

## **The School Counselor and Career Development**

(Adopted 2017)

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

School counselors implementing comprehensive programs strive to have an impact on student growth in three domain areas: career development, academic development and social/emotional development (ASCA, 2012). School counselors recognize students should demonstrate growth in these domains equally to be successful. School counselors understand these domains are not considered separate but are intertwined, each affecting the other (Schenck, Anttil, & Smith, 2010). Although this statement focuses on career development it is understood academic development and social/emotional development need to be considered with equal diligence.

### **The Rationale**

Workforce projections call for graduating secondary students to have at the least some postsecondary education to fulfill the demands of work (Carnevale, Smith, & Strohl, 2010). School counselors recognize that each student, regardless of background, possesses unique interests, abilities and goals, which will lead to future opportunities. Collaborating with students, families, educational staff and the community, the school counselor works to ensure all students select a postsecondary path to productive citizenry (e.g. military, career technical certificate or two-/four-year degree program) appropriate for the student.

ASCA recognizes career education begins in kindergarten and is exemplified by students who are knowledgeable about options and are prepared to enroll and succeed in any postsecondary experience without the need for remediation. ASCA recognizes all students possess the skills and knowledge needed to qualify for and succeed in their chosen field (Conley, 2013).

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

School counselors play a critical role in students' career development by:

- Introducing careers and the world of work beginning in lower elementary grades (pre-K–3)
- Providing opportunities to engage students in “life roles including learner and worker” (Gysbers, 2013)
- Providing learning and experiential opportunities for students to acquire behaviors and skills for career readiness (Gysbers, 2013)
- Working with students to identify their interests, abilities, specific career clusters (Stipanovic, 2010) and postsecondary plans (many states mandate an academic/career action plan as a graduation requirement)
- Helping students understand the connection between school and the world of work
- Helping students plan the transition from school to postsecondary education and/or the world of work (ASCA, 2014)
- Advising students on multiple postsecondary pathways (e.g., college, career-specific credentials and certifications, apprenticeships, military, service-year programs, full-time employment with a family-supporting wage) (Chicago Public Schools Multiple Postsecondary Pathways Framework)
- Connecting students to early college programs (e.g., dual credit/dual enrollment).
- Collaborating with administration, teachers, staff and decision makers to create a postsecondary-readiness and college-going culture
- Providing and advocating for individual pre-K through postsecondary students' college and career awareness through exploration and postsecondary planning and decision making, which supports students' right to choose from the wide array of options after completing secondary education
- Identifying gaps in college and career access and the implications of such data for addressing both intentional and unintentional biases related to college and career counseling
- Working with teachers to integrate career education learning in the curricula
- Providing opportunities for all students to develop the mindsets and behaviors necessary to learn work-related skills, resilience, perseverance, an understanding of lifelong learning as a part of long-term career success, a positive attitude toward learning and a strong work ethic
- Recognizing and supporting essential developmental factors key to future successes, such as self-efficacy and identity, motivation and perseverance (Savitz-Romer & Bouffard, 2013)

## Summary

School counseling has seen many evolution changes to initiatives in career development. School counselors understand students should demonstrate growth in the career, academic and social/emotional domains equally to be successful. School counseling programs should strive to implement comprehensive, developmental programming addressing student needs. These programs should seek a balance in delivering core curriculum, individual student planning and responsive services enhancing the three domains.

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