation. Technology exposes students to behavioral, safety and privacy risks such as:

- addictions (e.g., gaming, social networking)
- invasion of privacy and disclosure of personal information
- inappropriate online communications
- easy access to inappropriate content and media
- cheating and copyright infringement
- cyberbullying/harassment
- sexual predators

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors have a responsibility to protect students from potential risks and to promote healthy student development. School counselors collaborate with families and school personnel to advance the responsible and appropriate use of technology and software applications to facilitate academic, career and social/emotional achievement. School counselors consider the ethical and legal considerations of technological applications, including confidentiality concerns, security issues, potential limitations and benefits of communication practices in electronic media. School counselors use established and approved means of communication with students, while maintaining appropriate boundaries. In addition, school counselors help educate students about appropriate communication and boundaries (ASCA, 2016). School counselors may take the following actions to promote the safe, responsible use of technology (ASCA and iKeepSafe, 2012):

- help develop school policies
- appropriately respond to online incidents affecting conditions for learning
- assist the community in detecting at-risk behavior and risk-reduction approaches
- address digital citizenship, including technology literacy, privacy, online reputation and social awareness, among students and their families
- develop peer-helper programs encouraging students to help each other understand technological risks, practice responsible use and support other students who are vulnerable
- confront myths surrounding cyberbullying that are perpetuated by media headlines and unsubstantiated public statements like “cyberbullying is occurring at epidemic levels” and “cyberbullying causes suicide” (Sabella, Patchin, & Hinduja, 2013, p. 2703)

School counselors engage in professional development to improve and maintain digital literacy, which, coupled with expertise in human development, allows them to provide educators and families with guidelines for the appropriate use of technology by students.

Summary

Technology provides global opportunities for student learning, exploration, communication, networking and collaboration. School counselors promote the responsible use of technology in collaboration with families and educators to increase student safety.

References

American School Counselor Association & iKeepSafe. (2012). Facebook for school counselors.

<http://www.ikeepSAFE.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Facebook-For-School-Counselors-Final-Revision1.pdf>

American School Counselor Association, (2016). *ASCA ethical standards for school counselors*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Retrieved from <http://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Ethics/EthicalStandards2016.pdf>

International Society for Technology in Education. (2008). ISTE standards - teachers. Retrieved from

<http://www.iste.org/standards/iste-standards/standards-for-teachers>

National Science and Technology Council. (1996). Accomplishments of the National Science and Technology Council.

Retrieved from http://www.ostp.gov/NSTC/html/1996_Accomplishments.html

Sabella, R., Patchin, J., & Hinduja, S. (2013). Cyberbullying Myths and Realities. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29(6), 2703-2711.

The School Counselor and Students with Disabilities

(Adopted 1999; Revised 2004, 2010, 2013, 2016)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors encourage and support the academic, career and social/emotional development of all students through school counseling programs. School counselors are committed to helping all students realize their potential and meet or exceed academic standards with consideration for both the strengths and challenges resulting from disabilities and other special needs.

Rationale

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires public schools to provide a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment for all students. However, research suggests “students with disabilities have not always received adequate educational services and supports” (Rock & Leff, 2007, p. 314). In addition, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects qualified individuals with disabilities defined as persons with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. (For a complete list of major life activities refer to ADA Amendments Act of 2008.) School counselors strive to assist all students in achieving their full potential, including students with disabilities, within the scope of the school counseling program.

School counselors recognize their strengths and limitations in working with students with disabilities. School counselors also are aware of current research and seek to implement best practices in working with students presenting with any disability category and who, by reason thereof, need special education and related services. IDEA defined disabilities include:

- autism
- deaf-blind
- developmental delay
- emotional disturbance
- hearing impairments (including deafness)
- intellectual disability (formerly mental retardation)
- multiple disabilities
- orthopedic impairments
- other health impairments
- specific learning disabilities
- speech or language impairments
- traumatic brain injury
- visual impairments (including blindness)

The School Counselor’s Role

School counselors provide direct and indirect services to students in the least restrictive environment (as determined by each student’s individualized education plan [IEP]) and in inclusive settings when possible (Tarver-Behring, Spagna & Sullivan, 1998). School counselor responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:

- providing school counseling curriculum lessons, individual and/or group counseling to students with special needs within the scope of the school counseling program
- providing short-term, goal-focused counseling in instances where it is appropriate to include these strategies as a part of the IEP or 504 plan
- encouraging family involvement in the educational process
- consulting and collaborating with staff and families to understand the special needs of a student and understanding the adaptations and modifications needed to assist the student
- advocating for students with special needs in the school and in the community
- contributing to the school’s multidisciplinary team within the scope and practice of the school counseling program to identify students who may need to be assessed to determine special education or 504 plan eligibility

- collaborating with other related student support professionals (e.g., school psychologists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, special education staff, speech and language pathologists) in the delivery of services
- providing assistance with developing academic, transition and postsecondary plans for students with IEP's and 504 plans as appropriate

Inappropriate administrative or supervisory responsibilities for the school counselor include but are not limited to:

- making singular decisions regarding placement or retention
- serving in any supervisory capacity related to the implementation of the IDEA
- serving as the school district representative for the team writing the IEP
- coordinating, writing or supervising a specific plan under Section 504 of Public Law 93-112
- coordinating, writing or supervising the implementation of the IEP
- providing long-term therapy

Summary

The school counselor takes an active role in student achievement and postsecondary planning by providing a school counseling program for all students. As a part of this program, school counselors advocate for students with special needs, encourage family involvement in their child's education and collaborate with other educational professionals to promote academic achievement, social/emotional wellness and college/career readiness for all.

References

ADA Amendments Act of 2008, Pub. L. No. 110-325, 122 Stat. 3553 (2008). Retrieved from <https://www.congress.gov/110/plaws/publ325/PLAW-110publ325.pdf>.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Public Law 108-446 108th Congress <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-108publ446/html/PLAW-108publ446.htm>.

Rock, E., & Leff, E. (2007). The professional school counselor and students with disabilities. In B. T. Erford, *Transforming the School Counseling Profession* (2nd ed.), 314-341.

Tarver-Behring, S., Spagna, M. E., & Sullivan, J. (1998). School counselors and full inclusion for children with special needs. *Professional School Counseling, 1*(3), 51-56.

Resources

Oesterreich, H. A., & Knight, M. G. (2008). Facilitating transitions to college for students with disabilities from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 43*, 300-304.

Redmond, S. M., & Hosp, J. L. (2008). Absentee rates in students receiving services for CDs, LDs, and EDs: A macroscopic view of the consequences of disability. *Language, Speech, and Hearing in the Schools, 39*, 97-103.

The School Counselor and Suicide Prevention/Awareness

(Adopted 2018)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors work to identify behavioral and social/emotional signs of suicide risk among their students and ensure prevention methods are in place. It is the school counselor's ethical and moral responsibility to report suspected suicide risk to legal guardians and the appropriate authorities. In acknowledging suspected suicide risk, school counselors exercise reasonable care to protect students from unforeseeable harm (ASCA, 2016).

The Rationale

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC, 2015), suicide is the second leading cause of death for young people between the ages of 15 and 35 and the second leading cause of death for youth ages 10 to 14. Overall the nation has seen a 24 percent increase in suicide completions over the past 15 years (CDC, 2015). Data from the 2015 National Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey (YRBSS) showed that 29.9 percent or three out of 10 U.S. high school students expressed feeling sad or hopeless almost daily for two or more weeks (CDC, 2015). In addition, CDC (2015) reported that 17.7 percent of students expressed suicide ideation, and 14.6 percent of students had completed plans for their suicide. These statistics are alarming and reveal that students in significant numbers experience feelings and thoughts that isolate and lead to suicidal ideation and plans. Raising awareness around suicide and implementing suicide prevention initiatives is important in reinforcing student support and safety measures.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors recognize the threat of suicide among children and adolescents and strive to create a supportive environment. School counselors do not wait for certainty but rather the notion of a potential suicide places school counselors in a position to immediately notify parents/guardians (ASCA 2017). School counselors contact parents/guardians when placed on notice that a suicide is possible through student self-report, peer report, rumors, hearsay or any other means. It is a well-known fact that students will often deny suicidal ideation to escape the gaze of adults while confiding their true intentions to their peers. School counselors provide parents/guardians with referral resources for students (Stone, 2018). In the case that the parents/guardians do not take seriously the potential threat, the school counselor makes a report to child protective service (Stone, 2018). School counselors work to raise awareness of suicide and suicide ideation, train school personnel and create opportunities to identify resources available for school personnel (Desrochers & Houck, 2013).

To achieve their ethical obligation to protect students, school counselors must maintain current training in:

- Being informed about signs of suicidal thoughts
- Being knowledgeable about the resources available
- Preparing students, staff, colleagues and parents to recognize warning symptoms for suicidal behavior
- Referring students who demonstrate signs of suicidal thoughts to local community agencies

Summary

Through the implementation of comprehensive suicide prevention/awareness, school counselors ensure students and faculty are well-prepared to address and identify the negative thoughts and experiences that could potentially lead a student to suicide ideation.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2016). *Ethical standards for school counselors*. Retrieved from <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Ethics/EthicalStandards2016.pdf>

American School Counselor Association. (2017). Retrieved from <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:h0kMsfUXhJIJ:schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Resource%2520Center/Suicide-Suicide%2520Prevention/Sample%2520Documents/FAQs.doc+&cd=2&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015). Youth risk behavior surveillance system data: Adolescent and school health. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/data/yrbs/index.htm>

Desrochers J., & Houck G. (2013). Depression in children and adolescents: Guidelines for school practice: Principal leadership. Retrieved from http://www.nasponline.org/resources/principals/April_13_Depression.pdf

Population Reference Bureau. (2016). Suicide replaces homicide as second-leading cause of death among U.S. teenagers. Retrieved from <http://www.prb.org/Publications/Articles/2016/suicide-replaces-homicide-second-leading-cause-death-among-us-teens.aspx>

Stone, C. (2018). *Assessments and Third Party Software Alerts for Suicide Ideation*. ASCA January/February 2018.

Resources

“13 Reasons Why” and the Role of the School Counselor to Combat Teen Suicide. (2017, July 2). Retrieved February 27, 2018, from <https://counseling.online.wfu.edu/blog/13-reasons-why-and-the-role-of-the-school-counselor-to-combat-teen-suicide/>

The School Counselor and Suicide Risk Assessment

(Adopted 2020)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors support best practice in suicide prevention to reduce suicide risk in children and adolescents and are part of a collaborative team who respond when students are identified as at-risk for suicide. When becoming aware of a student considering suicide, school counselors assert their ethical and legal responsibility to report suspected suicide risk to parents/guardians and the appropriate authorities.

The Rationale

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data reveals that from 2007 to 2017, suicide was the second-leading cause of death for persons aged 10–19 and that suicide rates have been steadily increasing (Curtin and Heron, 2017). Because school counselors work with all students through the delivery of school counseling programs, school counselors are in a position to raise awareness among students, families and the education community regarding student suicide and assist educators in understanding how to recognize and respond to suicide risk.

The School Counselor’s Role

Through their work in classroom, group and individual settings, school counselors work to create supportive relationships with all students and to identify students’ social/emotional needs (ASCA, 2019). Through these interactions as well as through consultation with school staff, school counselors may become aware that a student could be at risk for suicide by report from the student, the student’s peers or school staff. School counselors are acutely aware that if they are placed on notice by any of these means, they must always notify parents/guardians about this risk. The exception is when the parent/guardian’s abuse or neglect is the expressed reason for the student’s suicidal ideation. In these cases, the school counselor must contact child protective services.

School counselors support the development of district policy based on best practices in suicide prevention (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, American School Counselor Association, National Association of School Psychologists & The Trevor Project, 2019). When district suicide-risk protocols are in place, school counselors must follow them, but they advocate for change when the protocols do not comply with ethical standards (ASCA, 2016). When the school district does not have a written suicide protocol for school personnel or the policy does not comply with ethical standards and school counselor scope of practice, school counselors advocate for the team-based creation of suicide-risk policies and procedures supporting students’ mental health needs and aligned with team members’ competencies.

If state legislation or school board policy requires a schoolwide screening program, school counselors advocate for ethical use of valid and reliable instruments with concerns for cultural sensitivity and bias (ASCA, 2016). School counselors also advocate as a non-negotiable that parents/guardians are to be notified of any suicidal ideation. Regardless of whether the student is 18 years of age or older, school counselors’ ethical imperative is to notify parents/guardians of their child’s suicidal ideation (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 2020; Stone, 2017).

If school counselors are required to use assessments, screenings or any type of instrument to determine the suicide risk, they advocate that they are never required to negate any level of risk of harm, as students may tell school counselors what they believe will get them out from under scrutiny. School counselors also advocate that the school district has a policy whereby parents/guardians are always contacted and notified of anything learned through an investigation of potential suicide, or with any instrument, that will guide parents/guardians in efforts to protect their child. Contacting parents/guardians is the school counselor’s primary responsibility (Stone, 2017).

