

**SCHOOL SAFETY PROGRAM MANUAL  
COUNSELOR AND SOCIAL WORKER**

**REVISED 2025**



The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) is pleased to provide the School Safety Program Counselor and Social Worker Manual. The manual is intended to provide information on the intent of the grant, the responsibilities of all parties, requirements for grant compliance, assistance with administrative issues, and the elements of an effective School Safety Program.

For clarification on issues or to provide feedback on the content, contact the School Safety Program at [SchoolSafetySocialWellness@azed.gov](mailto:SchoolSafetySocialWellness@azed.gov). The manual is a living document that will go through change as needed to meet the needs of the program. The ADE will continue to revise the manual as needed; therefore, comments from those using the manual are appreciated.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b><u>SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHOOL SAFETY PROGRAM</u></b>	<b>4</b>
- <a href="#"><u>ARS 15-154</u></a>	
- <a href="#"><u>Program Proposals</u></a>	
- <a href="#"><u>Program Evaluation</u></a>	
- <a href="#"><u>Definitions</u></a>	
<b><u>SECTION 2: APPLYING FOR THE SCHOOL SAFETY PROGRAM</u></b>	<b>5</b>
<a href="#"><u>Eligibility</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Application Process</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Award Process</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Appeal Procedure</u></a>	
<b><u>SECTION 3: PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS</u></b>	<b>7</b>
<a href="#"><u>CSW Contract</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>District Administrators</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Site Administrators</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>School Safety Program Team</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Continuous Improvement Plan</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Counselor and Social Worker Activity Log</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Counselor and Social Worker Performance Assessment</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Training</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Program Evaluation</u></a>	
<b><u>SECTION 4: COUNSELOR SOCIAL WORKER REQUIREMENTS</u></b>	<b>12</b>
<a href="#"><u>School Counselors and School Social Workers Role in Promoting School Safety</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Understanding the role of a School Counselor</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Tiered Supports and Instruction</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Best Practice Professional Models</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Understanding the role of a School Social Worker</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Tiered Supports and Instruction</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Best Practice Professional Models</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Mental Health Tiered Supports and Instruction by Counselors and Social Workers</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Building Community Partnerships</u></a>	
<b><u>SECTION 5: KEY PARTNERS AND THEIR ROLES</u></b>	<b>22</b>
<a href="#"><u>Arizona State Board of Education</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Arizona Department of Education</u></a>	
<b><u>SECTION 6: DOCUMENTS &amp; RESOURCES</u></b>	<b>23</b>

## **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHOOL SAFETY PROGRAM**

The School Safety Program is governed by Arizona Revised Statute (ARS) 15-154. Key sections of the statute are included below.

### **ARS 15-154**

The school safety program is established within the department of education to support, promote and enhance safe and effective learning environments for all students by supporting the costs of placing school counselors, school social workers, school resource officers, and juvenile probation officers on school campuses. A school district or charter school may apply to participate in the school safety program as provided in this section for up to three fiscal years by submitting by April 15 a program proposal to the department of education. A school district or charter school that receives approval for a three-year program under this subsection may annually submit a modified spending plan for its approved program.

### **Program Proposals:**

A program proposal submitted by a school district or charter school for supporting the costs of placing school counselors or school social workers, or both, on a school campus shall contain:

1. A detailed description of the school safety needs of the charter school or school district.
2. A plan for implementing a school guidance and counseling program that includes the following:
  - a. A detailed description of the relationship between the school counselor or the social worker, or both, and local community resources.
  - b. A plan for using a school counselor or school social worker services in the school, or both.
  - c. A detailed description of the methods for evaluating the effectiveness of the school guidance and counseling plan.
  - d. Policies on confidentiality under the school guidance and counseling plan.
  - e. Policies on notifying parents and other family members of issues or concerns as identified in the school guidance and counseling plan.
  - f. A detailed description of the school's, school district's or charter school's referral procedures to the appropriate community entities and state agencies.

### **Program Evaluation:**

The Department of Education shall evaluate the effectiveness of all the approved program proposals and report on the activities of the program and the participants to the president of the senate, the speaker of the house of representatives and the governor on or before November 1 of each year.

### **Definitions:**

*"School counselor"* means a professional educator who holds a valid school counselor certificate issued by the department of education.

*"School social worker"* means a professional educator who holds a valid school social worker certificate issued by the department of education.

*"School guidance and counseling program"* means a counseling program that supports, promotes and enhances the academic, personal, social, emotional and career development of all students.

## **SECTION 2: APPLYING FOR THE SCHOOL SAFETY PROGRAM**

The School Safety Program is a competitive grant that operates in three-year cycles. Each funding year begins on July 1st and ends on June 30th.

