



## **The Professional School Counselor and Credentialing and Licensure**

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

### **The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position**

ASCA strongly supports a professional school counselor credentialing or licensing law in each state which 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 School Counselor Performance Standards from the ASCA National Model and the ASCA School Counselor Competencies for professional school counselor credentialing or licensing.

### **The Rationale**

Regulations for professional school counselor credentialing or licensure ensure students and stakeholders are served by highly qualified and trained professionals. Such legislation should include:

- standards for entry into the profession that minimally require a master's degree in school counseling
- a description of the role of the professional school counselor as defined in the ASCA National Model
- requirements for continuing education to further develop skills as a professional school counselor

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

### **The Professional School Counselor's Role**

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

- be culturally competent (Holcomb-McCoy, 2003; Lee, 2001)
- have skills in evidence-based educational and school counseling practices (Carey & Dimmitt, 2008)
- focus on students' academic, career and personal/social needs
- possess leadership and advocacy skills (Stone & Clark, 2001)
- have consultation skills and the ability to work collaboratively with educational professionals and stakeholders in the school and community (House, Martin, & Ward, 2002)
- be able to develop, implement, and evaluate professional school counseling programs (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006)

Finally, professional 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.

### **Summary**

ASCA strongly supports the use of the ASCA National Model School Counselor Performance Standards and the ASCA School Counselor Competencies in establishing state certification or licensure guidelines for professional school counselors.

### **References**

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