When a student is suicidal and in crisis in school, the school counselor’s primary role is to keep the student safe until the student can be transferred to the parents/guardians. Before releasing the student to the parents/guardians, school counselors:

- are clear with 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
- avoid using words or phrases such as “impulse control” or “low risk” in an effort to soften the message

- strongly encourage parents/guardians to seek a medical or mental health provider for a comprehensive assessment of their child
- help the family find resources if needed

As parents/guardians are the people most invested long-term in a child’s life, they must be able to exercise custody and control over their child’s well-being. However, in the event the parents/guardians are neglecting the child’s mental health needs, school counselors make a report to child protective services. School counselors document all of these interactions with the parents/guardians and the student (Stone, 2017).

Summary

School counselors support best practice in suicide prevention to reduce suicide risk in children and adolescents and are part of a collaborative team who respond when students are identified as at-risk for suicide. When students are identified or are in crisis, school counselors support them by providing parents/guardians with appropriate information and referrals. School counselors are aware of the many legal and ethical implications associated with students who are contemplating suicide and adhere to them in their practice.

References

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, American School Counselor Association, National Association of School Psychologists & The Trevor Project (2019). *Model school district policy on suicide prevention: Model language, commentary, and resources* (2nd ed.). New York: American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

American School Counselor Association (2016). *ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors*. Alexandria, VA: American School Counselor Association.

American School Counselor Association (2019). *ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs* (4th edition). Alexandria, VA: American School Counselor Association.

Curtin, S.C., & Heron, M. (2019). Death rates due to suicide and homicide among persons aged 10–24: United States, 2000–2017. NCHS Data Brief, no 352. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. (2020). *The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act: Guidance for eligible students*. United States Department of Education, Family Policy Compliance Office. https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource_document/file/FERPAforeligiblestudents.pdf

Stone, C. (2017). *School counseling principles: Ethics and Law* (4th Ed.). American School Counselor Association.

The School Counselor and Supporting Students in Foster Care

(Adopted 2018)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors implement school counseling programs to meet the academic, career and social/emotional needs of all students. School counselors recognize that some students cope with situations that place them at higher risk. Youth in foster care represent an underserved and often-overlooked student population.

The Rationale

Children and youth in foster care represent one of the most vulnerable student subgroups in this country. Of the approximately 437,465 children in foster care in 2016, nearly 275,407 were in elementary and secondary schools (Children's Bureau, n.d.). Children in foster care experience much higher-levels of residential and school instability than their peers. Children experiencing this type of instability, including many students in foster care, are more likely to face a variety of academic difficulties (U.S. Department of Education & U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2016).

Research suggests that strong collaborative relationships between public schools and child welfare agencies improve the educational outcomes of students in the foster care system (Weinberg, Zetlin, & Shea, 2009; Zetlin, Weinberg, & Kimm, 2005; Zetlin, Weinberg, & Shea, 2006). It is imperative that professionals work together, along with the students' families when possible, to support each individual student and their unique needs.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors should inform themselves of the proper policies that apply to their states and local school districts regarding foster youth students' rights to school placements. School counselors should be knowledgeable about special circumstances and rights students may have in qualifying states and districts in which youth in foster care are able to receive their high school diploma with fewer credits or may qualify for a fifth year of high school if they changed school after their sophomore year. School counselors serve as the liaison between their school and child welfare agencies to promote communication and collaboration to address students' educational needs in their specific communities and improve students' educational outcomes.

In addition, school counselors:

- Help foster students with a stable school environment
- Bridge the communication between schools during times of transitions
- Promote resilience and identify protective factors
- Collaborate with foster/biological family and community stakeholders (e.g., social workers, therapists, attorneys and case managers)
- Display awareness of the challenges students face
- Inform themselves of resources available to help students access postsecondary training opportunities (e.g., current scholarships, grants and application fee waiver programs available to foster youth in their states)

Summary

School counselors recognize students in the foster care system are resilient, have many strengths and may require additional support in obtaining resources, social/emotional care, academic planning and college/career guidance. School counselors recognize it is their duty to be knowledgeable about legislation, resources and needs for students in foster care.

References

Children's Bureau. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb>.

U.S. Department of Education & U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2016, June 23). *Significant Guidance*. Retrieved from U.S. Department of Education: <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/edhhsfostercarenonregulatorguide.pdf>

Weinberg, L. A., Zetlin, A., & Shea, N. M. (2009). Removing barriers to educating children in foster care through interagency collaboration: A seven county multiple-case study. *Child Welfare: Journal of Policy, Practice, and Program*, 88(4), 77-111.

Zetlin, A. G., Weinberg, L. A., & Kimm, C. (2005). Helping social workers address the educational needs of foster children. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 29, 811-823. doi:10.1016/j.chiabu.2004.12.009

Zetlin, A.G., Weinber, L.A., & Shea, N.M. (2006). Improving educational prospects for youth in foster care: The educational liaison model. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 41, 267-272. doi 10.2975/33.2.2009.115.124

Resources

National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention. (2010). The Role of Schools in Supporting Children in Foster Care. Retrieved from <http://www.promoteprevent.org/sites/www.promoteprevent.org/files/resources/The%20Role%20of%20Schools.docx.pdf>

U.S. Department of Education. (2016, May 26). *New Foster Care Transition Toolkit Offers Tips for Helping Foster Youth Succeed as Adults*. Retrieved December 26, 2017, from U.S. Department of Education: <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/new-foster-care-transition-toolkit-offers-tips-helping-foster-youth-succeed-adults>

The School Counselor and Test Preparation Programs

(Adopted 1989; revised 1993, 1999, 2001, 2006, 2012, 2018)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors understand the impact of testing and test scores on college admissions, industry credentialing and other areas pertaining to students' postsecondary plans and goals. School counselors assist students in preparing for standardized tests by promoting opportunities designed to increase knowledge and improve test-taking skills. School counselors help students and their families become knowledgeable about test preparation programs and assist them as they decide which programs best meet their needs.

The Rationale

Students are often apprehensive about standardized tests and sometimes view tests as intimidating or threatening. Compounding these feelings is the fact that, since 1990, average increases in first-time college applications has increased yearly, while the number of students being accepted to college has remained relatively stable (National Association for College Admission Counseling, 2015). Research has demonstrated that markers predicting college success occur across a student's development and include reading proficiency by third grade, sound school attendance, positive social skills, rigorous course-taking pathways and maintenance of a 3.0 GPA or higher (College and Career Readiness & Success Center, 2013).

Although many postsecondary institutions require applicants to take a college entrance test to be considered for admission and/or placement, not all schools do. School counselors recognize that test-taking strategies for standardized tests are test-specific and will not necessarily be applicable to all standardized tests or other assessments students would take during their academic career. Even so, school counselors are often asked for advice on test preparation programs to increase scores and opportunities.

