

## CHAPTER ONE

# The Legal Context for Working With Students With Disabilities

It is the end of another busy school day. As you walk to the main office, you mentally check off the elements of your day's to-do list. You have met with teachers, conducted classroom guidance, and led small groups on changes in family systems. You worked on a curriculum for conflict resolution in the classroom and made several telephone contacts with parents. It has turned out to be a productive day with few interruptions. As you enter the main office to pick up your messages and a final cup of coffee before heading home, you see something in your box that always makes you apprehensive: an invitation to an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting. You care deeply about the success of all students in your school, and you are a committed team player, but these meetings remind you that you have very little training in working with students with special needs.

Each time you attend an IEP meeting, the requests for your time and skills are different. Last week's student has low self-esteem, seems disinterested in school, will not finish his work, and rejects authority figures. You are expected to take the lead on these issues, collaborating with special and general education teachers to ensure that your joint efforts promote and boost

## 2 ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

student learning. Tomorrow's IEP meeting will involve a discussion of another student's needs and strengths, and you'll identify areas that need to be addressed. The portion of the IEP you are responsible for may read something like this:

- Involve the student in a small group on social skills and match the student with a peer mentor.
- Follow up with individual counseling.

The case manager might turn to you and ask, "Would you be able to see the student once or twice a week?" Another IEP team member may ask you, "How would you like me to state the goals you'll be working toward?"

Even with your strong commitment to all of the students in your school, your ever-growing responsibilities may cause you to think, "I can't see this—or any other—student once a week for an entire year! And I wish I felt more certain about determining appropriate goals for this student."

This book has been written to help you meet these challenges proactively with enthusiasm, hope, and a renewed sense of competence. It is a first step toward working *collaboratively* and *effectively* with teachers, parents, administrators, and students with disabilities. The book focuses on higher-incidence disabilities and the student characteristics with which you will most often be faced. The goal is to give school counselors more information about managing those duties as defined by federal law and identified by accrediting agencies and professional organizations, such as the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Throughout this book, we will look at different elements of ASCA's position statement on school counselors and students with special needs. We also recommend that you visit the ASCA Web site ([www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org)) and familiarize yourself with ASCA's Ethical Standards for School Counselors (see Resource C).

Today's school counselors must

- Show that they are proficient with responsive services that are appropriate for typically developing learners
- Show that they can work effectively with students who have a wide range of disabilities
- Understand and address the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of atypically developing learners within the context of federal law and specific school environments

This first chapter provides a brief historical and foundational perspective about how students become eligible for special education and related services. This chapter also highlights laws that affect school counselors and describes multidisciplinary teams and why they are important. Finally, it introduces the broad concept of how schools are federally mandated to respond to students with disabilities and discusses school counselors' unique contributions to these collaborative efforts.

## **THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT ACT (IDEA)**

Students with disabilities include those with a wide range of physical, cognitive, behavioral, and emotional challenges. Such students have varied educational, social, and emotional needs. In attempts to meet these needs, schools may isolate students who receive special education services for part or nearly all of their school day. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)—introduced in 1975, passed in 1990, and reauthorized in 1997—requires schools and all school personnel to provide appropriate education in the *least restrictive environment* (LRE) for children (birth through age twenty-one) with disabilities. Many experienced counselors may ask, “I wonder if this refers to what I knew as P.L. 94-142 (Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975), and IDEA (1997)?” The answer is yes. In 2004, IDEA was again reauthorized, this time as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act. Please note that although the word *improvement* has been added to the act's name, this book will refer to the reauthorized bill as IDEA. (The full text of IDEA is available at the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities Web site at <http://www.nichcy.org/idea.htm>.)

### **Free and Appropriate Public School Education**

IDEA's overall intent is to guarantee a *free and appropriate public school education* (often referred to as FAPE) to all students, regardless

## 4 ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

of the type or severity of their disabilities. (This FAPE should not be confused with Families and Advocates Partnership for Education, another organization that helps improve educational services for children with disabilities.) This intent reflects the purposes of the previous acts. The new law includes several changes and modifications to the IEP process and other aspects of the identification and evaluation of students with disabilities. Under the new law, planning for postsecondary transition is no longer a choice, and transition goals and services must begin for students at age fourteen. A three-year education plan that focuses on postsecondary goals for students with disabilities should be developed. Secondary students with disabilities who are leaving school are to be provided a summary of their accomplishments along with their final report cards.