### **Eligibility**

The authorizing statute for the School Safety Program, ARS 15-154, allows Arizona school districts or charter schools to apply to participate in the School Safety Program for up to three fiscal years through a competitive application process. Public schools interested in applying for this three-year grant must go through their district/charter holder.

### **Application Process**

Applications are submitted for a three-year cycle through the ADE's on-line grants management enterprise. The application due date, established in ARS 15-154, is April 15<sup>th</sup> each year. Late applications are not accepted.

### **Award Process**

The ADE, subject to review and approval of the State Board of Education, distributes monies to the school districts and charters that are in compliance with program requirements and whose plans have been approved by the State Board of Education.

### **Appeal Procedure**

**Who May File an Appeal:** A school/district or charter denied award or renewal of their School Safety Program Grant.

**Definition of an Appeal:** A written request for an appeal committee to review a denied grant application. The request shall be signed and dated by the school site administrator and the district superintendent or charter holder. The request must state the nature of the appeal and include detailed factual support.

**Request for Hearing:** A notice of appeal or request for a hearing must be received by the ADE within 30 calendar days from the postmarked date of the grant denial letter. The request shall contain your school site, district, address, the action being appealed, a concise statement of the facts asserted and relief sought along with any supplemental documentation. In accordance with ADE policies and procedures for competitive discretionary grants, ARS 41-2701– 2704, and ARS 41- 2611, each application was reviewed and scored by three reviewers and the scores were averaged. Requests to dispute the score given by the review team, and requests to modify, reintroduce or expand upon original information provided in the application, cannot be considered. The request shall be sent by certified mail to:

Arizona Department of Education  
Attention: Mike Kurtenbach, Associate Superintendent School Safety Division  
1535 W. Jefferson Street Phoenix, Arizona 85007

**Hearing Panel:** Upon receipt of formal written request, ADE will schedule a hearing panel of ADE employees who are independent and impartial from the School Safety Program.

**Schedule of Hearing:** A hearing shall be scheduled within 30 days of receipt of formal written request. The requester shall be notified at least 10 business days prior to hearing date and location. The requester may submit written materials no later than five business days prior to the scheduled hearing date.

**Hearing Process:** At the hearing the requester may present the submitted written documentation. The panel may request additional supporting evidence and/or supportive documentation. If the requester or authorized

representative fails to appear at the designated date, time, and location of the hearing, the appeal shall be considered closed and the process terminated.

Decision: The requester shall be notified of the final decision determined by the hearing panel via certified mail postmarked within 5 business days of hearing date.

### **SECTION 3: PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:**

The following are the requirements of the School Safety Program. Noncompliance with program requirements could result in loss of current and/or future grant funding.

#### **CSW Contract**

For each site receiving funding under the School Safety Program, a contract must be developed by your district/charter. This essential document is an important step toward implementing a successful School Safety Program. The document shall be completed annually, within 30 days of when the officer begins work at the school. The agreement shall be kept on file at each funded site for review during a site visit conducted by the ADE.

NOTE: ARS 15-154 requires that counselors and social workers hold a valid school certificate issued by the Department of Education. Please note that any deficiencies must be completed by the date indicated on the certificate. District administrators are responsible for ensuring the deficiencies are met and updated in GME.

#### **District Administrator Requirements**

The district administrator's support of the School Safety Program is vital to the program's success. The district administrator performs the following duties (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Is responsible for all assurances listed in the grant application
- Supports and communicates the School Safety Program philosophy to all site staff.
- Develop a contract for the awarded position and ensure that they are certified by ADE.
- Keeps contact information up to date in GME for themselves, Site Administrators, and Awarded Positions.
- Attends annual required training provided by ADE SSP.
- Tracks all individuals required training completion for the district.
- Completes all surveys and provides an annual evaluation of the School Safety Program.
- Develops and keeps open communication with local law enforcement.
- Provides communications from ADE to site-level participants as required

TIP: Are all participants aware of their training requirement and scheduled to attend training?

#### **Site Administrator Requirements**

(school principal, assistant principal, dean of students, or similar title)

The site administrator's support of the School Safety Program is also vital to the program's success. The site administrator performs the following duties:

##### **General:**

- Supports and communicates the School Safety Program philosophy to all staff, students and parents on their campus.
- Understands and is responsible for supporting program guidelines and requirements on the campus.
- Attends annual training provided by ADE.
- Understands that the site administrator, not the counselor or social worker, is responsible for school discipline.

