

The School Counselor and Credentialing and Licensure

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

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

ASCA strongly supports a school counselor credentialing or licensing law in each state that includes: a definition of the profession, minimum qualifications for entry into the profession and requirements for continuing professional development. ASCA encourages all state education certification or licensure agencies to adopt the ASCA School Counselor Competencies from the ASCA National Model for school counselor credentialing or licensing.

The Rationale

Regulations 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
- standards for entry into the profession that minimally require a master's degree or higher in school counseling or the substantial equivalent and are employed as school counselors, supervisors of school counselors or professors of counseling in a graduate program that prepares school counselors
- requirements for continuing education to further develop skills as a school counselor

In establishing legislation for school counselor certification or licensure, ASCA supports the nationwide use of the School Counselor Competencies from the ASCA National Model, a description of professional roles for school counselors and setting state standards for school counselor preparation programs.

The School Counselor's Role

School counselors need to be skilled in meeting the changing needs of students, families, schools and communities. Therefore, school counselors should endorse school counselor preparation programs and credentialing or licensing requirements that require practitioners to:

- be culturally competent (Guzman, Calfa, Kerne, & McCarthy, 2013; Moore-Thomas, 2010)
- have skills in evidence-based educational and school counseling practices (Carey & Dimmitt, 2008; Carey & Martin, 2015)
- 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, 2014)
- possess leadership and advocacy skills (Janson, Stone, & Clark, 2009; Mason & McMahon, 2009)
- have consultation skills and the ability to work collaboratively with educational professionals and stakeholders in the school and community (Baker, Robichaud, Dietrich, Wells, & Schreck, 2009; Williams & Wehrman, 2010)
- be able to develop, implement and evaluate school counseling programs (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012)

Finally, school counselors should work with district personnel and local or state associations to provide ongoing professional development for the acquisition and updating of necessary skills, which may be identified through the effective use of the ASCA School Counselor Competencies.

Summary

ASCA strongly supports the use of the ASCA School Counselor Competencies in establishing state certification or licensure guidelines for school counselors.

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