Research on test-taking and test-wise strategies, such as time-use and guessing strategies, revealed that such preparation can improve scores. These gains are even larger when a student participates in a longer test preparation program that allows the student to practice and develop broader cognitive skills (Plakans & Gebril, 2015). Many students benefit from becoming familiar with the test format and test-taking strategies before taking a standardized test. Content area review and repeated test-based practice have shown to be beneficial for students as they prepare for exams (Turner, 2009).

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors provide test-taking strategies as a part of a school counseling program promoting academic, career and social/emotional development of all students. Test-taking skills and strategies include:

- Time use
- Error avoidance and guessing
- Memory and recall techniques
- Deductive reasoning
- Test-wiseness (including scoring rubrics, test format and item formats)
- Stress management and anxiety reduction (Selend, 2012)

School counselors collaborate with teachers and other school staff to coordinate and provide information on integrating test-taking strategies, content and practice tests into regular classroom instruction. Examples include providing students and families with research and information on a variety of test preparation options to enable them to make informed decisions about commercial test preparation programs, free programs, tutoring and other options. The school counselor collaborates with staff to encourage integration of test-taking strategies and content across the curriculum.

Summary

Research shows test preparation can help students improve test scores (What Works Clearinghouse, 2016). School counselors collaborate with school staff to assist students as they prepare for tests by providing instruction on test-taking skills and research and information about test preparation programs to students and their families.

References

College and Career Readiness and Success Center. (2013). *New CCRS Center brief: Predictors of postsecondary success*. Retrieved from <https://ccrscenter.org/blog/new-ccrs-center-brief-predictors-postsecondary-success>.

National Association for College Admission Counseling. (2015). *2015 State of College Admission*. Washington, D.C.

Plakans, L., & Gebril, A. (2015). *Assessment myths*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Salend, S.J. (2012). Teaching students not to sweat the test. *Kappan*, 93(6), 20-25.

Turner, S. L. (2009). Ethical and appropriate high-stakes test preparation in middle school: Five methods that matter, *Middle School Journal*, 41(1), 36-45, doi:10.1080/00940771.2009.11461702

What Works Clearinghouse. (2016). *ACT/SAT Test Preparation and Coaching Programs*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences.

The School Counselor and Transgender/Gender-nonconforming Youth

(Adopted 2016)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors recognize all students have the right to be treated equally and fairly with dignity and respect as unique individuals, free from discrimination, harassment and bullying based on their real or perceived gender identity and gender expression. School counselors work to safeguard the well-being of transgender and gender-nonconforming youth.

The Rationale

School counselors are committed to the academic, career and social/emotional development of all students. Transgender and gender-nonconforming students and their families face increased risks as well as unique circumstances that often require additional guidance and recommendations to help ensure these students receive the same educational opportunities as their peers (Greytak, Ksciw, & Diaz, 2009). According to Greytak et al. (2009), 26 percent of transgender students were physically assaulted, (e.g., punched, kicked or injured with a weapon) in school in the past year because of their gender expression. Greytak et al. (2009) noted that the adverse health and educational consequences for transgender and gender-nonconforming students are even greater than those for lesbian, gay and bisexual students. School counselors recognize the overall goal is to ensure the safety, comfort and healthy development of all students, maximizing inclusion and social integration while minimizing exclusion and stigmatization.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors recognize that the responsibility for determining a student's gender identity rests with the student rather than outside confirmation from medical practitioners, mental health professionals or documentation of legal changes. School counselors collaborate with other school personnel to address district operations, programs, policies and activities that may put the well-being of transgender and gender-nonconforming youth at risk. Although the guidelines within this statement provide important suggestions, they cannot anticipate every situation that might occur.

Each student's unique situation should be addressed on a case-by-case basis, using a student-centered approach that includes ongoing student and parent/guardian engagement (as appropriate) and school personnel with a legitimate educational interest per the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Title IX guidance and legal briefs issued by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) have defined fair and equal treatment for transgender and gender-nonconforming students in relation to rights in areas such as student names and pronouns, student records, privacy, restrooms, student safety and dress codes (OCR, 2014). School counselors promote the use of best practices to inform their support of transgender and gender-nonconforming students such as the following recommendations offered by MSBE (2016):

- **Names and Pronouns.** School staff should address students by their chosen name and pronouns that correspond to their gender identity, regardless of whether there has been a legal name change.
- **Student Records.** When requested, schools should engage in reasonable and good-faith efforts to change current unofficial student records (e.g., class and team rosters, yearbooks, school newspapers and newsletters) with the chosen name and appropriate gender markers to promote consistency among teachers, substitute teachers, school administrators and other staff. School districts should comply if transgender students ask the district to amend their secondary educational records, including diplomas and transcripts after graduation, to ensure those requesting records (e.g., college admissions offices or potential employers) will only see the name and gender marker corresponding to the student's gender identity (Lambda Legal, 2014).
- **Privacy and Confidentiality Regarding Disclosures.** Transgender and gender-nonconforming students have the right to decide when, with whom and to what extent to share private information. When contacting the parent/guardian of a transgender or gender-nonconforming student, school staff should use the student's legal name and the pronoun corresponding to the student's assigned sex at birth, unless the student or parent/guardian has specified otherwise.
- **Restrooms.** Students should be allowed to use the restroom in accordance with their gender identity. Alternative and nonstigmatizing options, such as an all-gender or single-user restroom (e.g., staff bathroom or nurse's office), should be made available to students who request them but not presented as the only option. Any student who has a need or desire for increased privacy, regardless of underlying reasons, has the right to access a single-user restroom.

- **Locker Rooms or Changing Facilities.** Students should not be required to use a locker room that is incongruent with their gender identity. Locker-room usage should be determined using the guiding principles of safety and honoring the student’s gender identity and expression. Some options include: 1) an adjusted changing schedule, 2) use of a private area in the facility (e.g., nearby restroom stall with a door, an area separated by a curtain, a physical education instructor’s office in the locker room) and 3) use of a nearby private area (e.g., restroom, nurse’s office). Any student who has a need or desire for increased privacy, regardless of the underlying reasons, may request the options listed above.
- **Physical Education Classes and Intramural Sports.** Students should be allowed to participate in physical education classes and intramural sports in accordance with their gender identity.
- **Interscholastic Sports.** Students should be allowed to participate in interscholastic sports in accordance with their gender identity, subject to state and federal civil rights laws.
- **Dress Code.** Students should have the right to express their gender at school, within the parameters of the school’s dress code, without discrimination or harassment. The school’s dress code should be gender-neutral and not restrict a student’s clothing choices on the basis of gender. In the event the dress code has differing expectations or practices based on gender, students should be permitted to dress in accordance with their gender identity.
- **Gender-Based Activities or Practices.** Districts should evaluate all gender-based programs and practices and maintain only those that have a clear and sound educational purpose. When students are separated by gender in school activities, students should be allowed to participate in accordance with their gender identity. When considering overnight accommodations, solutions should be sought that are inclusive, respectful and acceptable to the student and, to the extent possible, do not impose an additional expense or burden on the student.

