

Preamble

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is a professional organization supporting school counselors, school counseling students/interns, school counseling program directors/supervisors and school counselor educators. School counselors have unique qualifications and skills to address preK–12 students' academic, career and social/emotional development needs. These standards are the ethical responsibility of all school counseling professionals.

School counselors are advocates, leaders, collaborators and consultants who create systemic change by providing equitable educational access and success by connecting their school counseling programs to the district's mission and improvement plans. 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.

All students have the right to:

- Be respected, be treated with dignity and have access to a comprehensive school counseling program that advocates for and affirms all students from diverse populations including but not limited to: ethnic/racial identity, nationality, age, social class, economic status, abilities/disabilities, language, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity/expression, family type, religious/spiritual identity, emancipated minors, wards of the state, homeless youth and incarcerated youth. School counselors as social-justice advocates support students from all backgrounds and circumstances and consult when their competence level requires additional support.
- Receive the information and support needed to move toward self-determination, self-development and affirmation within one's group identities. Special care is given to improve overall educational outcomes for students who have been historically underserved in educational services.
- Receive critical, timely information on college, career and postsecondary options and understand the full magnitude of the choices available to them.

g. Are knowledgeable of laws, regulations and policies affecting students and families and strive to protect and inform students and families regarding their rights.

h. Provide effective, responsive interventions to address student needs.

i. Consider the involvement of support networks, wraparound services and educational teams needed to best serve students.

j. Maintain appropriate boundaries and are aware that any sexual or romantic relationship with students whether legal or illegal in the state of practice is considered a grievous breach of ethics and is prohibited regardless of a student's age. This prohibition applies to both in-person and electronic interactions and relationships.

A.2. Confidentiality

School counselors:

a. Promote awareness of school counselors' ethical standards and legal mandates regarding confidentiality and the appropriate rationale and procedures for disclosure of student data and information to school staff.

b. Inform students of the purposes, goals, techniques and rules of procedure under which they may receive counseling. Disclosure includes informed consent and clarification of the limits of

A.3. Comprehensive Data-Informed Program

School counselors:

- a. Collaborate with administration, teachers, staff and decision makers around school-improvement goals.
- b. Provide students with a comprehensive school counseling program that ensures equitable academic, career and social/emotional development opportunities for all students.
- c. Review school and student data to assess needs including, but not limited to, data on disparities that may exist related to gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status and/or other relevant classifications.
- d. Use data to determine needed interventions, which are then delivered to help close the information, attainment, achievement and opportunity gaps.
- e. Collect process, perception and outcome data and analyze the data to determine the progress and effectiveness of the school counseling program. School counselors ensure the school counseling program's goals and action plans are aligned with district's school improvement goals.
- f. Use data-collection tools adhering to confidentiality standards as expressed in A.2.
- g. Share data outcomes with stakeholders.

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

School counselors:

- a. Collaborate with administration, teachers, staff and decision makers to create a culture of postsecondary readiness
- b. Provide and advocate for individual students' preK-postsecondary college and career awareness, exploration and postsecondary planning and decision making, which supports the students' right to choose from the wide array of options when students complete secondary education.
- c. Identify gaps in college and career access and the implications of such data for addressing both intentional and unintentional biases related to college and career counseling.
- d. Provide 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.

A.5. Dual Relationships and Managing Boundaries

School counselors:

- a. Avoid dual relationships that might impair their objectivity and increase the risk of harm to students (e.g., counseling one's family members or the children of close friends or associates). If a dual relationship is unavoidable, the school counselor is responsible for taking action to eliminate or reduce the potential for harm to the student through use of safeguards, which might include informed consent, consultation, supervision and documentation.

- b. Establish and maintain appropriate professional relationships with students at all times. School counselors consider the risks and benefits of extending current school counseling relationships beyond conventional parameters, such as attending a student's distant athletic competition. In extending these boundaries, school counselors take appropriate professional precautions such as informed consent, consultation and supervision. School counselors document the nature of interactions that extend beyond conventional parameters, including the rationale for the interaction, the potential benefit and the possible positive and negative consequences for the student and school counselor.
- c. Avoid dual relationships beyond the professional level with

a strong work ethic, and use data for addressing both intentional and unintentional

- d. Collaborate with parents/guardians, when appropriate, to establish communication and to ensure students' needs are met.
- e. Understand students have the right to be treated in a manner consistent with their gender identity and to be free from any form of discipline, harassment or discrimination based on their gender identity or gender expression.
- f. Advocate for the equal right and access to free, appropriate public education for all youth, in which students are not stigmatized or isolated based on their housing status, disability, foster care, special education status, mental health or any other exceptionality or special need.
- g. Recognize the strengths of students with disabilities as well as their challenges and provide best practices and current research in supporting their academic, career and social/emotional needs.

A.11. Bullying, Harassment and Child Abuse

School counselors:

- a. Report to the administration all incidents of bullying, dating violence and sexual harassment as most fall under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 or other federal and state laws as being illegal and require administrator interventions. School counselors provide services to victims and perpetrator as appropriate, which may include a safety plan and reasonable accommodations such as schedule change, but school counselors defer to administration for all discipline issues for this or any

A.14. Technical and Digital Citizenship

School counselors:

- a. Demonstrate appropriate selection and use of technology and software applications to enhance students' academic, career and social/emotional development. Attention is given to the ethical and legal considerations of technological applications, including confidentiality concerns, security issues, potential limitations and benefits and communication practices in electronic media.
- b. Take appropriate and reasonable measures for maintaining confidentiality of student information and educational records stored or transmitted through the use of computers, social media, facsimile machines, telephones, voicemail, answering machines and other electronic technology.
- c. Promote the safe and responsible use of technology in collaboration with educators and families.
- d. Promote the benefits and clarify the limitations of various appropriate technological applications.
- e. Use established and approved means of communication with students, maintaining appropriate boundaries. School counselors help educate students about appropriate communication and boundaries.
- f. Advocate for equal access to technology for all students.

