

## **Counseling and Middle Grades CTE Exploration Standards Alignment**

*Draft Career and Technical Education (CTE) Middle Grades Exploration Standards and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) School Counselor Professional Standards and Competencies*

In January of 2022, The Delaware Department of Education, with the support of Rodel and partners at Education First, embarked upon the Rethinking Middle Grades project. The overarching goal of this project is to ensure that youth exit grade eight ready for high school, having found success in career and technical education (CTE), academic, and social-emotional (SEL) programming that is equity-centered and inspires student identity and a path to post-secondary success. The creation of CTE exploration standards for middle grades is a product of this project.

Developing these standards was a year-long project that began with a diverse Steering Committee of partners including school and district leaders, teachers, counselors, board members, parents, current and former students, post-secondary educators, employers, community-based organization representatives, and Delaware Department of Education staff. The Steering Committee developed a framework for standards adoption that they then turned over to a diverse subcommittee of educators, to draft the middle school CTE exploration standards.

Both the Steering Committee and the Standards Writing Subcommittee solicited extensive input from Delaware partners that informed the initial drafting (empathy interviews, surveys) as well as informed extensive revisions (focus groups, public input). Standards were also informed by: previous standards work done by Delaware, including the social-emotional competencies and the Common Core literacy standards; other state's standards; national research; guidance on best practices in middle school CTE; and interviews of national and Delaware experts.

This document uses the two core pieces of the ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards and Competencies: (1) the description of Mindsets for School Counselors provided in the introduction and (2) the standards and behaviors school counselors must demonstrate.

The table below shows the alignment between the Mindsets for School Counselors and the mission and vision of the CTE Middle Grades work.

<b>ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards &amp; Competencies: Mindsets</b>	<b>CTE Middle Grades Exploration Project: Mission and Vision</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M 1. <b>Every student can learn</b>, and <b>every student can succeed</b>.</li> <li>• M 2. <b>Every student</b> should have <b>access to and opportunity for a high-quality education</b>.</li> <li>• M 3. <b>Every student should graduate from high school prepared for postsecondary opportunities</b>.</li> <li>• M 4. Every student should <b>have access</b> to a school counseling program.</li> <li>• M 5. Effective school counseling is a <b>collaborative process</b> involving school counselors, students, families, teachers, administrators, other school staff and education stakeholders.</li> <li>• M 6. School counselors are leaders in the school, district, state and nation.</li> <li>• M 7. School counseling programs <b>promote and enhance student academic, career and social/emotional outcomes</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A strong, equity-focused, and well-rounded middle grades Delaware Pathways program that:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Is open and available for <b>all students to explore, grow, and learn</b> before making <b>critical decisions around high school and postsecondary plans</b>;</li> <li>○ <b>Eradicates the readiness gaps</b> caused by an unequal playing field and inconsistent expectations of youth as they move through middle grades and transition into high school;</li> <li>○ <b>Equips all students with the academic, self-efficacy, and social-emotional growth mindsets</b> needed to succeed in <b>rigorous high school coursework and early postsecondary experiences</b>;</li> <li>○ Ensures all students arrive at high school with <b>healthy and positive images of themselves</b> and a <b>meaningful connection to their community, school, and their future identity</b>; and</li> <li>○ Connects with the elementary school and high school to create a <b>continuum of educational experiences that prepare students for college, career, and life</b>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

The table below shows the School Counselor Behaviors that most closely align to all six domains from the CTE Middle Grades Exploration Standards. Some connections are clear and explicit while others are more implicit between the ASCA School Counselor Standards and the Middle Grades CTE Exploration Standards.

CTE Middle Grade Exploration Standards Domains		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domain 1: Increase career awareness and exposure</li> <li>• Domain 2: Increase self-awareness</li> <li>• Domain 3: Develop employability skills</li> <li>• Domain 4: Develop foundational technical skills as appropriate</li> <li>• Domain 5: Develop an actionable plan for next steps in High School</li> <li>• Domain 6: Develop the ability to make informed educational choices</li> </ul>		
Most Closely Related ASCA School Counselor Behaviors		
<i>School Counselor behaviors that support students in achieving the learning objectives within each domain of the CTE Middle Grades exploration standards.</i>		
Professional Foundation	Direct and Indirect Student Services	Planning and Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• B-PF 1. Apply developmental, learning, counseling and education theories</li> <li>• B-PF 3. Apply legal and ethical principles of the school counseling profession</li> <li>• B-PF 6. Demonstrate understanding of the impact of cultural, social and environmental influences on student success and opportunities</li> <li>• B-PF 9. Create systemic change through the implementation of a school counseling program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• B-SS 1. Design and implement instruction aligned to ASCA Student Standards: Mindsets &amp; Behaviors for Student Success in large-group, classroom, small-group and individual settings</li> <li>• B-SS 2. Provide appraisal and advisement in large-group, classroom, small group and individual settings</li> <li>• B-SS 3. Provide short-term counseling in small-group and individual settings</li> <li>• B-SS 4. Make referrals to appropriate school and community resources</li> <li>• B-SS 5. Consult to support student achievement and success</li> <li>• B-SS 6. Collaborate with families, teachers, administrators, other school staff and education stakeholders for student achievement and success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• B-PA 2. Identify gaps in achievement, attendance, discipline, opportunity and resources</li> <li>• B-PA 3. Develop annual student outcome goals based on student data</li> <li>• B-PA 4. Develop and implement action plans aligned with annual student outcome goals and student data</li> <li>• B-PA 5. Assess and report program results to the school community</li> </ul>