



Dear Daniel,

I hope you're doing well. It's hard to believe spring will be upon us soon and many of you are already preparing for the end of the school year. I wanted to update you on a development we've been working on for a while.

As you may know, ASCA was formed in 1952 as a division of the American Personnel and Guidance Association. As APGA evolved into the American Counseling Association, ASCA and ACA found our paths diverging, both philosophically and organizationally. ACA changed its policies in 1995 so that divisions may operate autonomously. Since then, ASCA has functioned as an independent organization, although we followed ACA bylaws and policies and attended all required meetings.

Last December ACA approached ASCA to explore the possibility of changing our division status. We agreed that because of the way our relationship has changed, the division structure created 65 years ago may no longer be the most appropriate for us. ASCA and ACA leaders held a series of meetings based on the premise that if we separated, it would be a mutual parting and not ASCA leaving or ACA asking us to leave.

Those discussions resulted in an agreement to change our relationship. ACA's Governing Council is meeting on March 21 to consider the agreement, and if the agreement is approved, ASCA would no longer be a division of ACA effective April 1.

There would be very few changes to ASCA. In fact, the change in our relationship with ACA would probably be imperceptible to most ASCA members. In our discussions, we tried to ensure developments at the national level have as little impact as possible at the state level. ASCA being independent from ACA does not necessarily mean your SCA should separate from your state counseling association. ASCA has always advised its state divisions to do what's in the best interests of their members. ASCA has never suggested that state school counselor associations disaffiliate from their state branch of ACA, and we are not suggesting that now.

One of the provisions of our agreement is that SCAs that are affiliated with a state counseling association would no longer be required by ACA bylaw to be chartered by an ACA national division. If your CA requires your SCA to be chartered by the ACA national division, we strongly encourage you to work with your state leadership to change the state bylaw or policy to emulate ACA's bylaw under our agreement. By ASCA policy, an ASCA-chartered division cannot be chartered by another national organization. We would like to avoid a situation in which your SCA can no longer be a division of ASCA because your CA requires it to be chartered by an ACA national division.

ASCA and ACA leaders believe this change in our relationship is in the best interests of both organizations and our members and it's long overdue. We hope this development will usher in a new era of collaboration between ASCA and ACA so we may work together more closely on issues that are important to school counselors. We will keep you updated as ACA moves through its approval process for the agreement. Please let me know if you have any questions about the ASCA-ACA relationship and how it may possibly affect on your SCA's relationship with your CA.

—Richard

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ASCA is the school counseling division  
of the American Counseling Association