

The Professional School Counselor and Academic and Career Planning

(Adopted 1994, Revised 2000, 2006)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position

Professional school counselors recognize that each student possesses unique interests, abilities and goals that will lead to many future opportunities. Collaborating with students, parents, educational staff, and the community, the professional school counselor works to ensure that all students develop an academic and career plan that reflects their interests, abilities and goals and includes rigorous, relevant coursework and experiences appropriate for the student.

Rationale

Academic and career planning provides students with the opportunity to make and expand choices geared towards their unique abilities, interests and goals. By developing and maintaining an academic and career plan starting in elementary grades, students and parents can best plan for future opportunities. Professional school counselors implement academic and career planning based on students abilities, interests and goals with the hope of reducing inequities based on stereotypes or special needs and is an important step towards equal access to postsecondary opportunities.

The Professional School Counselor's Role

The professional school counselor plays a critical role in academic and career planning. With unique training, knowledge, and skills, professional school counselors understand national, state and local requirements and programs that may impact future opportunities. Professional school counselors collaborate with teachers and parents to assist students in the development of personalized plans that address academic, career, and personal/social opportunities. Through this planning, students and parents can best identify how to achieve success in school and in the future.

Professional school counselors design and implement a comprehensive school counseling program that consists of individual, small group and classroom guidance and instruction. Lessons and activities aligned with ASCA standards may include:

- decision-making
- goal setting
- interest inventories
- career awareness, exploration and planning
- college/post-secondary awareness, exploration and planning
- choosing appropriate courses for post-secondary options

The professional school counselor collaborates with parents and the educational community as the student and family makes academic and career planning decisions. This collaboration may lead to the development of new opportunities that will meet student needs. The professional school counselor takes a proactive role in assisting students, parents and staff as they assess student strengths and interests and encourages the selection of a rigorous and relevant educational program for all students.

Summary

Professional school counselors collaborate with administrators, teachers, staff, parents and the community to ensure that all students have the opportunity to design a rigorous and relevant academic and career program. Professional school counselors design and implement a comprehensive school counseling program that includes educational and career planning activities for all students designed to assist students in reaching academic, career and personal/social goals.