National School Counseling Week 2023, "School Counselors: Helping Students Dream Big," will be celebrated February 6-10, 2023, to focus public attention on the unique contribution of school counselors within U.S. school systems. National School Counseling Week highlights the tremendous impact school counselors can have in helping students achieve school success and plan for a career.

Key Messages

- The special week honoring school counselors provides recognition for school counselors who implement comprehensive school counseling programs, a vital part of the educational process for all students as they
meet the challenges of the 21st century.

- This special week honors school counselors for the important role they play in college and career readiness and in helping students examine their talents, strengths, abilities, and interests.
- [School Counseling Week Toolkit](2023 Activities and Events).

**School Counselor Role**

- Counselors work in professional partnerships with teachers and support personnel to foster an educational system where students can realize their true potential.
- School counselors are actively engaged in helping students:
  - examine their abilities, strengths, interests and talents;
  - guide their academic and career planning;
  - focus on positive ways to enhance students' social/personal, educational and career development;
- work in partnership with parents as they encounter the challenges of raising children in today's world; and
- work with teachers and other educators to provide an educational system where students maximize their potential and set healthy, realistic and optimistic aspirations.
- Professional school counselors are certified, experienced educators with a master's degree in guidance and counseling. The combination of their training and experience makes them an integral part of the total DoDEA educational program.
- As all educators focus their efforts on improving academic achievement for all students, it is important that we recognize school counselors for their continuing efforts in reducing barriers to learning and in providing the support necessary for all students to achieve at the highest level.
- DoDEA School Counselors are here for students. They listen, support, and advise.
- School counselors are school leaders and student advocates.
- School counselors help guide academic and career planning.
- School counselors are knowledgeable and experienced in providing transition help for mobile military students.
- Counselors have the resources and expertise to help students develop their future plans.
- School counseling is a key component of the system of support for the school-family-community relationship to help students be successful.
- DoDEA's Competency Based Counseling Program (CBCP) is a comprehensive counseling program that addresses three areas of student development: academics, career planning and personal/social.
- The CBCP is aligned with the ASCA National Model and counseling standards; it is an integral part of the educational process.
- The CBCP is data driven, planned annually and provides for a delivery of direct and indirect counseling services based on the needs of students.

**Direct services** are counselor in-person interactions with students. They include:

- A developmental counseling core curriculum designed that helps students attain the competencies (knowledge, attitudes and skills) appropriate to their level.
- Individual student planning comprises systemic activities designed to assist students in establishing personal goals and developing future plans.
- Responsive services encompass a spectrum of activities designed to meet students' immediate needs.

**Indirect services** are those activities provided on behalf of and in advocacy for students and as a result of the school counselors' interactions with others. This includes consultation, referrals, and collaboration with parents, teachers, other educators and community organizations.
- The CBCP promotes learning by assisting students in mastering competencies (skills) and developing the attitudes necessary to be successful. It stresses self-concept development and the acquisition of skills in developing interpersonal relationships for student learning.
The CBCP assists all students to become responsible adults who can develop realistic and fulfilling life plans based upon a clear understanding of themselves, their needs, abilities, interests and skills. Counselors design, organize, coordinate, implement, and evaluate the CBCP in collaboration of administrators, students, parents, military authorities, and other school community resource personnel.

School Counseling Resources

- School Counselor Toolkit
- American Counseling Association School Counselor Connection
- Teachers Pay Teachers School Counseling Resources

Message for Parents and Students

Professional school counselors collaborate with administrators, teachers, staff, families and the community to ensure 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.

Academic and college and career planning provides all students with the opportunity to identify strengths, areas in need of improvement and areas of interest early on so students and their families can set post-secondary goals and make informed choices to support students in reaching the desired outcome. The focus of academic and career planning is threefold: to help students acquire the skills to achieve academic success, to make connections between school and life experiences and to acquire knowledge and skills to be college and career ready upon high school graduation.

The Professional School Counselor’s Role in College and Career Planning

Professional school counselors understand national, state and local requirements and programs that may affect future opportunities for college and career readiness and therefore play a critical role in academic and career planning. The professional school counselor takes a proactive role in assisting students, families and staff as they assess student strengths and interests and encourage the selection of a rigorous and relevant educational program supporting all students’ college and career goals. Professional school counselors provide all students the opportunity to:

- Demonstrate skills needed for school success.
- Demonstrate the connection between coursework and life experiences.
- Make course selections that allow them the opportunity to choose from a wide range of postsecondary options.
- Explore interests and abilities in relation to knowledge of self and the world of work.
- Identify and apply strategies to achieve future academic and career success.
- Demonstrate the skills for successful goal setting and attainment.

Possible Reasons to Contact Your Child’s School Counselor

- Academic skills support
- Career preparation
- Post-secondary planning and college application process
- Support for parent deployment or pending PCS
- School transition/adjustment concerns
- Coping, problem-solving, decision-making concerns
- Organizational, study and test-taking skills
- Peer relationships and conflict resolution
- Divorce, separation and family changes
- Experiencing loss, death and grief
- Substance abuse awareness
- School-based and community resources information or referrals
- Suicide intervention and prevention
- Bullying intervention and prevention

**American School Counselor Association (ASCA)**

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is a worldwide nonprofit organization based in Alexandria, Va. Founded in 1952, ASCA supports school counselors' efforts to help students focus on academic, personal/social and career development so they not only achieve success in school but are prepared to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society. The association, which is the school counseling division of the American Counseling Association, provides professional development, publications and other resources, research and advocacy to more professional school counselors around the globe - [www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org).

**Resources**

[Certificate of Appreciation](https://www.dodea.edu/print/pdf/node/175807)