This law also speaks to many other specific areas in which school counselors play a part, such as mediation of disciplinary action and parental involvement. The entire text of the law, as well as clear explanations of changes, is available at several excellent Web sites, such as Wrightslaw ([www.wrightslaw.com](http://www.wrightslaw.com)), Reed Martin ([www.reedmartin.com](http://www.reedmartin.com)), and the National Committee of Parents and Advocates to Protect IDEA ([www.spedvoters2.org](http://www.spedvoters2.org)).

### **IDEA and School Counselors**

#### ***Assessment and Placement***

Over the years, a variety of special education class placements have been created to help more fully develop the academic and life skills of students with disabilities by providing various levels of support. Placement options ranging from nonschool settings to integrated education in the general classroom (also referred to as *inclusion*) have been used. IDEA entitles eligible students to appropriate

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evaluations by qualified professionals, and school counselors often play an important role in jump-starting the assessment process. While school psychologists typically conduct psychoeducational evaluations, school counselors are a critical first step in referral and advocacy for student assessment. Parents must give *informed consent* before

their child is evaluated or reevaluated. However, the law allows an option by which the school counselor can—in rare circumstances—advocate for student assessment and intervention without parental approval. Of course, every effort should be made to work with parents to obtain their understanding and permission.

### ***Inclusion and the Least Restrictive Environment***

Due to the implementation of IDEA, more and more children with disabilities have been educated alongside children who are not disabled. At one time, best practice suggested that children with mild learning challenges be educated in the general classroom, whereas students with more serious difficulties were thought to be better served in a resource room or outside of the regular school environment. More recently, this belief has been disputed, and the movement continues to grow to place students with special needs into general classrooms with their peers. Such challenges relate directly to the concept of least restrictive environment, which is another legal aspect of IDEA.

*Full inclusion* is now the goal of many educators and parents who are leading the special education reform movement. As a result, the 2002 Report to Congress on Implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (described later in this chapter) noted that the percentage of students with disabilities who spend more than 80 percent of their instructional time in regular classrooms has more than doubled, from 21 percent to 45 percent. In fact, students with disabilities can be removed from the general classroom only when the nature or severity of their disability is such that even with the use of supplementary aids and services, students cannot be led to success in that setting. While the interpretation of this position may differ from district to district, the overall commitment to greater inclusion is clear.

There are several counseling implications related to providing the least restrictive educational environment for students who have disabilities. First, school counselors may be asked to work with the multidisciplinary team to *develop behavior management programs* for children, as some classroom teachers may not feel equipped to handle the social and emotional behaviors that some students may exhibit. A second implication for counselors is that they will have to *modify classroom guidance activities*, because more children with varying abilities are in the general education

## 6 ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

classroom. On the whole, school counselors may need to *provide more consultation to teachers* regarding students' affective, social-emotional, or cognitive development.

### **Eligibility for Services Under IDEA**

IDEA includes children and youth with the following specific disabilities as eligible for services, if the disability is determined to significantly interfere with academic progress:

- Mental retardation
- Hearing impairments
- Specific learning disabilities
- Speech and language impairments
- Orthopedic impairments
- Serious emotional disturbance
- Autism
- Deaf-blindness
- Traumatic brain injury
- Visual impairments
- Other health impairments (OHI) such as asthma, sickle-cell anemia, etc., and/or multiple disabilities (National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities, n.d.)

Some school administrators may believe that only children with certain cognitive or physical disabilities are eligible for services. Despite the origins of, or motivations behind, this belief, it is far from the truth. Cognitive and physical abilities are only two of several areas in which a child can qualify for services. In one mid-western state, a school denied access to special education services to a student who had a well-documented record of significant behavioral problems and aggression. This student was diagnosed with depression and conduct disorder, but because the school found no cognitive or physical disability, the student was denied services. Lawsuits brought against the school by parents in cases like this have been successful, because serious emotional disturbance is a qualifying condition for services provided under the law.