A.15. Virtual/Distance School Counseling

School counselors:

- a. Adhere to the same ethical guidelines in a virtual/distance setting as school counselors in face-to-face settings.
- b. Recognize and acknowledge the challenges and limitations of virtual/distance school counseling.
- c. Implement procedures for students to follow in both emergency and nonemergency situations when the school counselor is

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- c. Taking reasonable steps to ensure school and other resources are available to provide appropriate staff supervision and training.
- d. Providing opportunities for professional development in current research related to school counseling practice and ethics.
- e. Taking steps to eliminate conditions or practices in their schools or organizations that may violate, discourage or interfere with compliance with the ethics and laws related to the profession.
- f. Monitoring school and organizational policies, regulations and procedures to ensure practices are consistent with the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors.

D. SCHOOL COUNSELING INTERN SITE SUPERVISORS

Field/intern site supervisors:

- a. Are licensed or certified school counselors and/or have an understanding of comprehensive school counseling programs and the ethical practices of school counselors.
- b. Have the education and training to provide clinical supervision. Supervisors regularly pursue continuing education activities on both counseling and supervision topics and skills.
- c. Use a collaborative model of supervision that is on-going and includes, but is not limited to, the following activities: promoting professional growth, supporting best practices and ethical practice, assessing supervisee performance and developing plans for improvement, consulting on specific cases and assisting in the development of a course of action.
- d. Are culturally competent and consider cultural factors that may have an impact on the supervisory relationship.
- e. Do not engage in supervisory relationships with individuals with whom they have the inability to remain objective. Such individuals include, but are not limited to, family members and close friends.
- f. Are competent with technology used to perform supervisory responsibilities and online supervision, if applicable. Supervisors protect all electronically transmitted confidential information.
- g. Understand there are differences in face-to-face and virtual communication (e.g., absence of verbal and nonverbal cues) that may have an impact on virtual supervision. Supervisors educate supervisees on how to communicate electronically to prevent and avoid potential problems.
- h. Provide information about how and when virtual supervisory services will be utilized. Reasonable access to pertinent applications should be provided to school counselors.
- i. Ensure supervisees are aware of policies and procedures related to supervision and evaluation and provide due-process seminars.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Advocate

a person who speaks, writes or acts to promote the well-being of students, parents/guardians and the school counseling profession. School counselors advocate to close the information, opportunity, intervention and attainment gaps for all students.

Assent

to demonstrate agreement when a student is not competent to give informed consent to counseling or other services the school counselor is providing.

Assessment

collecting in-depth information about a person to develop a comprehensive plan that will guide the collaborative counseling and service provision process.

Boundaries

something that indicates or affixes an extent or limits.

Breach

disclosure of information given in private or confidential communication such as information given during counseling.

Competence

the quality of being competent; adequacy; possession of required skill, knowledge, qualification or capacity.

Confidentiality

the ethical duty of school counselors to responsibly protect a student's private communications shared in counseling.

Conflict of Interest

a situation in which a school counselor stands to personally profit from a decision involving a student.

Consent

permission, approval or agreement; compliance.

Consultation

a professional relationship in which individuals meet to seek advice, information and/or deliberation to address a student's need.

Conventional Parameters

general agreement or accepted standards regarding limits, boundaries or guidelines.

Cultural Sensitivity

a set of skills enabling you to know, understand and value the similarities and differences in people and modify your behavior to be most effective and respectful of students and families and to deliver programs that fit the needs of diverse learners.

Legal Mandates

a judicial command or precept issued by a court or magistrate, directing proper behavior to enforce a judgment, sentence or decree.

Legal Rights

those rights bestowed onto a person by a given legal system.

Mandatory Reporting

the legal requirement to report to authorities.

Minors

persons under the age of 18 years unless otherwise designated by statute or regulation.

Perception

A mental image or awareness of environment through a physical sensation. A capacity for understanding or a result of an observation.

Peer Helper

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 that enhance the effectiveness of the school counseling program while increasing outreach and raising student awareness of services.

Privacy

the right of an individual to keep oneself and one's personal information free from unauthorized disclosure.

Privileged Communication

conversation that takes place within the context of a protected relationship, such as that between an attorney and client, a husband and wife, a priest and penitent, a doctor and patient and, in some states, a school counselor and a student.

Professional Development

the process of improving and increasing capabilities through access to education and training opportunities.

Relationship

a connection, association or involvement.

Risk Assessment

a systematic process of evaluating potential risks

School Counseling Supervisor

a qualified professional who provides guidance, teaching and support for the professional development of school counselors and school counseling candidates.

Serious and Foreseeable

when a reasonable person can anticipate significant and harmful possible consequences.

Sole-Possession Records

exempted from the definition of educational records and the protection of FERPA, are records used only as a personal memory aid that are kept in the sole possession of the maker of the record and are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a temporary substitute for the maker of the record and provide only professional opinion or personal observations.

Stakeholder

a person or group that shares an investment or interest in an endeavor.

Supervision

a collaborative relationship in which one person promotes and/or evaluates the development of another.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

a law that demands that no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Virtual/Distance Counseling

counseling by electronic means.

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