##### **School Safety Program Team:**

- Establishes a multidisciplinary SSPT that meets at least quarterly to conduct a school needs assessment, uses the needs assessment data on an on-going basis to determine the use of the counselor/social worker consistent with program requirements, coordinates prevention programming, and makes recommendations for continuous improvement of the program

- Ensures the team utilizes needs assessment data to design clear and appropriate strategies and activities to support a successful School Safety Program to include:
  - Use of counselor or social worker expertise and resources
  - Use of prevention and intervention programming

#### Operational Plan:

- Under the direction of the school administrator, each school is required to develop and utilize an operational plan that incorporates program requirements and illustrates their site-specific program design in a succinct and logical manner.

#### Work closely with the Counselor and/or Social Worker

- Administrators should take the lead on school policy violations. The counselor and/or social worker may be involved in supporting emotional regulation when a student needs support. After disciplinary actions have been taken by the administrator additional support may be provided for any identified needs.
- Introduces the counselor and/or social worker to staff and students and integrates counselor/social worker into the school community.
- Monitors the counselor/social worker activity logs to ensure progress is made toward achieving program requirements
- Facilitates collaboration between counselor/social worker and school personnel on school-wide safety strategies such as staff training, emergency response planning, needs assessment, and prevention programming.
- Develops a collaborative relationship with the counselor/social worker while allowing the counselor/social worker to function independently. The counselor/social worker serves as a resource to the students and staff.
- Ensures additional activities shall not overwhelm the counselor or social worker, jeopardize their ability to meet the minimum requirements of this grant (e.g. coordinating/case management of 504s), or go against the intent of this program (e.g. disciplinarian, detention monitor, lunch duty, fill-in for teacher)

### **Counselor and Social Worker Performance Assessment**

The site administrator is required to complete a counselor/social worker performance assessment once every year. The evaluation is meant to assist the counselor/social worker and his/her supervisor in meeting the intent of the grant and effectively carrying out their duties. Only counselors/social workers who have performed in a satisfactory manner should be considered for further service in the School Safety Program. (Document: ASCA performance assessment & SSWAA performance assessment)

### **School Safety Program Team**

Awarded schools are required to establish a School Safety Program Team (SSPT). The purpose of this team is to create a [SSP Continuous Improvement Plan](#) by conducting a safety needs assessment, use the needs assessment data on an on-going basis to determine the use of the Counselor or Social Worker consistent with program requirements, coordinate efforts of this program with other safety and prevention programs and activities to achieve greater effectiveness, and make recommendations for continuous improvement of the program. A team may be formed specifically to meet this requirement, or an existing appropriate team may be utilized.

The team membership must consist of:

- School Principal or Assistant Principal
- School Counselor or School Social Worker
- School Psychologist, mental/behavioral health expert, or similar role (if available)
- School Resource Officer, Juvenile Probation Officer, or School Safety Officer (if applicable)



- Security Personnel (if applicable)
- Other members as needed as determined by the school principal

Other members recommended for inclusion on the team are:

- School Staff Representatives
  - Facilities personnel
  - Paraprofessionals
  - Teachers
  - Transportation
  - Etc
- Parent Representative
- Community Organization Representatives
  - Local Fire Dept
  - Local Police Dept
  - Mental/Behavioral Health

The team is required to meet at a minimum on a quarterly basis. For the purpose of the School Safety Program, quarterly is identified as three month intervals (July-September, October-December, January-March, and April-June). Monthly meetings are recommended. At each meeting the team should review needs assessment data and the operational plan, make appropriate revisions to the operational plan based on the needs assessment, discuss completed and upcoming activities and milestones, and identify the person(s) responsible for ensuring the activities are achieved.

Question: Is the SSPT reviewing the Operational Plan at each of its quarterly meetings?

## **Continuous Improvement Plan**

The site administrator, in collaboration with the school's SSPT, must develop and implement an [SSP Continuous Improvement Plan](#) that aligns with SSP program requirements and demonstrates their site-specific program design. The plan should be logically structured and actionable. This plan must include the following components:

- Needs Assessment
  - Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to identify available resources and current safety concerns at the school site
  - Determine top safety concerns, referred to as Priority Focus Areas, based on the needs assessment findings
- Operational Plan
  - Develop a targeted plan to address each Priority Focus Area. This should include:
    - Specific strategies and interventions
    - How the counselor/social worker will be specifically utilized
    - Methods for progress monitoring and evaluating effectiveness
  - Implementation of the plan ensuring all team members understand their roles and responsibilities
  - Ongoing review and adjustment of the plan by regularly reviewing progress monitoring data to assess the effectiveness of implemented strategies and make data-informed adjustments as appropriate to ensure continuous improvement

The [SSP Continuous Improvement Plan](#) is a living document. It should be actively used by the SSPT throughout the school year to guide program implementation and support ongoing improvement. Data collected through the plan will be used for reporting purposes to the Arizona Department of Education (ADE). Plans must be maintained in an organized and accessible format and made available upon request by ADE.

