

## **The Professional School Counselor and Parental Consent**

(Adopted 1999, revised 2004)

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

The professional school counselor educates students, parents and the community about the school counseling program. Parental consent is obtained if state or local law or policy requires it.

### **Rationale**

Local school boards and school administrators expect professional school counselors to implement a comprehensive school counseling program for all students. The professional school counselor follows all local guidelines regarding the circumstances under which signed consent must be obtained.

The professional school counselor has the responsibility to explain confidentiality and limits of confidentiality to students and parents. The professional school counselor adheres to the guidelines of ASCA's Ethical Standards for School Counselors regarding informing students of the purposes, goals, techniques and rules of procedure used for school counseling. According to ASCA's Ethical Standards for School Counselors, professional school counselors

- work to establish a collaborative relationship
- provide information to parents/guardians about the school counseling role, especially relating to confidentiality
- respect the rights and responsibilities of parents

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

The professional school counselor provides written information about the comprehensive school counseling program for students and parents. Professional school counselors follow all state and local laws and guidelines regarding the circumstances under which signed consent must be obtained. As counseling with a student progresses, it may become beneficial or necessary to consult and collaborate with parents. Either the parent or the professional school counselor may initiate the collaboration process. It is the responsibility of the professional school counselor to reach an agreement with the student concerning the information to be shared with the parent unless there is clear and imminent danger to the student or others as specified in ASCA's Ethical Standards for School Counselors. This agreement is essential to maintaining trust in the school counseling relationship.

### **Summary**

Providing written information about the school counseling program is essential to the ethical and legal functioning of the professional school counselor. A full understanding of the school counseling process tends to increase the sense of trust between professional school counselors, students, and parents. Professional school counselors obtain parental consent if required by local law or policy.