

The Professional School Counselor and Gifted and Talented Student Programs

(Adopted 1988; revised 1993, 1999, 2001, 2007)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

The professional school counselor is an integral part of the educational team that delivers a comprehensive school counseling program to meet the needs of all students. Because gifted and talented students have some unique and diverse needs professional school counselors collaborate with other educators within the context of the comprehensive school counseling program to assist in meeting these needs.

The Rationale

The professional school counselor conducts developmentally appropriate activities based on the needs of students in the academic, career and personal/social domains (ASCA, 2005).

Within the school counseling program professional school counselors create an environment in which the academic development of all students, including gifted students, is fostered (Colangelo & Davis, 2003).

The Professional School Counselor's Role

The role of the professional school counselor in gifted and talented programs includes:

1. Assisting in the identification of gifted and talented students through the use of a multiple-criterion system utilized in the school district. Although it is most appropriate for professional school counselors to be involved in the analysis of data obtained from the multi-criterion, it is inappropriate for professional school counselors to be responsible for the coordination, collection and/or administration of the multi-criterion or any assessment used in the selection process. These criterion may include:

- Intellectual ability
- Academic performance
- Visual and performing arts ability
- Practical arts ability
- Creative-thinking ability
- Leadership potential
- Parent, teacher peer nomination
- Expert evaluation

2. Advocating for the inclusion of and the participation in activities effectively addressing the personal/social, career development and academic needs of identified gifted and talented students.

3. Assisting in promoting understanding and awareness of the special issues that may affect gifted and talented students including:

- Underachievement
- Perfectionism
- Depression
- Stress management
- Dropping out
- Delinquency
- Difficulty in peer relationships
- Career development
- Meeting expectations
- Goal setting

4. Providing individual and group counseling for gifted and talented students as needed.

5. Recommending material and resources for gifted and talented students in meeting their personal/social needs.
6. Engaging in professional development activities through which knowledge and skills in the area of programming for the needs of the gifted and talented are regularly upgraded.
7. Collaborating with other school personnel to maximize opportunities for these students.

Summary

Gifted and talented students come from diverse backgrounds, and their special abilities cover a wide spectrum of human potential. Specifically planned educational experiences can greatly enhance the continued development of gifted and talented persons. Professional school counselors work in collaboration with other school personnel to maximize opportunities for students. The professional school counselor is an integral part of the educational team and delivers a comprehensive school counseling program to meet the needs of all students.

References

Colangelo, N. & Davis, G. (2003). *Handbook of Gifted Education*, Third edition. Boston, Allyn & Bacon.

American School Counselor Association. (2005). *The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs, Second Edition*. Alexandria, VA: Author.