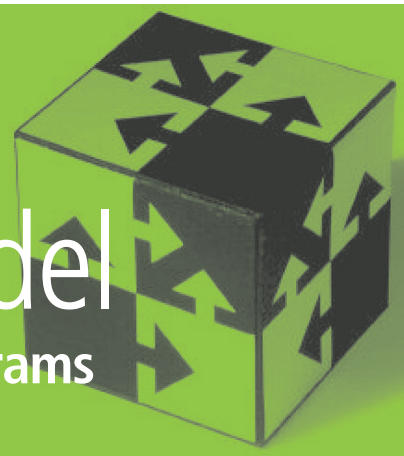
ASCA National Model

A Framework For School Counseling Programs



Executive Summary

School counselors design and deliver comprehensive school counseling programs that promote student achievement. These programs are comprehensive in scope, preventive in design and developmental in nature. "The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs" outlines the components of a comprehensive school counseling program. The ASCA National Model brings school counselors together with one vision and one voice, which creates unity and focus toward improving student achievement.

A comprehensive school counseling program is an integral component of the school's academic mission. Comprehensive school counseling programs, driven by student data and based on standards in academic, career and personal/social development, promote and enhance the learning process for all students. The ASCA National Model:

- ensures equitable access to a rigorous education for all students
- identifies the knowledge and skills all students will acquire as a result of the K-12 comprehensive school counseling program
- is delivered to all students in a systematic fashion
- is based on data-driven decision making
- is provided by a state-credentialed school counselor

Effective school counseling programs are a collaborative effort between the school counselor, parents and other educators to create an environment that promotes student achievement. Staff and school counselors value and respond to the diversity and individual differences in our societies and communities. Comprehensive school counseling programs ensure equitable access to opportunities and rigorous curriculum for all students to participate fully in the educational process.

School counselors focus their skills, time and energy on direct and indirect services to students. To achieve maximum program effectiveness, the American School Counselor Association recommends a school counselor to student ratio of 1:250 and that school counselors spend 80 percent or more of their time in direct and indirect services to students. School counselors participate as members of the educational team and use the skills of leadership, advocacy and collaboration to promote systemic change as appropriate. The framework of a comprehensive school counseling program consists of four components: foundation, management, delivery and accountability.

FOUNDATION

School counselors create comprehensive school counseling programs that focus on student outcomes, teach student competencies and are delivered with identified professional competencies.

Program Focus: To establish program focus, school counselors identify personal beliefs that address how all students benefit from the school counseling program. Building on these beliefs, school counselors create a vision statement defining what the future will look like in terms of student outcomes. In addition, school counselors create a mission statement aligned with their school's mission and develop program goals defining how the vision and mission will be measured.