## **Counselor and Social Worker Activity Log**

To ensure consistent documentation and accountability, counselors and social workers must use the [SSP CSW Activity Log](#) to record all of their activities. This log serves as a tool to verify alignment with the SSP standards and SSPT's Continuous Improvement Plan.

Counselors and social workers shall complete the [SSP CSW Activity Log](#) daily. Use of the counselor/social worker and entries must clearly reflect activities that align with [SSP's counselor and social worker requirements](#) and the SSPT's Continuous Improvement Plan.

The site administrator is responsible for supporting, overseeing, and reviewing the counselor's/social worker's activity log to ensure compliance with the requirements of the SSP Grant. Data collected through the activity logs will be used for reporting purposes to the Arizona Department of Education (ADE). Activity logs must be maintained in an organized and accessible format and made available upon request by ADE.

*\*Additional activities shall not overwhelm the counselor or social worker, jeopardize their ability to meet the minimum requirements of this grant (e.g. coordinating/case management of 504s), or go against the intent of this program (e.g. disciplinarian, detention monitor, lunch duty, fill-in for teacher)*

## **Training**

Specific training is required each year for the following positions (see the [SSP Annual Required Training & Calendar](#) for details):

- District Administrator
- Site/designee Administrator
- Agency Supervisor
- School Resource Officer (SRO)
- School Safety Officer (SSO)
- Juvenile Probation Officer (JPO)
- School Counselor
- Social Worker

### **Required Training Information:**

- You must create a lawforkids.org login account no later than 30 days after joining the SSP program.
- Failure to meet the annual training requirement will result in the LEA/charter being put on programmatic hold the following year and your LEA will not be able to draw down funds.
- If a grantee missed their annual required training, they must complete two trainings the next year, the missed training in addition to the annual required training for that year.
- For FY26, a returning district administrator must take the District Administrator Advanced Course, which is new for this year. A new District Administrator will take the Leadership 100 course.
- Site Administrator: This is typically the school principal or equivalent (ie: headmaster).
  - If the principal appoints a designee (assistant principal, dean of students, etc.) to oversee & implement the School Safety Program, both the principal and the designee must attend Leadership 100. Thereafter, the designee can attend training on behalf of the principal.
  - If a principal has a designee, and the principal has not attended L100 training since SY23/24 (FY24), they are required to take L100 again, as the training content has changed substantially (this applies to the principal even if their designee is attending training on their behalf and has been compliant).
  - If there is turnover in either the site admin or the designee position, the new site admin

- or new designee must take Leadership 100.
- The Designee must be an administrative on-site position such as an assistant principal, dean of students, or another administrative on-site position. The Designee cannot be the counselor, social worker, teacher on special assignment, or front office personnel.
- If an Awarded Position (Counselor, Social Worker or SRO/JPO) has not attended training since SY23/24 (FY24), they are considered a new position and are required to take NCSW or NOT again, as the training content has changed substantially.
- If a grantee joins the SSP later in the school year, they are still required to attend training that school year if the appropriate training is still being offered. If the appropriate training is no longer being offered, the grantee will take the appropriate training the next school year.
- Administrators are welcome to attend New Officer Training or New CSW Training with their SRO, JPOs, or CSWs if seats are available.

### **Program Evaluation:**

ARS 15-154 requires the ADE to evaluate the effectiveness of the School Safety Program and report on the activities of the program and the participants in the School Safety Program to the President of the Arizona Senate, the Speaker of the Arizona House of Representatives, and the Governor of Arizona on or before November 1 of each year. The ADE shall provide a copy of this report to the Secretary of State. The evaluation and report shall include survey results from participating schools and data from participating schools on the impact of participating in the School Safety Program. The ADE shall establish data guidelines for School Safety Program participants to follow. By applying for School Safety Program funding, grant recipients agree to participate in the ADE School Safety Program evaluations.

## **SECTION 4: COUNSELOR AND SOCIAL WORKER REQUIREMENTS**

Section 4 provides information for schools that may have differing experiences of utilizing a school counselor or school social worker for school safety. The section looks at the role school counselors and social workers both play in promoting school safety, dives deeper into the services each role may provide, explores how both roles can support comprehensive mental health within their school community, and concludes with the importance of building partnerships to help support and sustain school safety.

