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2025 School Counselor
of the Year

KEYNOTE TOPICS



Transforming School Counseling: The Art and Science of the ASCA National Model

School counseling has transformed from its guidance roots to a profession driven by data and purpose, and defined by the ASCA National Model. In an ever-evolving educational landscape, school counselors remain champions of student success, fostering academic achievement, personal growth and future readiness. The ASCA National Model—a framework rooted in equity, advocacy and systemic change—offers school counselors the tools to create impactful programs that touch every student's life. This keynote will illuminate the transformative power of the ASCA National Model, exploring how it serves as both an evidence-based science and an art in addressing the holistic needs of students.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Discuss the evolution of school counseling from guidance to comprehensive programs under the ASCA National Model.
- Identify strategies to align daily practices with systematic, data-informed goals that impact student success and provide a platform for systemic change.
- Reflect on the science of data-informed practices with the art of empathetic, student-centered interactions.

Advocacy Starts at Home: Mobilizing at the Local Level

In schools across the country, school counselors often find themselves overwhelmed with non-counseling duties that detract from their ability to provide critical support to students. Advocacy at the local level—within schools, districts and communities—is key to ensuring school counselors can focus on their primary roles as outlined by the ASCA National Model. This keynote will empower attendees with strategies to mobilize stakeholders, use data effectively, and drive systemic change. By advocating for appropriate school counselor duties, we can amplify the impact of school counseling programs and improve student outcomes.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Highlight the negative effects of role confusion and non-counseling duties.
- Emphasize the importance of local action to influence policies and practices.
- Describe how to use focus groups, surveys and data-driven presentations to elevate school counselor voices, identify priorities and propose solutions that lead to systemic change.

KEYNOTE TOPICS

The Art of Advocacy: Elevating the School Counselor Voice

When the demands on school counselors are greater than ever, advocacy has become a crucial skill for ensuring the profession is valued, supported and empowered to fulfill its mission. This keynote will explore the art of advocacy, providing school counselors with the tools and confidence to champion their role, influence local and state policies, and secure resources that align with the ASCA National Model. Through inspiring stories, actionable strategies and a focus on collective impact, this session will empower attendees to elevate their voices and create systemic change.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Reflect on the evolving challenges and expectations for school counselors.
- Explain how advocating for the profession directly impacts students' success.
- Identify the key principles of successful advocacy.

Tune out the Noise: Leverage ASCA Standards to Support Safety and Belonging

The educational landscape has become increasingly complex, with schools often serving as battlegrounds for cultural and ideological conflicts. These debates can profoundly affect students' sense of safety, identity and belonging, placing school counselors in a position to lead with empathy, advocacy and purpose. This keynote will explore how school counselors can leverage the ASCA standards to navigate these challenges, promote their essential role, and create inclusive environments where all students can thrive, despite the noise. Attendees will leave with actionable strategies to uphold equity, foster resilience and champion a culture of belonging.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Discuss how cultural and ideological conflicts underscore the need for school counselor leadership.
- Identify strategies to support students amidst politically charged challenges and legislative restrictions.
- Describe how to leverage the ASCA standards (ethical standards, position statements, professional standards, student standards) as a framework to advocate for students and promote safe and healthy school environments.