### ***“At-Risk” Does Not Alone Determine Eligibility***

One important aspect to note about eligibility is that a student who has inadequate or interrupted previous education, or limited

English proficiency, cannot, on either basis alone, be considered to have a disability. Learning difficulties due to cultural, environmental, or economic issues alone also do not qualify students for disability services. For example, if a child of a migrant worker is struggling in school, has limited English, and lives in poverty, these conditions do not accurately identify him or her as a student with a disability. Of course, you will work with students with such circumstances as part of your regular counseling duties, but these students will not be automatically placed in special education.

### **The Multidisciplinary Team**

Once it has been determined that a student is eligible for services under IDEA, a multidisciplinary team (called an IEP or child study team in some districts) is formed. School counselors are often the first people with whom concerned parents communicate; as such, counselors are in favorable positions to work closely with all personnel who are providing assistance to students with special needs. Consequently, school counselors will find that their participation as identified service providers to students with special needs and their families will continue to grow.

How and why school counselors get involved in identifying or working with a student who has special needs differs from case to case. But, for various reasons, counselors are increasingly being asked to join multidisciplinary teams in the schools and therefore need to be prepared to take on meaningful and appropriate roles on these teams.

IDEA mandates that a multidisciplinary team must be created when a student has been identified with a special need. Team members must include the following:

- Parents
- One or more classroom teachers
- A special education teacher
- A school psychologist (or an individual who can interpret assessment results)
- An administrator with the authority to make decisions about the student

Other professionals on the team may include a speech and language clinician, a physical and/or occupational therapist, a school counselor, and possibly, at the discretion of the school or

## 8 ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

parents, a physician. The student is included whenever possible. Together, members of the team pool their assessment results, both formal and informal, in order to make decisions regarding appropriate services for students. IDEA now allows multidisciplinary team members to be excused from participation if a skill area for which they are responsible is not affected.

### Collaboration

Collaboration is much more than coordinating services or cooperating with various stakeholders and must be a highly valued part of the IEP process. Collaboration requires each participant to be willing, if necessary, to give up a piece of his or her professional “turf” or control for the good of the larger goal—student success. The idea of a collaborative multidisciplinary team assumes that all participants and their opinions and data are of equal importance, including parents. Each member shares in creating and being accountable for the student’s goals.

IDEA prohibits the exclusion of students with disabilities from developmental guidance and counseling services.

Experience and research suggest that school counselors may become either over-involved in multidisciplinary teams by acting as case managers, or under-involved by not interacting with very many students identified as having

disabilities. An appropriate balance for counselors working with students with special needs is outlined in the American School Counselor Association (ASCA, 2004) position statement (see Resource B).

## SECTION 504

Section 504 is the section of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that first addressed rights and protections for people with disabilities. According to the statute, in order to be eligible for 504 status, a student must have documentation of physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, such as walking, seeing, hearing, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, breathing, learning, speaking, or working. Naturally, a



condition that interferes with learning is of primary interest to teachers and counselors. The law declares that no one should be excluded on the basis of a disabling condition from any program or activity receiving federal support. Most schools receive federal dollars, so they are responsible for complying with this law. The full text of Section 504 is available at <http://ericec.org/faq/sectn504.html>.

### **Section 504 Eligibility**

Examples of disabling conditions that qualify for services under Section 504, and which are not typically covered under IDEA, include the following:

- Communicable diseases (such as HIV and tuberculosis)
- Medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy)
- Temporary medical conditions (such as illness, accident, pregnancy)
- Attention deficit disorder (ADD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), though a child with ADD/ADHD may be eligible for services under the category of Other Health Impaired (OHI), explained on page 6
- Drug/alcohol addiction
- Most chronic health conditions (although some may qualify under IDEA, if the condition adversely affects academic performance)

### **Differences Between Section 504 and IDEA**

As noted, any disabling condition that can be documented as *interfering with a student's learning process* may be considered for accommodation under Section 504. This eligibility differs from that under IDEA in that it focuses on equalizing access and eliminating barriers in the regular classroom. IDEA may include significant modification of the curriculum, whereas Section 504 calls for reasonable accommodation within the existing curriculum. Thus, IDEA may require specialized instruction involving a radical restructuring of the learning environment for students with disabilities. Section 504 has to do with allowing students with disabilities to participate fully in existing educational settings

## 10 ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Under Section 504, reasonable accommodations include allowing more time on a test, or developing an alternative assessment method to replace a test.

without substantial changes. Reasonable accommodations include allowing more time on a test, or developing an alternative assessment method to replace the test. That said, Section 504 defines disability in broader terms than does IDEA. If impairments are determined to limit a student's ability to learn or participate in a major life activity, that student (with ADD, ADHD, AIDS, hepatitis, etc.) may be eligible for services.