### **School Counselors and School Social Workers Role in Promoting School Safety:**

*The information below (paraphrased from the two linked resources) provides a general overview of the role of school counselors and social workers in school safety.*

Safe and successful learning environments are fostered through collaboration among school staff and community-based service providers while also integrating existing initiatives in the school. Counselors and social workers play crucial roles in improving school safety by working collaboratively with school teams. Here are some ways in which they can contribute to enhancing school safety:

*Prevention Programs:* Counselors and social workers can collaborate with school teams to implement prevention programs targeting issues like bullying, substance abuse, violence, and self-harm. They can design and deliver educational workshops, awareness campaigns, and support initiatives that promote positive behaviors and foster a culture of safety and respect within the school community.

*Mental Health Support:* Counselors and social workers are well-equipped to address the mental health needs of students. They can provide short-term counseling, conduct assessments, and support the development of personalized intervention plans. By addressing mental health concerns, they contribute to creating a supportive and safe school environment.

*Risk Assessment and Intervention:* Counselors and social workers can conduct risk assessments to identify students who may be at risk of engaging in harmful behavior or those who may be victims of bullying or abuse. They can intervene by providing appropriate counseling, support, and referrals to external services if necessary.

*Crisis Response:* In the event of a crisis or emergency situation, counselors and social workers can provide immediate support to students, teachers, and staff members. They are trained to address the psychological and emotional needs of individuals affected by traumatic events, such as school shootings or natural disasters.

*Collaboration and Training:* Counselors and social workers can actively participate in school safety teams or committees sharing their expertise and insights on mental health and social issues. They can provide training to school staff on recognizing signs of distress, managing crisis situations, and responding to student needs effectively.

*Referrals and Community Engagement:* When additional support is required beyond the school setting, counselors and social workers can connect students and families with community resources, such as behavioral health agencies, social servicers, or local community support organizations. They can also collaborate with external agencies and professionals to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated approach to student well-being.

*Data Collection and Evaluation:* Counselors and social workers can contribute to data collection efforts related to school safety and student well-being. By tracking and analyzing relevant data, they can identify trends, assess the effectiveness of interventions, and make informed decisions about future strategies.

Overall, counselors and social workers bring unique skills and perspectives to school teams working on improving school safety. By addressing mental health, providing intervention and support, and fostering a culture of well-being, they contribute significantly to creating safe and nurturing environments for students.

NASP (2018) Framework for safe and successful schools: Considerations and actions steps (Brief). Bethesda, MD: National Association of Psychologists  
<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-safety-and-crisis/systems-level-prevention/a-framework-for-safe-and-successful-schools>

Hoover, S., Lever, N., Sachdev, N., Bravo, N., Schlitt, J., Acosta Price, O., Sheriff, L. & Cashman, J. (2019). Advancing Comprehensive School Mental Health: Guidance From the Field. Baltimore, MD: National Center for School Mental Health. University of Maryland School of Medicine.  
[www.schoolmentalhealth.org/AdvancingCSMH](http://www.schoolmentalhealth.org/AdvancingCSMH)

## **Understanding the role of a School Counselor**

*This section describes the professional model that school counselors utilize to design a school counseling program that supports school safety.*

### **ASCA: The Role of the School Counselor**

School counselors are certified/licensed educators who improve student success for ALL students by implementing a comprehensive school counseling program.

School counselors design and deliver school counseling programs that improve student outcomes. They lead, advocate and collaborate to promote equity and access for all students by connecting their school counseling program to the school's academic mission and school improvement plan. They uphold the ethical and professional standards of ASCA and promote the development of the school counseling program based on the following areas of the ASCA National Model: *define, deliver, manage and assess*.

#### **DEFINE**

School counselors create school counseling programs based on three sets of standards that define the profession. These standards help school counselors develop, implement and assess their school counseling program to improve student outcomes.

#### **MANAGE**

To be delivered effectively, the school counseling program must be efficiently and effectively managed. School counselors use program focus and planning tools to guide the design and implementation of a school counseling program that gets results.

#### **DELIVER**

School counselors deliver developmentally appropriate activities and services directly to students or indirectly for students as a result of the school counselor's interaction with others. These activities and services help students develop the [ASCA Student Standards: Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success](#) and improve their achievement, attendance and discipline. Through the school counseling program, school counselors ensure equitable academic, career and social/emotional development opportunities for all students.

#### **ASSESS**

To achieve the best results for students, school counselors regularly assess their program to:

- determine its effectiveness in helping all students succeed
- inform improvements to their school counseling program design and delivery
- show how students are different as a result of the school counseling program

School counselors also self-assess their own mindsets and behaviors to inform their professional development and annually participate in a school counselor performance appraisal with a qualified administrator.

