



ISCA Position Statement – The Role of the School Counselor in Iowa

ISCA supports promoting the unique role of the school counselor in providing access to social-emotional learning, college and career planning for post-secondary success, and academic supports for all students.

Rationale

The ASCA National Model brings school counselors together with one vision and one voice, which creates unity and focus toward improving student achievement (ASCA, 2012a). The School Counselor Competencies (ASCA, 2012b) outline the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that ensure school counselors are equipped to meet the rigorous demands of the profession and the needs of our preK-12 students. The ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors specify the principles of ethical behavior necessary to maintain the highest standard of integrity, leadership, and professionalism for the school counselor's integral role in the education of our youth (ISCA, 2014). The effective school counselor utilizes student standards under three broad domains to promote behaviors that enhance the learning process: academic, career, and social/emotional development. When school counselors thrive in their role, excelling in counselor competencies, ethical standards, and in ASCA model components, it maximizes students' ability to be career and college ready, as well as fulfilling the needs in the workforce and community at large.

The School Counselor's Role

- ❖ School counselors serve as leaders in the school and community to promote and support student success, collaborating with parents, teachers, administrators, community leaders, and others to do so
- ❖ School counselors intentionally employ leadership, advocacy, and collaboration skills as a part of a comprehensive school counseling program, acting as change agents to create an environment promoting and supporting success for all students
- ❖ School counselors analyze school and school counseling program data to show the impact of the school counseling program on student achievement and determine how students are different as a result of the comprehensive program, and analyze school counseling program assessments to guide future action and improve future results for all students (ASCA, 2012a)
- ❖ School counselors understand the inherent diversity of the student population and the differentiated needs for delivery, equity, and access for each student
- ❖ School counselors deliver instruction to students in a variety of environments and methods, not only in the classroom setting, but also in individual and small group settings
- ❖ School counselors use a multi-tiered system of supports to establish and implement the school counseling program, using data to determine which students require academic or behavioral interventions, and ensuring intervention for high-needs and underrepresented students and groups

- ❖ School counselors understand the effect social-emotional development has on academic and post-secondary success, and promote social-emotional learning as a necessary component of student achievement (ASCA, 2017b)
- ❖ School counselors work to identify the social-emotional needs of students and implement age appropriate interventions intended to promote healthy development
- ❖ School counselors provide information about community mental health services to students and families in crisis and/or in need of ongoing mental health services
- ❖ School counselors adhere to ASCA's Ethical Standards and state licensing requirements when addressing student mental health concerns (ASCA, 2017b)
- ❖ School counselors address academic development by promoting high expectations and achievement for all students (ASCA, 2017a)
- ❖ School counselors promote rigor and ensure all students have access to rigorous coursework (ASCA, 2017a)
- ❖ School counselors identify systemic barriers and gaps that may prevent students from achieving college and career readiness (ASCA, 2012a) and work to remedy these barriers
- ❖ School counselors understand the importance of process, perception, and outcome data in designing, implementing, and evaluating all components of the school counseling program (ISCA, 2014)
- ❖ School counselors collaborate with teachers, administrators, and others to analyze data and use the results of the analysis to address student learning needs
- ❖ School counselors provide opportunities for and encourage students to engage with the larger community to learn about the role their own interests and abilities play in the life of the community
- ❖ School counselors foster collaborative relationships with others to supplement the offerings of the comprehensive school counseling program
- ❖ School counselors provide opportunities for students to identify and match interests and abilities with career choices and assist with course selection so students are well-prepared to meet post-secondary goals
- ❖ School counselors provide information and assistance with understanding and completing the necessary steps to post-secondary success: applications for post-secondary educational opportunities (community college, vocational and technical programs, 4-year colleges and universities, apprenticeship programs, military and national service), financial aid and scholarship searches, and admissions testing

Summary

Advocacy, leadership, and collaboration, used to create positive systemic change, stand as pillars to the role of the school counselor. Former First Lady Michelle Obama recognized our important role as advocates, leaders, and master collaborators when she stated, "Engaged school counselors are the deciding factor in whether our young people attend college or not....they are the key." As engaged and committed school counselors, we advocate, lead, and collaborate for and with students in many ways that

work towards accomplishing district, building, and individual school counseling programs' mission and vision. In alignment with their mission and vision, and as a result to their work in these essential skills, school counselors strive to ensure access, equity, and success for all students in graduating citizen, college, and career ready.

References

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