### **Determining Appropriate Accommodations**

Appropriate accommodations for each student determined to be eligible under Section 504 are developed by the multidisciplinary team, which includes the parents. Typically, the major responsibility for carrying out these accommodations falls on general classroom teachers. The student's progress, with regard to the goals spelled out in the IEP, is monitored regularly by a Section 504 coordinator. ASCA specifically discourages school counselors from taking on noncounseling-related activities, such as serving as a 504 coordinator. The IEP itself is reviewed periodically (the length of time varies from district to district) to make sure that the goals are still appropriate for the child. Many students who do not qualify for special education services may still qualify for consideration and accommodations under Section 504. Typical accommodations include the following:

- Providing air conditioning in a classroom for students with severe asthma
- Providing voice-activated computers to students with orthopedic impairments
- Offering one-on-one, non-timed testing for students with epilepsy

Another common accommodation in schools is a ramp or elevator. This example is a great reminder of how accommodations prove useful to everyone: Ramps and sidewalk cuts are now used

by more people with strollers, wheeled suitcases, and shopping carts than by individuals in wheelchairs.

The intent of the law is to allow all students to have an equal opportunity to benefit from and participate in services offered by the schools. Although the goal is to prohibit discrimination on the basis of a disability, Section 504 does not provide federal funds to support schools' efforts toward that end.

## **THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)**

Passed in 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) extends the provisions of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to people with disabilities in public settings, such as employment, parks, and entertainment venues. It is sometimes referred to as the "civil rights act for persons with disabilities." While the ADA is not aimed directly at PreK–12 school settings, there are many school-related implications of this law. For example, Title II of the ADA prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in contexts that include the public schools, vocational education, and higher education. Title II requires that school facilities are physically accessible to all. Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965, 1994) allows school districts to use Title II monies to implement the parental involvement requirements of No Child Left Behind (2002). The National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPIE) Web site ([www.ncpie.org](http://www.ncpie.org)) provides additional information on this topic. Also, full text of the ADA and much related useful material is available at [www.usdoj.gov](http://www.usdoj.gov).

The following case study looks at accommodations that might be made for a particular student. This example and others discussed in this book are intended to illustrate general principles and may or may not apply to specific situations. Eligibility for exceptional student education is ultimately decided by the multi-disciplinary team at each specific school and there is an inherent subjectivity in the determination.

## 12 ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

### A Closer Look: Isaac

Isaac is a seven-year-old second grader with rheumatoid arthritis located primarily in his hands. Isaac has trouble completing some schoolwork and is failing penmanship. He has difficulty participating in art projects and certain physical education activities. Many times he cannot finish tests at the same rate as his classmates. The multidisciplinary team determined that the arthritis does not adversely affect his educational performance across the curriculum; therefore, Isaac's disability does not qualify him for services provided under IDEA. Because Isaac's physical impairment limits his participation in school (major life activity) and the limitations are documented via evaluation of his fine and gross motor skills, he is eligible for accommodations by the school district under Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The 504 team, including Isaac's parents, determine that Isaac will benefit from a laptop computer to assist him with written work and some artwork. Occupational therapy will be added, at the school's expense, to help Isaac develop his fine motor skills so that he can participate more fully in art education and improve his penmanship.

When working with children like Isaac, school counselors must be mindful of not only the law, but also their own school district's and state's procedures with regard to these laws. The school counselor will want to be certain that all guidance activities are accessible to Isaac, so that he, too, can benefit from the comprehensive school counseling program.

## THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND (NCLB) ACT

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is the educational reform law signed in 2002 by President George W. Bush. It is a revision of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which is the primary federal law in precollegiate education (enacted in 1965, reauthorized in 1994). Its stated intent is to increase the accountability of schools, provide more school choices for parents and children, and emphasize basic skills mastery (especially in reading) for all students.

NCLB requires testing of all students with regard to reading and math proficiency. An aspect of this testing that is proving somewhat

problematic is the inclusion of students with various types of disabilities in order to monitor annual yearly progress (AYP). While accountability is important and laudable, schools whose students do not make satisfactory AYP are designated as “in need of improvement,” or, in subsequent years, “failing.” Consequences of failing to meet AYP goals are serious, including possible withdrawal of federally funded supplemental educational services.

On one hand, NCLB is praised as an effort to “ensure all children . . . including those with disabilities, are prepared to be successful, participating members of our democracy,” according to the Learning Disabilities Association of America (Harper, 2005, ¶13). In contrast, however, many administrators and parents note that including the scores of students who have certain disabilities with overall school assessment measures can cause those schools to appear to fail.

When first implemented, NCLB allowed 1 percent of special education students to take alternate tests. This has since been raised to 3 percent in 2005, with ongoing discussion of what might be both fair and accurate ways of measuring AYP and school accountability (Council for Exceptional Children, 2005). Over 13 percent of the student population has been noted to have some sort of disability that may impact testing (National Center for Education Statistics, 2004). Students with limited English proficiency (LEP), while previously noted as not qualifying solely on that basis for disability services, are accommodated in the short term by receiving assessments in their native languages. This option is available during the first three years of their schooling in the United States.

The impact of NCLB on schools is immense and the stakes are high. School counselors need to be aware of what is required by NCLB and committed to working with administrators, special educators, teachers, and, above all, students in demonstrating student progress.

Counselors are often involved in testing procedures and help to both prepare students for tests and interpret test results. They may also be active in planning ways to increase student and school success, such as advocating for tutoring services, teaching test-taking

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## 14 ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

skills, demonstrating relaxation techniques, and so forth. There is no doubt that NCLB is changing how counselors and others focus on the academic achievement of students with disabilities. The full text of NCLB is available at [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov). For a thorough overview of NCLB and its impact, see the Web site of the Education Trust ([edtrust.org](http://edtrust.org)).

### **ADDITIONAL LAWS AFFECTING SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL COUNSELORS**

#### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects access to student records. Parents may examine all of their child's student records maintained by the school. Students age eighteen or older may inspect all of their own school records. Schools are required to provide copies, but may charge for them. Parents may ask schools to correct inaccurate or misleading records. Disagreements are mediated during a formal hearing, and unresolved conflicts may result in parents adding statements to their child's records in order to include contrasting information.

Schools must have written permission in order to release *any* information in a student's educational record to anyone other than the student or parents. However, there are several exceptions to this rule, and some include the following:

- School personnel with legitimate interest
- Schools to which the student will transfer
- Accrediting organizations
- Local and state authorities dealing with health, safety, or juvenile justice situations

FERPA rights transfer to students, including those with disabilities, once they enter postsecondary education. The law allows institutions to define what is considered "directory information," that is, what can be released to the public. Some college professionals who work with students with disabilities encourage students to sign

release of information forms to the parents immediately. Others believe that this may encourage or continue dependency at a time when students are striving to achieve independence. FERPA does not prohibit students from sharing information with their parents, but leaves this decision in the student's hands (N. Hartenhoff-Crooks, personal communication, August 3, 2006). Full information about FERPA is available at [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov).

### **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)**

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) protects the privacy of health-related information. Enforcement of HIPAA is in the hands of the Office of Civil Rights. School counselors deal with issues of confidentiality every day, and HIPAA reinforces that concept in concrete ways. Students with disabilities will perhaps have more privacy issues than other students. Sometimes, even with the best of intentions, school personnel share restricted personal information about a student with a disability in order to explain behavior or alert to treatment in progress.

One of the greatest challenges to student privacy is the use of technology. For example, computers, e-mail, PDAs, voice mail, and the like can give unauthorized access to information that should not be disclosed. Counselors must take precautions, such as password protection, information encryption, and the refusal to transmit sensitive information in public places, in order to safeguard student confidentiality.