## **Tiered Supports and Instruction for School Counselors**

*This section describes the activities school counselors may provide as part of their school counseling program within a school's Multitiered System of Supports.*

### **School Counselors:**

#### **ASCA - The School Counselor and Multitiered System of Supports**

School counselors enhance student academic, career and social/emotional development through the implementation of a school counseling program based on the ASCA National Model (2019). Through these programs, school counselors align with the school's MTSS by:

- providing all students with standards-based school counseling instruction to address universal academic, career and social/emotional development and analyzing academic, career and social/emotional development data to identify students who need support
- identifying and collaborating on research-based intervention strategies implemented by school staff
- evaluating academic and behavioral progress after interventions
- revising interventions as appropriate
- referring to school and community services as appropriate
- collaborating with administrators, teachers, other school professionals, community agencies and families in MTSS design and implementation
- advocating for equitable education for all students and working to remove systemic barriers

School counselors align their school counseling program with MTSS by providing direct and indirect student services including:

- Tier 1 interventions in the form of classroom instruction and schoolwide programming and initiatives
- Tier 2 interventions including small-group and individual counseling, consultation and collaboration with school personnel, families and community stakeholders
- Tier 3 indirect student support services through consultation, collaboration and facilitation of referrals.

Additionally, school counselors provide Tier 1 services by emphasizing the use of data and collaboration and engage in evidence-based prevention work. In Tier 2, school counselors provide direct services such as targeted group counseling and individualized interventions. In Tier 3, typically school counselors only provide indirect services as supporters through consultation, collaboration and facilitation of referrals as members of the MTSS team.

School counselors collaboratively support the process of MTSS universal screening for mental health, academic and behavioral supports. The school counselor may also provide indirect student service by presenting data or serving as a consultant to a student support team. The school counselor engages as part of the leadership team in MTSS but should not be the sole leader of MTSS in our buildings.

*The School Counselor and Multitiered System of Supports.* ASCA. (n.d.).

<https://www.schoolcounselor.org/Standards-Positions/Position-Statements/ASCA-Position-Statements/The-School-Counselor-and-Multitiered-System-of-Sup>

## **School Counselors Best Practice Professional Model & Resources**

*This section provides helpful links that further guide the role and activities of school counselors*

### **ASCA National Model**

[American School Counselor Association \(ASCA\)](#)

[ASCA Student Standards: Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success](#)

### **ASCA Resources:**

[The Essential Role of Elementary School Counselors](#)

[The Essential Role of Middle School Counselors](#)

## **Understanding the role of a School Social Worker**

*This section describes the professional model that school social workers utilize to design a plan that supports school safety.*

### **SSWAA: Role Of School Social Worker**

School social work is a specialized area of practice within the broad field of the social work profession. School social workers bring unique knowledge and skills to the school system and the student services team. School Social Workers are trained mental health professionals who can assist with mental health concerns, behavioral concerns, positive behavioral support, academic, and classroom support, consultation with teachers, parents, and administrators as well as provide individual and group counseling/therapy. School social workers are instrumental in furthering the mission of the schools which is to provide a setting for teaching, learning, and for the attainment of competence and confidence. School social workers are hired by school districts to enhance the district's ability to meet its academic mission, especially where home, school and community collaboration is the key to achieving student success.

*Role of school social worker.* SSWAA. (n.d.). [www.sswaa.org/school-social-work](http://www.sswaa.org/school-social-work)

### **SSWAA: School Social Work Practice Model**

The roles and responsibilities of school social workers vary significantly across schools, districts, states, and countries. The purpose of the *School Social Work Practice Model* is (1) to articulate the skills and services that can be expected from school social workers, and (2) to promote consistency in undergraduate and graduate social work education, credentialing, and professional practice, with the goal of improving academic and behavioral outcomes.

The Practice Model encourages school social workers to (1) *provide evidence-based education, behavior, and mental health services*; (2) *promote a school climate and culture conducive to student learning and teaching excellence*; and (3) *maximize access to school-based and community-based resources*. School social workers are expected to possess advanced knowledge and technical skills to guide their practice in these three areas. The proportion of their time that school social workers engage in each practice varies widely depending on contextual factors, including the needs of the community, school, families, and students served.