Summary

School counselors promote affirmation, respect and equal opportunity for all individuals regardless of gender identity or gender expression. School counselors encourage a safe and affirming school environment and promote awareness of and education on issues related to transgender and gender-nonconforming students.

References

Greytak, E., A., Ksciw, J. G., & Diaz, E. M. (2009). *Harsh realities: The experiences of transgender youth in our nation’s schools*. New York: GLSEN.

Lambda Legal. (2014). *A transgender advocates guide to updating and amending school records: Frequently asked questions on FERPA*. Retrieved from http://www.lambdalegal.org/sites/default/files/publications/downloads/factsheet_ferpa.pdf.

Michigan State Board of Education. (2016). *State Board of Education statement and guidance on safe and supportive learning environments for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) students*. Retrieved from http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Item_B_SBE_Statement_and_Guidance_on_LGBTQ_515608_7.pdf.

OCR’s Questions and Answers on Title IX and Sexual Violence. (2014) at B-2. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/qa-201404-title-ix.pdf>.

The School Counselor and Trauma-Informed Practice

(Adopted, 2016)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors understand the impact adverse childhood experiences have on students' academic achievement and social/emotional development. School counselors strive to identify, support and promote the success of students who have experienced trauma through the implementation of a data-informed school counseling program.

The Rationale

Forty-six million children witness violence, crime, physical and psychological abuse every year in the United States (Listenbee et al., 2012). Research has shown trauma significantly increases the risk of mental health problems, difficulties with social relationships and behavior, physical illness and poor school performance (Gerrity & Folcarelli, 2008). Student academic performance can be compromised by lack of attention, focus, processing new material and an increase in absenteeism, all of which can result from trauma. Establishing a supportive, positive school environment decreases these effects (Doll, 2010). Positive school environments have been linked to increased academic achievement and improved social/emotional coping skills, such as reducing bullying, harassment and excessive disciplinary problems. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration describes four characteristics of a trauma-informed program or system:

- realizes the impact of trauma and understands the potential for recovery
- recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in system members
- responds by integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures and practices
- actively resists re-traumatization

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors can be key players in promoting a trauma-sensitive environment at their schools. They are in a unique position to identify students affected by traumatic events and can provide the support and resources these students need. Certified school counselors implementing a data-informed school counseling program addressing academic, career and social/emotional development can have a positive impact at all levels of education. In an effort to promote student's physical, emotional and mental health and to create conditions allowing students to thrive and succeed, school counselors:

- recognize the signs of trauma in students
- understand traumas need not predict individual failure if sufficient focus on resilience and strengths is present
- avoid practices that may re-traumatize students
- create connected communities and positive school climates that are trauma-sensitive to keep students healthy and in school and involved in positive social networks
- implement effective academic and behavioral practices, such as positive behavioral interventions and supports and social and emotional learning
- promote safe, stable and nurturing relationships. Research shows this is critical in helping students succeed even in the face of deprivation and adversity (The Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning Act of 2015).
- provide community resource information to students and families dealing with trauma
- educate staff on the effects of trauma and how to refer students to the school counselor
- collaborate with community resources to provide support for students
- promote a trauma-sensitive framework for policies, procedures and behaviors to entire staff
- recognize the role technology can play in magnifying trauma incidents for students

Summary

A trauma-sensitive school is one in which all students feel safe, welcomed and supported (Cole, Eisner, Gregory, & Ristuccia, 2013). School counselors, collaborating with school staff and community partners, can help transform the school into a safe, supportive, trauma-sensitive learning environment for all students. School counselors advocate for policies and procedures focused on the trauma-sensitive framework and the establishment of a safe school climate for all students.

References

The Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning Act of 2015 (H.R. 850) will expand the availability of educator training to help students learn social and emotional competencies.

Cole, S., Eisner, A., Gregory, M., & Ristuccia, J. (2013). *Helping traumatized children learn: Creating and advocating for trauma-sensitive schools*. Retrieved from http://nysteachs.org/media/TLPI_Creating.and.Advocating.for.Trauma.Sensitive.Schools.pdf.

Doll, B. (2010). Positive school climate. *Principal Leadership*. Retrieved from http://www.nasponline.org/resources/principals/School_ClimatePLDec10_ftsp.pdf.

Gerrity, E. & Folcarelli, C. (2008). *Child traumatic stress: What every policymaker should know*. Durham, NC and Los Angeles, CA: National Center for Child Traumatic Stress.

Listenbee, R., et al., (2012). Report of the Attorney General's National Task Force on Children Exposed to Violence. U.S. Department of Justice. Retrieved from <http://www.justice.gov/defendingchildhood/cev-rpt-full.pdf>.

Resources

Bethell, C. et al. (2014). Adverse childhood experiences: Assessing the impact on health and school engagement and the mitigating role of resilience." *Health Affairs*, 33(12), 2111.

Department of Health and Human Service's Letter to State Directors. (2013). Retrieved from http://www.oacbha.org/docs/TIC_October_2013.pdf

Effects of Emotional Trauma on the Brain and Learning. Bright Hub Education. Retrieved from <http://www.nctsn.org/trauma-types/complex-trauma/effects-of-complex-trauma>

FUTURES Without Violence. Safe, Healthy, and Ready to Learn. (2015). Policy recommendations to ensure children thrive in supportive communities free from violence and trauma. Retrieved from https://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Policy/Documents/Safe-Healthy-and-Ready-to-Learn_Full-Report.pdf.

Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities. (2013). *Behavioral health: Developing a better understanding*. (citing Department of Health and Human Services Letter to State Directors). Retrieved from http://www.oacbha.org/docs/TIC_October_2013.pdf.

Southern California Public Radio. (2014). *Teaching through trauma: How poverty affects kids' brains*. Retrieved from <http://www.scpr.org/blogs/education/2014/06/02/16743/poverty-has-been-found-to-affect-kidsbrains-can-o/>.

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network. (2016). *The effects of trauma on schools and learning*. Retrieved from <http://www.nctsn.org/resources/audiences/school-personnel/effects-of-trauma>.

