



ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies

The ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies outline the mindsets and behaviors school counselors need to meet the rigorous demands of the school counseling profession and the needs of pre-K–12 students. These standards and competencies help ensure new and experienced school counselors are equipped to establish, maintain and enhance a school counseling program addressing academic achievement, career planning and social/emotional development. These standards and competencies can be used in a variety of ways including:

PROFESSIONAL FOUNDATION

B-PF 1. Apply developmental, learning, counseling and education theories

- a. Use human development theories to have an impact on developmental issues affecting student success
- b. Use learning theory to support student achievement and success, including students with diverse learning needs
- c. Use established and emerging evidence-based counseling theories and techniques that are effective in a school setting to promote academic, career and social/emotional development, including but not limited to rational emotive behavior therapy, reality therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, Adlerian, solution-focused brief counseling, person-centered counseling and family systems
- d. Use counseling theories and techniques in individual, small-group, classroom and large-group settings to promote academic, career and social/emotional development
- e. Use career development theories to promote and support postsecondary planning
- f. Use principles of multitiered systems of support within the context of a school counseling program to provide instruction and interventions matched to student need

B-PF 2. Demonstrate understanding of educational systems, legal issues, policies, research and trends in education

- a. Explain the organizational structure and governance of the American educational system as well as cultural, political and social influences on current educational practices
- b. Explain educational systems, philosophies and theories and current trends in education, including federal and state legislation
- c. Explain and/or inform the process for development of policy and procedures at the building, district, state and national levels
- d. Explain the history of school counseling to create a context for the current state of the profession and school counseling programs
- e. Explain the nature of academic, career and social/emotional counseling in schools and the similarities and differences between school counseling and other fields of counseling, such as mental health, marriage and family, substance abuse counseling, social work and psychology, within a continuum of care
- f. Delineate the roles of student service providers, such as school social worker, school psychologist or school nurse, and identify best practices for collaborating to have an impact on student success
- g. Articulate a rationale for a school counseling program
- h. Use education research to inform decisions and programming
- i. Use current trends in technology to promote student success

B-PF 3. Apply legal and ethical principles of the school counseling profession

- a. Practice within the ethical principles of the school counseling profession in accordance with the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors
- b. Adhere to the legal responsibilities of the role of the school counselor including the unique legal and ethical principles of working with minor students in a school setting
- c. Adhere to the ethical and statutory limits of confidentiality
- d. Fulfill legal and ethical obligations to families, teachers, administrators and other school staff
- e. Consult with school counselors and other education, counseling and legal professionals when ethical and legal questions arise
- f. Resolve ethical dilemmas by employing an ethical decision-making model in accordance with the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors
- g. Model ethical behavior
- h. Engage in continual professional development to inform and guide ethical and legal work

B-PF 4. Apply school counseling professional standards and competencies

- a. Stay current with school counseling research and best practices
- b. Conduct and analyze self-appraisal and assessment related to

B-PA 1. Create school counseling program beliefs, vision and mission statements aligned with the school and district

- a. Analyze personal, school, district and state beliefs, assumptions and philosophies about student success
- b. Compose a personal beliefs statement about students, families, teachers, school counseling programs and the educational process consistent with the school's educational philosophy and mission
- c. Analyze the school's vision and mission
- d. Create a school counseling vision statement describing a future world where student outcomes are successfully achieved
- e. Create a school counseling mission statement aligned with school, district and state missions
- f. Communicate the vision and mission of the school counseling program to administrators, teachers, other school staff and stakeholders

B-PA 2. Identify gaps in achievement, attendance, discipline, opportunity and

PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT, cont.

B-PA 7. Establish agreement with the principal and other administrators about the school counseling program

- a. Complete managing templates for the school counseling program with other members of the school counseling staff
- b. Discuss school counseling with the principal and/or supervising administrator to formalize delivering, managing and assessing the school counseling program
- c. Explain and model the appropriate role of the school counselor and the organization of the school counseling program
- d. Explain annual student outcome goals, their basis in student data and their alignment with the school improvement plan
- e. Advocate for the appropriate use of school counselor time based on national recommendations and student needs
- f. Finalize the annual administrative conference template after presentation to and discussion with the principal and/or supervising administrator

B-PA 8. Establish and convene an advisory council for the school counseling program

- a. Determine appropriate education stakeholders for representation on the advisory council

- b. Develop effective and efficient advisory council meeting agendas to inform stakeholders about the school counseling program
- c. Explain and discuss school data, school counseling program assessment and annual student outcome goals with the advisory council
- d. Record advisory council meeting notes, and distribute as appropriate
- e. Analyze and incorporate feedback from the advisory council related to annual student outcome goals as appropriate

B-PA 9. Use appropriate school counselor performance appraisal process

- a. Explain and advocate for appropriate school counselor performance appraisal process based on school counselor standards and implementation of the school counseling program
- b. Explain how school counseling activities fit within categories of a performance appraisal instrument
- c. Utilize components of the ASCA National Model to document data-informed, student-focused activities that demonstrate evidence of meeting standards of performance appraisal instruments