#### **1) Provide evidence-based education, behavior, and mental health services**

Providing evidence-based education, behavior, and mental health services to support academic and behavior outcomes is the primary direct service component of school social work practice. School social workers have unique expertise in child and family work because they address school and community stressors that interfere with educational success. In addition, school social workers' consultative skills can assist other school staff in implementing interventions with fidelity. This practice is accomplished by:

- Implementing multi-tiered programs and practices
- Monitoring progress, and
- Evaluating service effectiveness

#### **2) Promote a school climate and culture conducive to student learning and teaching excellence**

School social workers promote a psycho-social environment that fosters academic engagement and achievement. Environments are conducive to learning and teaching when they have: (1) policies and procedures that produce safe and orderly environments; (2) capacity-building efforts to promote effective practices; and (3) supportive relationships within and between students, families, school staff, and community partners. This practice is implemented by:



- Promoting effective school policies and administrative procedures
- Enhancing the professional capacity of school personnel, and
- Facilitating engagement between student, family, school, and community

### **3) Maximize access to school-based and community-based resources**

Maximizing school-based and community-based resources is the primary indirect or macro-practice component of school social work services. This may involve coordinating available services within the school or reaching out to community partners to secure services. School social workers know the services a school system provides, and they know the scope of services available within the community. Their skills in navigating these service delivery systems (e.g., health, mental health, child welfare, and juvenile justice) are crucial in challenging barriers to school and community resources that enable academic and behavioral success. This practice is accomplished by:

- Promoting a continuum of services
- Mobilizing resources and promoting assets, and
- Providing innovative leadership, interdisciplinary collaboration, systems coordination, and professional consultation

*School Social Work Practice Model Overview. SSWAA. (n.d.). [www.sswaa.org/files/ugd/486e55\\_47e9e7e084a84e5cbd7287e681f91961.pdf](http://www.sswaa.org/files/ugd/486e55_47e9e7e084a84e5cbd7287e681f91961.pdf)*

## **Tiered Supports and Instruction for School Social Workers**

*This section describes the activities school social workers may provide within a school's Multitiered System of Supports as part of their school safety plan.*

### **SSWAA: Who are School Social Workers?**

#### **Social Workers Practice at Tier 1**

- Needs assessments · School-wide data collection · Collaboration and consultation with teachers and administrators · Crisis intervention and prevention · Provide professional development for all school staff and families · Family engagement activities · Leadership and accountability for systems wide mental health initiatives · Student engagement · Educational policy advocacy · Systems of care coordination · McKinney Vento · Foster care · Foster community partnerships

#### **Social Workers Practice at Tier 2**

- Classroom and small group practices · Behavioral and mental health needs · Group counseling and skill building · Attendance · Engagement

#### **Social Workers Practice at Tier 3**

- Psychosocial assessments · Short Term Individual counseling · Family support · Functional Behavioral Assessments · Behavioral Intervention Plans · 504 Plan/IEP's · Suicide assessment and reintegration

## **School Social Workers Best Practice Professional Model & Resources**

*This section provides helpful links that further guide the role and activities of school social workers*

### **National School Social Work Practice Model**

[School Social Work Association of America \(SSWAA\)](#)

[School Social Work Association of Arizona \(SSWAAZ\)](#)

### **SSWAA Resources:**

[School Social Work Program Development Toolkit](#)

[SSWAA Evidence-Based Practice Resources](#)

### **NASW Resources:**

[NASW Practice Standards & Guidelines](#)

[NASW Standards for School Social Work Services](#)



## **Mental Health Tiered Supports and Instruction by Counselors and Social Workers**

*This section describes how school counselors and school social workers provide mental health support within a school and collaborate with external mental health agencies for needs beyond the school's scope.*

Mental health tiered supports in schools refer to a framework that provides different levels of intervention and support to students based on their mental health needs. This tiered approach aims to identify and address mental health concerns early on and provide appropriate interventions at each level.

### **Tier 1: Universal Supports**

Universal supports are strategies and practices that promote mental well-being for all students. These supports include creating a positive and inclusive school climate, fostering positive social interactions, supporting emotional regulation, promoting health and wellness, and mental health education. Universal supports are typically delivered through school-wide programs, initiatives, and curriculum integration.

### **Tier 2: Targeted Supports**

Targeted support is provided to students who may be at risk of developing mental health difficulties or who require additional support beyond the universal level. This level included interventions such as small group counseling, social skills training, and mentoring programs.

### **Tier 3: Intensive Supports**

Intensive support is designed for students with significant mental health needs that impact their functioning and well-being. This tier involved individualized interventions and services, including individual counseling and collaboration with external mental health providers. Intensive support may also include developing individualized education plans (IEPs) or 504 plans to address the unique mental health needs of students.

### **Implementing Tiered Supports:**

*Assessment and Screening:* Schools should conduct regular mental health screenings and assessments to identify students who may require additional support. This can involve using validated screening tools to identify students' social-emotional and behavioral needs.

*Collaboration:* School staff, including teachers, administrators, and support personnel, should collaborate to develop and implement a comprehensive mental health plan. This involves regular communication and coordination to ensure seamless delivery of support at each tier.