The School Counselor and the Use of Non-School-Counseling Credentialed Personnel in Implementing School Counseling Programs

(Adopted 1994, Revised 2000, 2006, 2012, 2018)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors and the school counseling programs they design and implement serve a vital role in maximizing student success (Dimmit & Wilkerson, 2012; Olsen, Parikh-Fox, Flowers, & Algozzine, 2017; Wilkerson, Perusse, & Hughes, 2013). School counselors are uniquely qualified and solely eligible to meet the requirements of designing and implementing these programs. School counselors recognize that personnel who do not hold a master's degree in school counseling are not qualified to deliver a school counseling program that supports academic, career and social/emotional development and positively affects achievement for all students.

The Rationale

Research shows students who attend a school with a fully implemented school counseling program earn higher grades and are better prepared for life after high school (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012; Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Hoffman, 2012; Carey, Harrington, Martin, & Stephenson, 2012; Dimmit & Wilkerson, 2012; Stone & Dahir, 2015; Wood, Wilkerson, Perusse, & Hughes, 2013). School counselors recognize students face many challenges that may place them at risk for school failure. Communities and school districts across the country are seeking solutions to these complex challenges and may establish a variety of positions to address student needs.

School districts work diligently to employ the most highly trained personnel for dealing with these issues and may employ non-school-counseling credentialed staff for specific functions. Although non-school-counseling credentialed staff members provide valuable services to students, they do not have the training or skills to design or implement a school counseling program nor are they qualified to be placed in the role of school counselor. Non-school-counseling credentialed staff may include, but are not limited to, the following jobs:

- paraprofessionals
- peer helpers
- volunteers
- clerical support staff
- student assistance team members
- social workers, psychologists
- nurses
- mentors
- mental health counselors including marriage and family counselors, social emotional coaches, and day treatment workers
- college or graduation coaches/academic advisors
- behavior support specialists
- deans/assistant deans of students

The services non-school-counseling credentialed personnel provide must be clearly defined based on the individual's training and skills. Without appropriate training and skills, individuals with the best of intentions may provide inappropriate responses or interventions to students that could jeopardize students' development and well-being.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors recognize student needs can best be met through the collaborative efforts of all school personnel (Auger, 2013; Bardhoshi, Duncan, & Erford, 2017). In situations in which non-school-counseling credentialed personnel are performing interventions or prevention activities, school counselors advocate these activities be limited to the scope of the individual's training and capabilities. The school counselor collaborates with administrators, teachers and staff to establish appropriate guidelines, responsibilities and supervision for non-school-counseling credentialed staff as well as the activities provided. To ensure integrity, school counselors and non-school-counseling credentialed personnel should be aware of who is claiming credit for services to avoid duplicated reports of service.

When referring students to non-school-counseling credential staff, school counselors inform students and families of these staff members' role within the school. The school counselor may also provide information related to the individual's education level and scope of practice.

Summary

School counselors play an important role in the academic, career and social/emotional development of all students. Non-school-counseling credentialed individuals do not have the training or skills to design or implement a school counseling program nor are they qualified to be placed in the role of the school counselor. School counselors collaborate with administrators, teachers and staff to establish appropriate guidelines and supervision of services provided by non-school-counseling credentialed personnel and make referrals to these individuals as appropriate for the student.

References

- Auger, R. (2013). School counselors and children's mental health: Introduction to the special issue. *Professional School Counseling, 16*, 208-210.
- Bardhoshi, G., Duncan, K., & Erford, B. (2017). Effect of a specialized classroom counseling intervention on increasing self-efficacy among first-grade rural students. *Professional School Counseling, 21*, 12-25.
- Carey, J. & Dimmitt, C. (2012). School counseling and student outcomes: Summary of six statewide studies. *Professional School Counseling, 16*, 146-153.
- Carey, J., Harrington, K., Martin, I., & Hoffman, D. (2012). A statewide evaluation of the outcomes of the implementation of asca national model school counseling programs in rural and suburban Nebraska high schools. *Professional School Counseling, 16*, 100-107.
- Carey, J., Harrington, K., Martin, I., & Stephenson, D. (2012). A statewide evaluation of the outcomes of implementation of asca national model school counseling programs in Utah high schools. *Professional School Counseling, 16*, 89-99.
- Dimmitt, C. & Wilkerson, B. (2012). Comprehensive school counseling in Rhode Island: Access to services and student outcomes. *Professional School Counseling, 16*, 125-135.
- Olsen, J., Parikh-Foxx, S., Flowers, C., & Algozzine, B. (2017). An examination of factors that relate to school counselors' knowledge and skills in the multi-tiered systems of support. *Professional School Counseling, 20*, 159-171.
- Stone, C. B. & Dahir, C. A. (2015). *The transformed school counselor*. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
- Wood, C., Wilkerson, K., Perusse, R., & Hughes, A. (2013). Comprehensive school counseling programs and student achievement outcomes: A comparative analysis of ramp versus non-ramp schools. *Professional School Counseling, 16*, 172-184.

Resources

ASCA Empirical Research Studies Supporting the Value of School Counseling:
<https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Careers-Roles/Effectiveness.pdf>

California Department of Education: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/cg/rh/counseffective.asp>

Center for School Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation:
https://www.counseling.org/PublicPolicy/PDF/Research_Support_School_Counseling-ACA-CSCORE_02-11.pdf

The Professional Counselor and Use of Support Staff in School Counseling Programs

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

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors understand the value added to a school counseling program through the effective use of support staff. Assistance from school counseling program support staff members allows school counselors to use their time more efficiently and use their professional expertise and leadership skills more effectively to meet student needs.

The Rationale

To achieve maximum effectiveness, the ASCA National Model recommends a student-to-school-counselor ratio of 250:1 and that 80 percent or more of a school counselor's time be spent providing direct and indirect services to students (ASCA, 2019). However, even though recent studies have demonstrated significant correlations between student achievement and student-to-school-counselor ratios (e.g., Gewertz, 2018), the national average ratio is 455-to-1 for the 2016–2017 school year. In addition, the ASCA National Model offers a framework for a school counseling program that includes testing coordination and clerical duties on its list of “inappropriate activities for school counselors” (ASCA, 2019).

According to Heitin (2013), school counseling program support staff provide a means to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the school counseling program by relieving school counselors of many inappropriate, although necessary, tasks such as maintaining clerical records and coordinating paperwork. Heitin added that school counseling program support staff members allow the school counselor to spend more time planning and delivering programs and activities requiring specialized skills and training.

The Role of Support Staff in School Counseling Programs

School counseling program support staff members may assist in a variety of areas, including: collecting and maintaining current student files, record keeping, clerical support, data entry, new student registration and many other activities, allowing the school counselor to concentrate on delivering the school counseling program.