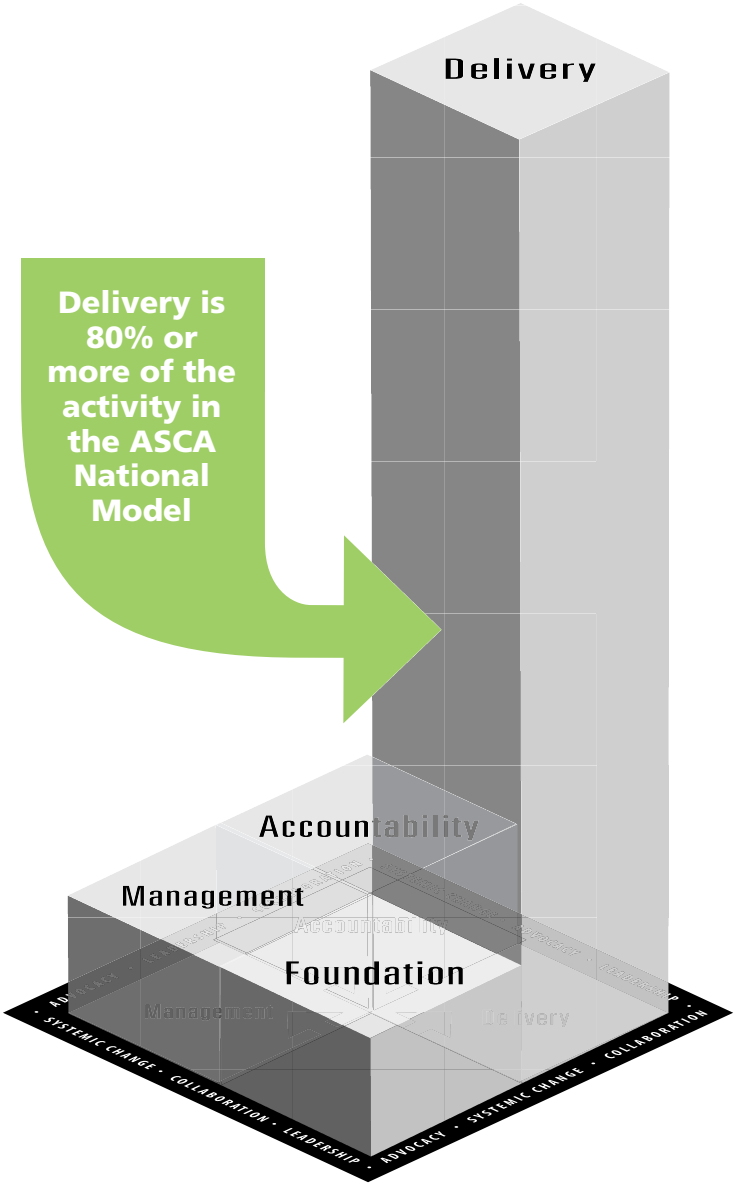
Student Competencies: Enhancing the learning process for all students, the ASCA Student Standards guide the development of effective school counseling programs around three domains: academic, career and personal/social development. School counselors also consider how other student standards important to state and district initiatives complement and inform their school counseling program.

Professional Competencies: The ASCA School Counselor Competencies outline the knowledge, attitudes and skills that ensure school counselors are equipped to meet the rigorous demands of the profession. The ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors specify the principles of ethical behavior necessary to maintain the highest standard of integrity, leadership and professionalism. They guide school counselors' decision-making and help to standardize professional practice to protect both students and school counselors.

MANAGEMENT

School counselors incorporate organizational assessments and tools that are concrete, clearly delineated and reflective of the school's needs. Assessments and tools include:

- **School counselor competency and school counseling program assessments** to self-evaluate areas of strength and improvement for individual skills and program activities
- **Use-of-time assessment** to determine the amount of time spent toward the recommended 80 percent or more of the school counselor's time to direct and indirect services with students



- **Annual agreements** developed with and approved by administrators at the beginning of the school year addressing how the school counseling program is organized and what goals will be accomplished
- **Advisory councils** made up of students, parents, teachers, school counselors, administrators and community members to review and make recommendations about school counseling program activities and results
- **Use of data** to measure the results of the program as well as to promote systemic change within the school system so every student graduates college- and career-ready
- **Curriculum, small-group and closing-the-gap action plans** including developmental, prevention and intervention activities and services that measure the desired student competencies and the impact on achievement, behavior and attendance

APPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES FOR SCHOOL COUNSELORS	INAPPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES FOR SCHOOL COUNSELORS
individual student academic program planning	coordinating paperwork and data entry of all new students
interpreting cognitive, aptitude and achievement tests	coordinating cognitive, aptitude and achievement testing programs
providing counseling to students who are tardy or absent	signing excuses for students who are tardy or absent
providing counseling to students who have disciplinary problems	performing disciplinary actions or assigning discipline consequences
providing counseling to students as to appropriate school dress	sending students home who are not appropriately dressed
collaborating with teachers to present school counseling core curriculum lessons	teaching classes when teachers are absent
analyzing grade-point averages in relationship to achievement	computing grade-point averages
interpreting student records	maintaining student records
providing teachers with suggestions for effective classroom management	supervising classrooms or common areas
ensuring student records are maintained as per state and federal regulations	keeping clerical records
helping the school principal identify and resolve student issues, needs and problems	assisting with duties in the principal's office
providing individual and small-group counseling services to students	providing therapy or long-term counseling in schools to address psychological disorders
advocating for students at individual education plan meetings, student study teams and school attendance review boards	coordinating schoolwide individual education plans, student study teams and school attendance review boards
analyzing disaggregated data	serving as a data entry clerk