### **WHEN PARENTS, STUDENTS, AND SCHOOL PERSONNEL DISAGREE**

Often parents, students, and school personnel disagree about what is best for a child's education and development. This is even more frequently the case when determining the best alternatives for a student who has a disability. When these disagreements occur, IDEA mandates a resolution process comprises three parts: mediation, due process hearings, and appeals to state or federal courts.

## 16 ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

### **Mediation**

According to information on the Web site [www.wrightslaw.com](http://www.wrightslaw.com), mentioned previously as a tremendous resource for families and educators, mediation is voluntary, is not used to delay or avoid a due process hearing, and involves an unbiased, trained mediator who makes sure that all parties are heard and understood. The mediator facilitates communication and does not take sides. The classic book *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In* by Roger Fisher and William Ury (1991) is a recommended source of solid information about successful mediation practices.

### **Due Process**

If mediation is unsuccessful, the next step is a due process hearing. Again, [www.wrightslaw.com](http://www.wrightslaw.com) provides an exceptional and detailed description of the process. In general, due process is subject to both federal and state laws and requires full disclosure of evaluations and recommendations regarding the student's school situation. Due process hearings are characterized as adversarial, and can be compared to medical malpractice suits. Schools must receive ten days' notice before such a hearing occurs, so school personnel do have some measure of preparation time. Obviously, it is usually preferable to avoid such confrontations, and school counselors can be key in creating solutions *before* family/school relationships deteriorate to the point at which hearings are needed.

Family members advocating for the best education possible for their children with disabilities can be both emotional and highly motivated. School counselors bring strongly developed listening skills as well as negotiation skills to such situations, and can help all parties stay focused on the common goal of meeting the student's educational needs. Counselors may be able to defuse power struggles by offering diplomacy and sincere commitment to a win-win outcome. It is valuable when counselors recognize and respect the expertise parents bring as educational "managers" and advocates for their children.

### **Appeals**

From the school's perspective, the worst-case scenario occurs when mediation and due process hearings fail and formal appeals are filed with courts at the state or federal level. Counselors must



keep careful records at every stage of negotiation. In the interest of avoiding this final stage of court proceedings, school counselors can facilitate open communication, demonstrate respect, and keep the focus on helping children succeed in school.

The national Consortium for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education (CADRE) is a helpful source for creating workable agreements between schools and families of students with disabilities. Its up-to-date and user-friendly Web site, [www.directionservice.org/cadre](http://www.directionservice.org/cadre), contains a wealth of information, including many resources useful to all parties hoping to reach effective mediated decisions. CADRE urges people to resolve disputes before the safeguard procedures go into effect. Videos, conferences, books, and workshops are among the many tools made available to those who check this site.

## **CONCLUDING COMMENTS**

Since the publication of the first edition of this book (1999), ASCA has expanded and strengthened its stance with regard to counselors working with students who have special needs. ASCA's position statement (adopted 1999; revised 2004) asserts:

Professional school counselors encourage and support all students' academic, personal/social, and career development through comprehensive school counseling programs. Professional school counselors are committed to helping all students realize their potential and make adequate yearly progress despite challenges that may result from identified disabilities and other special needs. (See Resource B, page 113)

ASCA recognizes that school counselors have increasingly important roles in working with students with disabilities. Some of the tenets of the revised statement that relate to working with students who have disabilities are paraphrased below. According to ASCA, school counselors are involved in (but not limited to) the following:

- Leading school counseling activities for all students
- Providing collaborative services

## 18 ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

- Serving on the school's multidisciplinary team that identifies students who may need assessments to determine special needs
- Collaborating with other student support specialists in the delivery of services
- Advocating for students with special needs in both school and community
- Assisting with creation and implementation of accommodations, modifications
- Providing assistance from grade to grade as well as with postsecondary options
- Consulting with staff and parents to understand student needs
- Making appropriate referrals

Further, ASCA delineates administrative duties and decisions that school counselors should *not* carry out, such as making decisions about student placement or retention, supervising implementation of IDEA, coordinating the 504 planning team, and so on. The ASCA Web site, [www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org), is an excellent source of additional information.