The school counseling program support staff members should be sensitive to students' problems and needs and be knowledgeable of the role of the school counselor and the total school counseling program. School counseling program support staff members should maintain the highest level of confidentiality of student records and personal information. They should not involve themselves in situations that are more appropriately handled by the school counselor.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors may assist in the selection and professional development of school counseling program support staff, collaborate to outline processes and activities that best support the school counseling program and ensure the support staff understand the ethical standards required for the office (Atici, 2014). These activities may include providing appropriate, ongoing supervision of school counseling program support staff members and ensuring the support staff has initial training as well as the opportunity for ongoing professional development in areas of clerical training, human relations and multicultural competence, ethics, community resources and confidentiality with regard to student records. When the school counselor works effectively through collaboration with support staff, the efficacy of the school counselor is enhanced (Atici, 2014).

Summary

School counselors understand the value support staff members add to a school counseling program. School counseling support staff members provide a means to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery of the school counseling program and allow the school counselors to spend more time planning and delivering a program that requires specialized skills and training. School counselors may be involved with the selection of support staff and collaborate with them to outline processes and activities that best support the school counseling program.

References

American School Counselor Association (2019). *ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.

Atici, M. (2014). Examination of school counselors' activities: From the perspectives of counselor efficacy and collaboration with school staff. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice, 14*(6), 2107–2120. <https://doi.org/10.12738/estp.2014.6.2554>

Gewertz, C. (2018). School counseling: State-by-state student-to-counselor ratio report: 10-year trends. *Education Week, 14*, 5.

Heitin, L. (2013). School counselors, support staff work hard amid scant resources. *Education Week, 32*(16), 22. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=shib&db=f5h&AN=84698597&site=eds-live&custid=s8501869>

Public Agenda. (2010). *Can I get a little advice here?*, downloaded from http://www.publicagenda.org/theirwholelifesaheadofthem?qt_active=1.

The School Counselor and Virtual School Counseling

(Adopted 2017)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors working in a virtual setting provide a school counseling program through the use of technology and distance (virtual/online/e-learning) counseling with the same standards and adherence to ethics as school counselors working in traditional school settings. School counselors work collaboratively with all stakeholders to ensure equity, access and success of all students whether virtual school counseling is offered synchronously or asynchronously.

The Rationale

Online learning is becoming increasingly relied upon in the United States (Setzer & Lewis, 2005) as students ranging from kindergarten to the postsecondary level are enrolling in virtual schools and online distance-education programs (Holmes & Kozlowski, 2016). Clark (2001) defined a virtual school as “an educational organization that offers K–12 courses through Internet or web-based methods” (p. 1). Students can be involved in online programs, ranging from a part-time, hybrid model in which they take some components of their education in a face-to-face environment and some in a fully digital environment, to fully online programs and degrees (Holmes & Kozlowski, 2016).

Many states have approved virtual academies or virtual charter public schools to serve as state-funded educational environments; data have shown that enrollment in online or virtual learning is rapidly increasing. Within this new environment, school counselors provide programming to promote engagement in the virtual school counseling platform to ensure students can gain access to the tools required to reach their potential. “Counselors understand the additional concerns related to the use of distance counseling, technology and social media and make every attempt to protect confidentiality and meet any legal and ethical requirements for the use of such resources” (Corey, Schneider Corey, Corey & Callanan, 2015, p. 545).

School counselors should ensure they continue to follow ethical standards in their virtual school counseling program (Wilczenski & Coomey, 2006). Osborn, Peterson and Hale (2014) found that the experiences of school counselors can provide new frames of reference to unique experiences of those who service as virtual school counselors.

The School Counselor’s Role

Within this new environment, school counselors provide programming to encourage engagement in the virtual school counseling platform to ensure students can gain access to the tools required to reach their potential. Students enroll in virtual schools for myriad reasons and come from diverse backgrounds. These students have unique reasons for choosing to attend a virtual school to remove barriers that keep them from achieving success in school. These unique reasons include but are not limited to:

- Dealing with mental health issues that lead to them needing to be in a smaller environment
- Being medically unable to attend a physical school
- Preferring a smaller environment, smaller class size or being able to be on their own
- Dealing with bullying in a traditional school setting
- Wanting a more rigorous school curriculum
- Wanting more individualized instructional support
- Requiring gifted and/or accelerated courses
- Developing asynchronously, such as being gifted in some courses and behind in others
- Participating in athletics or performing arts at the professional level

School counselors working with students in a virtual setting should:

- Adhere to the same ethical guidelines in a virtual setting as school counselors in a face-to-face setting
- Recognize and acknowledge the challenges and limitations of virtual school counseling
- Implement procedures for students to follow in both emergency and nonemergency situations when the school counselor is not available
- Recognize and mitigate the limitation of virtual school counselor confidentiality, which may include unintended viewers or recipients

- Inform both the student and parent/guardian of the benefits and limitations of virtual counseling
- Educate students on how to participate in the electronic school counseling relationship to minimize and prevent potential misunderstandings that could occur due to lack of verbal cues and inability to read body language or other visual cues that provide contextual meaning to the school counseling process and school counseling relationship
- Educate students about appropriate conduct in the online setting and using digital literacy as a tool to have an impact on students
- Incorporate lessons that align with academic, career and social/emotional domains

Summary

School counselors understand the expectations and limitations of providing virtual school counseling. School counselors have the responsibility to provide a school counseling program and develop programs to support all students in academic, career and social/emotional development that would emulate school counseling that would take place in a face-to-face environment. Virtual school counseling is a way to reach a diverse student set, to help students meet their potential and have an impact on their learning in a way they may not receive in a traditional face-to-face school environment.

References

American School Counselor Association. (2019). *ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.

American School Counselor Association. (2016). *Ethical standards for school counselors*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

American School Counselor Association. (2014). *Mindsets and behaviors for student success: K-12 college- and career-readiness standards for every student*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Clark, T. (2001). *Virtual schools: Trends and issues*. Phoenix, AZ: WestEd/Distance Learning Resource Network.

Corey, G., Schneider Corey M., Corey, C., & Callanan, P. (2015). *Issues and ethics in the helping professions* (9th Ed.). Cengage: Stamford, CT.

Holmes, C.M. & Kozlowski, K.A. (2016). A group counseling collaboration model: Support for virtual high school students. In *Ideas and research you can use: VISTAS 2016*. Retrieved from <http://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/vistas>.

Osborn, D., Peterson, G., & Hale, R. (2014) Virtual school counseling. *Professional School Counseling, 18*(1), 179-190.

