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The School Counselor and Credentialing and Licensure

(Adopted 1990; revised 1993, 1999, 2003, 2009, 2015, 2021, 2026 draft)

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 when developing policy and legislation regarding school counselor credentialing or licensing.

The Rationale

Credentialing and licensure ensure school counselors are equipped with the knowledge, attitudes and skills to effectively support each and every student. These requirements ultimately protect students by ensuring access to highly qualified and trained professionals who can deliver comprehensive, ethical and data-informed services. Credentialing or licensure legislation should include:

- a description of the role of the school counselor as defined in the ASCA National Model® (ASCA, 2025a) and the ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies (ASCA, 2025b)
- standards for entry into the profession that require, at minimum, a master’s degree in school counseling or the substantial equivalent
- standards for school counselor preparation programs aligned with the ASCA Standards for School Counselor Preparation Programs (ASCA, 2019)
- reasonable and relevant requirements for continuing education to further develop skills as a school counselor

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 (Verdon, 2020; Uher, Fisher & Josol, 2024)
- have skills in evidence-based educational and school counseling practices (Zyromski, et al., 2018)

- 39 • focus on the ASCA Student Standards: Mindsets & Behaviors for
40 Student Success, including K–12 college- and career- readiness
41 standards for each and every student, with specific attention to
42 academic, career and social/emotional needs (Yulis Mardotilla, et al.,
43 2024; ASCA, 2025a)
- 44 • possess leadership and advocacy skills (Gilfillan, et al., 2026)
- 45 • engage in professional development to maintain credentials and
46 licensure to stay current with best practices in school counseling
- 47 • have consultation skills and the ability to work collaboratively with
48 educational professionals and partners in the school and community
49 (Brigman, et al., 2021)
- 50 • be able to develop, implement and assess school counseling programs
51 using data-informed processes (Warren & Mauck, 2019)
- 52 • be able to identify systemic factors affecting the school counseling
53 program and advocate for improvement (Kratsa et al., 2023)

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55 School counselors collaborate with district and state education personnel and
56 local or state school counselor associations to provide ongoing professional
57 development specifically for school counselors, aligned with the ASCA School
58 Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies (ASCA, 2025b).

59 **Summary**

60 Effective state school counselor credentialing/licensing laws and regulations
61 align with the ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards &
62 Competencies to ensure highly qualified and trained school counselors.

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