- **Annual and weekly calendars** to keep students, parents, teachers and administrators informed and to encourage active participation in the school counseling program

DELIVERY

School counselors provide services to students, parents, school staff and the community in the following areas:

Direct Student Services

Direct services are in-person interactions between school counselors and students and include the following:

- **School counseling core curriculum:** This curriculum consists of structured lessons designed to help students attain the desired competencies and to provide all students with the knowledge, attitudes and skills appropriate for their developmental level. The school counseling core curriculum is delivered

throughout the school's overall curriculum and is systematically presented by school counselors in collaboration with other professional educators in K-12 classroom and group activities.

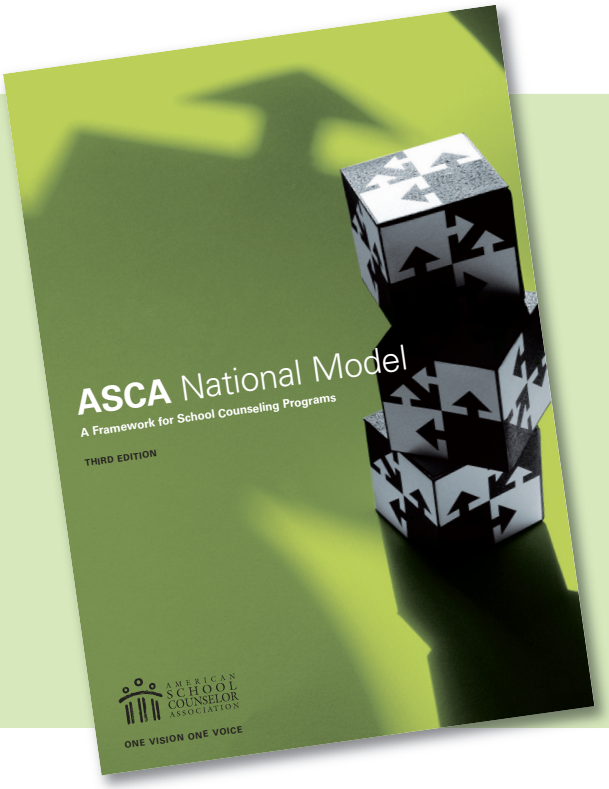
- **Individual student planning:** School counselors coordinate ongoing systemic activities designed to assist students in establishing personal goals and developing future plans.
- **Responsive services:** Responsive services are activities designed to meet students' immediate needs and concerns. Responsive services may include counseling in individual or small-group settings or crisis response.

Indirect Student Services

Indirect services are provided on behalf of students as a result of the school counselors' interactions with others including referrals for additional assistance, consultation and collaboration with parents, teachers, other educators and community organizations.

ACCOUNTABILITY

To demonstrate the effectiveness of the school counseling program in measurable terms, school counselors analyze school and school counseling program data to determine how students are different as a result of the school counseling program. School counselors use data to show the impact of the school counseling program on student achievement, attendance and behavior and analyze school counseling program assessments to guide future action and improve future results for all students. The performance of the school counselor is evaluated on basic standards of practice expected of school counselors implementing a comprehensive school counseling program.



ORDERING INFORMATION

"The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs (third edition)" is $34.95 for ASCA members or $44.95 for nonmembers. Bulk pricing of $29.95 is available for 10 copies or more. Order no. 289325.

Four easy ways to order:

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AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION

1101 King St., Suite 625, Alexandria, VA 22314 ■ Phone: 703 683 ASCA ■ *www.schoolcounselor.org*