Wilczenski, F, & Coomey, S. (2006). Cyber-communication: Finding its place in school counseling practice, education, and professional development. *Professional School Counseling, 9*(4), 327-331.

The School Counselor and Working with Students Experiencing Issues Surrounding Undocumented Status

(Adopted 2017; revised 2019)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

School counselors promote equal opportunity, a safe and nurturing environment and respect for all individuals regardless of citizenship status, including undocumented students and students with undocumented family members, understanding that this population faces a unique set of stressors. School counselors work to eliminate barriers that impede student development and achievement and are committed to the academic, career and social/emotional development of all students. “School counselors demonstrate their belief that all students have the ability to learn by advocating for an education system that provides optimal learning environments for all students” (ASCA, 2016, p. 1).

The Rationale

The 1982 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Plyler v. Doe* (1982) prohibits states from denying undocumented children a public K–12 education. In ruling the court stated that to deny these students an education would create a “lifetime of hardship” for the student, and it would create a “permanent underclass” (Eusebio & Mendoza, 2015).

Educators are on the front lines of implementing Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). Because of their unique position within a school, school counselors are able to support undocumented students by assisting these students in gathering documentation for DACA requests, advising them on the many academic, career and social/emotional opportunities made possible by DACA (Avila & Zellner, 2015).

A school counseling program is an integral component of the school’s academic mission. Comprehensive school counseling programs, informed by student data and based on standards in academic, career and social/emotional development, promote and enhance the learning process for all students. The ASCA National Model ensures equitable access to a rigorous education for all students. Undocumented students and students with undocumented family members deserve the same services as all other students but face social, financial and legal barriers. These students need support to feel safe, in addition to needing assistance to find funding for any postsecondary educational goals, due to lack of Title IV federal financial aid that is not available to undocumented student in the form of grants, student loans or work-study.

Many students experience stressors due to:

- separation from family
- cultural differences
- language barriers and interpretation for families
- anxiety, fear, grief and loss regarding family members’ detention and deportation
- caretaker roles for family members
- concerns about their futures
- understanding how to navigate college access and availability to them
- marginalization due to mixed cultures
- PTSD due to traumatic immigration events
- re-traumatization

Connecting with a school counselor will alleviate many of these stressors and fears, especially when individual counseling addresses the students’ concerns. Having access to a qualified school counselor builds a support system needed at any age and will enable students to develop goals for their futures and feel safe and connected to their communities. School counselors recognize these stressors can be alleviated by intervention from a school counselor.

The School Counselor’s Role

School counselors focus their skills, time and energy on direct and indirect services to all students, regardless of their citizenship, national origin, race, color, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or any other demographics. School counselors participate as members of the educational team and use the skills of leadership, advocacy and collaboration to

promote systemic change as appropriate. Supporting all students with a variety of needs may include a diverse skill set, including knowledge about many legal factors affecting students.

“Undocumented youth, in particular, can experience high levels of acculturative stress from immigration-related issues such as separation from family and academic difficulties. The psychological costs of family separation, associated with the migration process and with U.S. immigration procedures such as detention and deportation, are well documented and, among children, may include symptoms of depression and anxiety” (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

The role of the school counselor includes:

- Advocating for the rights of all students, including undocumented students, by ensuring students are not barred from education based on foreign birth certificates, lack of a Social Security number or a home language other than English
- Working with other district personnel so any information collected is uniformly applied to all students and not used to discriminate or bar certain students’ access to education
- Supporting undocumented students by helping them gain access to an equitable education that meets their needs and prepares them for postsecondary access, if necessary (e.g., referrals for ELL services, special education services and medical treatment)
- Working with school and district personnel to promote awareness and to educate school counselors and school and district personnel, students, parents and the community on policy, procedures and rights of the students and their families and to eliminate discriminatory language and actions regarding these students and their families
- Supporting the family with information about educational access and rights
- Assisting students with seeking postsecondary goals, navigating college access and finding funding for their goals
- Working with community partners and leveraging resources to provide support in keeping families intact, if possible, while supporting students who are separated from a parent due to deportation
- Ensuring schools are a safe haven for undocumented students and will not divulge confidential information to any outside agencies without proper legal documentation
- Providing counseling intervention and social/emotional support for students affected by immigration stressors, including assessment of possible trauma that they may have experienced
- Keeping abreast of current policies and practices of postsecondary institutions regarding access for undocumented students
- Advocating against the practice of separating children from their families at U.S. borders (ASCA, 2018)
- Maintaining a database of community resources to support referrals in assisting families with various challenges related to issues surrounding undocumented status, including recovery associated with trauma resulting from separation

Summary

School counselors understand undocumented students face additional legal, financial and social stressors and need additional support with these barriers as well as assistance with postsecondary goals. School counselors have a responsibility to provide services to all students regardless of their citizenship status, to advocate for their access to services and to prevent discrimination against students by removing barriers impeding student development and achievement.

References

- American School Counselor Association. (2016). *ASCA ethical standards for school counselors*. Alexandria, VA: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Ethics/EthicalStandards2016.pdf>
- American School Counselor Association. (2018). *ASCA issues statement condemning the separation of children and families at U.S. borders*. Alexandria, VA: Author. Retrieved from <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Press%20releases/ASCA-statement-against-border-separation.pdf>
- Avila, K. & Zellner, M. (2015). *Deferred action for childhood arrivals (DACA): Toolkit for educators*. San Francisco, CA: Educators for Fair Consideration. Retrieved from http://e4fc.org/images/E4FC_DACAEducatorToolkit.pdf
- Eusebio, C., & Mendoza, F. (2015). *The case for undocumented students in higher education*. San Francisco, CA: Educators for Fair Consideration. Retrieved from http://www.e4fc.org/images/E4FC_TheCase.pdf
- Plyler v. Doe*, 457 U.S. 202 (1982).
- U.S. Department of Education. (2015). *Resource guide: Supporting undocumented youth*. Washington D.C.: Author. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/focus/supporting-undocumented-youth.pdf>

Resources

Chicago Public Schools & Choose Your Future. (2016). Undocumented Students. Chicago, IL: Author. Retrieved from <https://chooseyourfuture.cps.edu/high-school-college-career/undocumented-students/>

Suárez-Orozco, C., Bang, H. J., & Kim, H. Y. (2011). I felt like my heart was staying behind: Psychological implications of family separations & reunifications for immigrant youth. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 26(2), 222-257.
doi:10.1177/0743558410376830

<https://www.aft.org/our-community/immigration>

<https://www.nilc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/immigration-reform-chart-2013-07-11.pdf>

<https://www.nilc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/immigration-reform-chart-esp-2013-07-11.pdf>