*Professional Development:* Providing ongoing professional development opportunities to school staff is crucial. Training can focus on topics such as recognizing signs of mental health concerns, suicide prevention, implementing evidence-based interventions, and creating a trauma-informed school environment.

*Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS):* Schools can implement an MTSS framework to guide the delivery of tiered supports. MTSS involves a data-driven decision-making process, where interventions are matched to students' needs and progress is regularly monitored.

*Partnerships with Community Resources:* Collaboration with external mental health agencies and community resources can enhance the effectiveness of tiered supports. Schools can partner with local mental health providers, organizations, and agencies to ensure a continuum of care for students. A good available tool is the School & Behavioral Health Partnerships: A Resource Guide.

*Parent and Family Involvement:* Engaging parents and families is essential in supporting students' mental health. Schools should communicate regularly with families, provide resources and information, and involve them in the decision-making process regarding their child's mental health support.

It's important to note that the specific implementation of tiered supports may vary between schools and districts. The guidelines provided above serve as a general framework, and counselors and social workers should tailor their approach based on the unique needs of their student population and available resources.

*The School Counselor and Multitiered System of Supports*. ASCA. (n.d.).

<https://www.schoolcounselor.org/Standards-Positions/Position-Statements/ASCA-Position-Statements/The-School-Counselor-and-Multitiered-System-of-Sup>

*Who are School Social Workers?*. SSWAA. (n.d.). [www.sswaa.org/files/ugd/426a18\\_98102fe3074e4529a17602419df0be59.pdf](http://www.sswaa.org/files/ugd/426a18_98102fe3074e4529a17602419df0be59.pdf)

## **Building Community Partnerships and Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems**

Building community partnerships and comprehensive school mental health systems support building a sustainable model for safe schools. Comprehensive school mental health provides an array of supports and services that promote positive school climate and increase school safety through the use of a tiered approach that addresses prevention, early identification, intervention and treatment of mental health concerns in school-age children. By creating strategic partnerships with behavioral health providers, and other identified partners, your team creates more resources and supports for your school safety plan, campus, and community.

- Behavioral Health Providers
  - [Accessing Behavioral Health Services in Schools](#)
    - List of Regional Behavioral Health Providers
    - [AHCCCS Universal Referral Form](#)
- Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems
  - [SHAPE System](#)
    - [SHAPEing Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems](#)
- Other Partnership Resources
  - [211](#)
    - A comprehensive source of information about local resources and services
  - Crisis
    - [AHCCCS Crisis Hotline](#)
    - [Samhsa 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#)

## **SECTION 5: KEY PARTNERS AND THEIR ROLES**

Below are the key partners in the School Safety Program and their respective roles.

### **Arizona State Board of Education**

ARS 15-154 directs the Arizona State Board of Education to review and approve School Safety Program proposals.

### **Arizona Department of Education**

ARS 15-154 directs the ADE to administer the School Safety Grant. ADE conducts the following duties:

- Provides the application to each district and charter holder.
- Prepares the application for review by the State Board of Education to determine awards.
- Announces awards to districts and charters.
- Monitors sites for compliance with the grant.
- Logs completion reports, due September 30th, for the previous program year.
- Collects money not spent by grantees at the end of the program year.
- Withholds payment to grantees that have not returned money due.
- Provides technical assistance.
- Conducts a program evaluation as specified by ARS 15-154.
- Monitors the training contract.

## **SECTION 6: DOCUMENTS & RESOURCES**

### **DOCUMENTS AND RESOURCES**

#### **Documents**

- [School Safety Program Documents Folder](#)
  - Required Training & Schedule ○ SSP CSW/Officer Manual ○ CSW/Officer Guidance Documents ○ CSW/Officer Weekly Activity Log ○ Responsibilities Checklist - District Administrator ○ Responsibilities Checklist - Site Administrator ○ Responsibilities Checklist - Agency Supervisor ○ Responsibilities Checklist - Officer ○ Responsibilities Checklist - Counselor/Social Worker ○ Strategic Plan ○ SSPT Needs Assessment Activity ○ Operational Calendar ○ SSPT Agenda ○ Roles & Responsibilities Cheat Sheet ○ School Safety Task Force Checklist ○ IGA Example

#### **Websites**

- [Arizona Department of Education School Safety Program](#)
  - SSP Guidance Manual ○ SSP Contact Information ○ SSP Grantees Page ○ SSP Events Calendar
- [School Safety Program Documents & Resources Padlet](#)
  - SSP Documents Folder SSP Videos ○ Training Registration Information & Participant Handouts Folders ○ SSP Website Links ○ Officer Resources ○ Counselor & Social Worker Padlet ○ School Safety & Social Wellness

