

Why Join NYSSCA? Because.....in the words of Carolyn Stone, Ed.D., former ASCA president and current Chair of the ASCA Ethics Committee

It is a pleasure to be able to send a message to school counseling professionals! Thank you for contributing to the credibility of school counseling in New York with your daily adherence to the legal and ethical codes. Professionalism for School Counselors is a legal and ethical imperative. The guiding principles of professionalism help us maintain our standing with our peers, teachers, staff members, administrators, parents, students and with the courts.

School counselors develop their principles of professional behavior through membership in their professional organizations, continuing education, networking with peers, and attendance at workshops and conferences. Professionalism means staying current on the literature, research, skills/techniques and knowledge needed to best serve students. The New York School Counseling Association (NYSSCA) is one-stop purveyor of all these opportunities to protect and continue to grow our professionalism.

Standard of care is the reasonable person test. In the unlikely event you get into legal trouble in the course of doing your job, your attorney will work to establish that you acted as the reasonably competent school, while the plaintiff's attorney is going to try and show that you stepped outside the boundaries of the reasonably competent school counselor. Part of the test on both attorneys' part is to a look at who you are as a professional and whether or not you have held yourself to a high standard of care. How do the attorney's try to support or discredit your standard of care? The courts look at your course work, training, professional development, certificate, state and federal statutes, previous court case, testimony of expert witnesses and membership in professional organizations. If asked and you have to reply that you are not a member of your professional organization, ouch, you have put a big dent in your standard of care.

We work with minors in the personal, social, emotional arena and the slightly less personal area of academic and career success. Because of the intimacy of our work with minors who are mandated to be in our setting we are compelled to hold ourselves to a very high standard of care. Hold yourself to a high standard of care. Be a member of your professional organization.

Sincerely,

**Carolyn Stone
ASCA Ethics Chair**