









## What ASCA Ethical Standards Apply to Issues Related to Racism and Bias?

School counselors help identify and address racism and bias while working within the [ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors](#).

### Preamble

All students have the right to:

- Be respected, be treated with dignity and have access to a school counseling program that advocates for and affirms all students from diverse populations including but not limited to: ethnic/racial identity, nationality, age, social class, economic status, abilities/disabilities, language, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity/expression, family type, religious/spiritual identity, emancipated minors, wards of the state, homeless youth and incarcerated youth. School counselors as social-justice advocates support students from all backgrounds and circumstances and consult when their competence level requires additional support.
- Receive the information and support needed to move toward self-determination, self-development and affirmation within one's group identities. Special care is given to improve overall educational outcomes for students who have been historically underserved in educational services.

Applicable ASCA Ethical Standards include:

### **A.9. Serious and Foreseeable Harm to Self and Others**

#### **School counselors:**

a. Inform parents/guardians and/or appropriate authorities when a student poses a serious and foreseeable risk of harm to self or others. When feasible, this is to be done after careful deliberation and consultation with other appropriate professionals. School counselors inform students of the school counselor's legal and ethical obligations to report the concern to the appropriate authorities unless it is appropriate to withhold this information to protect the student (e.g. student might run away if he/she knows parents are being called). The consequence of the risk of not giving parents/guardians a chance to intervene on behalf of their child is too great. Even if the danger appears relatively remote, parents should be notified

### **A.10. Underserved and At-Risk Populations**

#### **School counselors:**

a. Strive to contribute to a safe, respectful, nondiscriminatory school environment in which all members of the school community demonstrate respect and civility.

### **A.13. Evaluation, Assessment and Interpretation**

#### **School counselors:**

a. Use only valid and reliable tests and assessments with concern for bias and cultural sensitivity.

## What ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies Apply to Issues Related to Racism and Bias?

School counselors help identify and address racism and bias while working within the [ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies for School Counselors](#).

### Mindsets

School counselors believe:

M 1. Every student can learn, and every student can succeed.

M 2. Every student should have access to and opportunity for a high-quality education.

M 3. Every student should graduate from high school prepared for postsecondary opportunities.

M 4. Every student should have access to a comprehensive school counseling program

M 7. Comprehensive school counseling programs promote and enhance student academic, career and social/emotional outcomes.

### Behaviors

School counselors demonstrate the following standards in the design, implementation and assessment of a comprehensive school counseling program

B-PF 2 a. Explain the organizational structure and governance of the American educational system as well as cultural, political and social influences on current educational practices

c. Explain and/or inform the process for development of policy and procedures at the building, district, state and national levels

B-PF 3a. Practice within the ethical principles of the school counseling profession in accordance with the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors

B-PF 6a. Demonstrate basic knowledge and respect of differences in customs, communications, traditions, values and other traits among students based on race, religion, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or intellectual ability and other factors

b. Explain how students' cultural, social and economic background may affect their academic achievement, behavior, relationships and overall performance in school

c. Maintain and communicate high expectations for every student, regardless of cultural, social or economic background

d. Explain the dynamics of cross-cultural communications and demonstrate the ability to communicate with persons of other cultures effectively

e. Collaborate with administrators, teachers and other staff in the school and district to ensure culturally responsive curricula and student-centered instruction

f. Understand personal limitations and biases, and articulate how they may affect the school counselor's work

B-PF. 7 a. Identify sources of power and authority and formal and informal leadership

h. Serve as a leader in the school and community to promote and support student success

B-PF 9 a. Act as a systems change agent to create an environment promoting and supporting student success

b. Use data to identify how school, district and state educational policies, procedures and practices support and/or impede student success

c. Use data to demonstrate a need for systemic change in areas such as course enrollment patterns; equity and access; and achievement, opportunity and/or information gaps

d. Develop and implement a plan to address personal and/or institutional resistance to change that better supports student success

B-SS 6 a. Partner with others to advocate for student achievement and educational equity and opportunities

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**Standard 6. Professional Practice**

Candidates demonstrate the appropriate scope of school counseling practice in varied educational settings, understand their role as a leader, collaborator, advocate, and agent for systemic change, and engage in opportunities to support their professional growth and identity development.

6.2 Demonstrate leadership, advocacy and collaboration for the promotion of student learning and achievement, the school counseling program, and the profession.

**Standard 7. Ethical Practice**

Candidates demonstrate ethical and culturally responsive behavior, maintain the highest standard of professionalism and legal obligation, and use consultation and ongoing critical reflection to prevent ethical lapses.

7.1 Engage in professional behavior that reflects ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors and relevant federal and state laws and district policies.

7.2 Describe the impact of federal and state laws and regulations, as well as district policies, on schools, students, families, and school counseling practice.

## What Do School Staff Members, Parents and Students Need to Know About Systemic and Institutional Racism?

- Racism and biased behaviors exist in our schools – The education system has a long history of racism and bias. Progress has been made, but it has been slow, and there is much work to be done. Racism and biased behaviors occur among adults and students in the building.
- Impact of racism and bias – Educate school staff, parents and students about the impact of racist and biased behaviors that impede our nation from reaching its potential including:
  - Gaps in achievement, opportunity and attainment
  - Disproportionate rates of discipline and suspension for students of color
  - Lower attendance rates
  - Self-destructive behavior such as acting out withdrawal nonparticipation in class activities
- Gatekeeping of underrepresented students in access to and placement in rigorous curriculum such as Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate
- Lower participation of underrepresented groups participating in higher education
- Where to go for help – Ensure school staff, parents and students know to which school staff they should report concerns about racist and biased policies, procedures and behaviors.
- School resources – Let school staff, parents and students know that administrators, school counselors and other school staff are always a resource to address student concerns and help their students achieve success.
- Community resources - Publicize community resources for additional assistance, including individuals and organizations with missions to end racism and bias.

## Additional Resources

### ASCA Resources

[The Role of the School Counselor](#)

### ASCA Position Statements:

[The School Counselor and Equity for All Students](#)

[The School Counselor and Cultural Diversity](#)

### Magazine articles:

[Myth Busters](#)

[Will We Overcome](#)

### Webinars:

[Interrupting Racism: Race and Equity in Your Program](#)

[Ignite Change for Equity and Inclusion](#)

[Supporting Students After Crisis and Loss](#)

[Culturally Responsive Pedagogy](#)

[Cross-cultural Counseling: Understand Bias and Practice Humility](#)

[Build Multiculturally Aware Students](#)

### Journal articles:

Race, Gender, Class and Achievement: A Culturally Responsive Approach to Urban School Counseling  
An Examination of Referrals to the School Counselor by Race, Gender and Family Structure  
Gender and Ethnic Bias in Letters of Recommendation: Considerations for School Counselors  
Supporting Interethnic and Interracial Friendships among Youth to Reduce Prejudice and Racism in Schools: The Role of the School Counselor  
Exploring the Work Experiences of School Counselors of Color  
Transitioning to High School: Issues and Challenges for African American Students  
Teaching School Counselors to Use Evidence-Based Practice to Advance Social Justice: A Case Study  
Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies: