

The Addition of School Counselors to the IL Student Support Services Funding Formula in Illinois

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“That some achieve great success, is proof to all that others can achieve it as well.”-- Abraham Lincoln

Read more at:

<http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/a/abrahamlin385457.html>

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Abstract

School Counselors are vital for all students' successes, when afforded the necessary district resources. Across Illinois, School Counselors rely on a national comprehensive school counseling model based on decades of evidence attesting to the positive impact of School Counselors on student achievement. Through the application of efficacy-based, standardized mindsets and behaviors, School Counselors target cognitions, attitudes and skills required for academic success, careful selection of post-secondary options and optimal social emotional growth. When the recommended School Counselor to student ratios are in place (1:250, American School Counselor Association) School Counselors can implement the comprehensive counseling model designed to target interventions for the support of all students academically and in post-secondary success. Illinois School Counselors must be involved in the revised funding formula so they can implement effective and proactive developmentally based, comprehensive programming to enable student success.

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Talking Points Covered in the Paper

1. The integral role of the School Counselor.
2. Career and College Readiness: Research based effects on the School Counselor's impact on student achievement and increase post-secondary readiness.
3. Lasting benefits of social-emotional development of students in a comprehensive school counseling model.
4. Importance of the investment in School Counselors and District Benefits.
5. Status of the Illinois School Counselor Current Ratios as Compared to other States.

Glossary

ASCA-American School Counselor Association, national professional organization for School Counselors.

Direct Student Services-Individual, group or school counseling classroom lessons provided to students by School Counselors.

FTE-Full time employee.

Indirect Student Services-Activities School Counselors engage in with parents, educators and the community to advocate and coordinate support for students.

RTI -Response to intervention. A multi-tiered approach to assist students who need more than generalized classroom instruction to learn.

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Introduction

“We know that unequal access and quality of care can create health disparities in the US for many causes of death, while other causes are linked to risk factors or policies” (Howard, J., 2016, para. 4). This Journal of American Medicine Association article as mentioned in the CNN article, highlights the devastating effects to health and mortality when there is a lack of equity and access among preventative and maintenance healthcare. Convincingly, the authors note that if we know what a regions unique risk factors are, communities will benefit from intentional and proactive policy and systemic responses.

Similarly, to the health crises discovered in the JAMA article, our school districts are comprised of a diverse set of socio-cultural issues varying in complexity by district, school, and classroom to classroom. Consequently, exposure to different risk and protective factors create complex circumstances when students try to build the skills needed for academic and post-secondary successes. School systems with appropriately staffed and deployed School Counselors are poised for to address the risk factors through careful assessment and enhance the strengths and protective factors of the system. Once identified, School Counselors consult and collaborate with the school and community systems to coordinate the best supports. The School Counselor's goal is to help ‘every student succeed’ through the role of *prevention specialists* in the field of academic success. This can lead to a long-lasting statewide impact in our economy, culture, mortality, quality of life and well-being in every region of Illinois.

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School Counselors are well equipped to work with these ever-changing and complex cultural systems. At a minimum, Illinois School Counselors earn a Master's degree and must complete a minimum of 700 hours of practicum and field experiences under the supervision of Illinois endorsed School Counselors. Most graduate programs are a minimum of 60 credit hours. The core coursework is listed below, but is the minimum required for the State of Illinois.

- Human Growth and Development
- Counseling Children and Adolescents and Adjustment Issues
- Family and School Consulting
- Lifestyle and Career Development/College and Career Readiness
- Principles of School Counseling
- Group Counseling
- Ethics
- Research Methods/Outcome Research
- Analysis and Appraisal of the Individual
- Introduction to Substance Abuse and Prevention Programs

Illinois School Board of Education also encourages School Counselor students to work in diverse and underserved settings. This ensures exposure to a broad range of experiences.

Once the unique issues impacting each region of our state are realized, and with the implementation of proper School Counselor to-student ratios, Illinois will be equipped to work with all identified diverse needs. School Counseling and the Federal Every Student Succeeds Act share the same vision and goals for Illinois students. Working in tandem, we can ensure every

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Illinois student has equal access to the School Counselor and any other available resources for academic support.

**Talking Point One:
The Integral Role of the School Counselor**

Fundamental to their professional identity, School Counselors believe in supporting all students regardless of background, socioeconomic status, behavior referrals, or academic standing. Our mission is to help close the gap in order to provide all students with access and equity to the services needed to succeed academically and post-secondarily.

Beliefs of Professional School Counselors. (ASCA, 2016)

I-C: Attitudes

School Counselors believe:

I-C-1. Every student can learn, and every student can succeed

I-C-2. Every student should have access to and opportunity for a high-quality education

I-C-3. Every student should graduate from high school and be prepared for employment or college and other post-secondary education

I-C-4. Every student should have access to a school counseling program

I-C-5. Effective school counseling is a collaborative process involving School Counselors, students, parents, teachers, administrators, community leaders and other stakeholders

I-C-6. School Counselors can and should be leaders in the school district

I-C-7. The effectiveness of school counseling programs should be measurable using process, perception and outcome data (ASCA School Counselor Competencies, 2008;

retrieved on 11/8/16 from: The IL School Counseling Model available at:

http://www.ilschoolcounselor.org/resources/Documents/Dev%20Coun%20Model_v28.pdf

(Beasley-Greene, V., Bolden, A., Mason, E., Septeowski, D., Yates, A.M., Zyromski, B., 2010)

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These beliefs define the unique role of the School Counselor. Often, this role has been misunderstood in the school setting (American School Counselor Association, 2003; Carter, 1993, Napierkowski & Parsons, 1995; Paisley & Borders, 1995). This has led to the inappropriate assignment of tasks that are not suited for School Counselors. Such tasks may include, but are not limited to:

- Testing
- Scheduling
- IEP or 504 Plan Managers
- Disciplinarians/Acting Vice Principals

The American School Counselor Association has an official role statement on what a School Counselor is specialized to do in a school setting. (ASCA, 2016)

Direct Student Services

School Counselors assess the unique needs of students in their districts and schools. Similar to direct student services provided by social workers and school psychologists, School Counselors work on across all grade levels directly and indirectly. Direct services range from facilitation of small groups, psychoeducation classes on academic, career, and social emotional topics and may meet with individual students. Their training in counseling theory and often an emphasis in Brief, Solution-Focused Therapy allows them to meet with students over a time-limited number of sessions. The number of sessions may vary based on district needs and resources. Within the school setting, it is essential that School Counselors be versed in brief therapy models so that they can quickly work to defuse crisis situations. In the long-term, utilization of these brief psychotherapy models will increase the efficiency of the comprehensive

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school guidance counseling model. Ultimately, this will decrease reactive responsive (crisis) services and increase preventative guidance curriculum services which maximize the output of the comprehensive guidance counseling model (Stevens & Wilkerson, 2010). This allows for increased attention to school counseling appropriate duties including work with students in college and career readiness. College Board has documented that adding one counselor to a school will increase 4-year college enrollment by 10% (Gewertz, 2016).

All Illinois schools need to insure all students receive the services they need and are accountable for our efforts in this area. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) model supports these efforts by definition and mission. According to the ASCA (2016), the school counseling comprehensive program model is:

...an integral component of the school's academic mission. Comprehensive school counseling programs, driven by student data and based on standards in academic, career and personal/social development, promote and enhance the learning process for all students. (ASCA, 2016)

The ASCA model is designed to support all students, including low-poverty and low-minority achieve post-secondary school success. The ASCA model supports existing curriculum by introducing and teaching students the tools needed to succeed in academics, career and social-emotional learning. In addition, the ASCA model supports differentiated instruction in conjunction with RTI by providing a range of individualized to school system wide services.

What can a School Counselor contribute to the school? Relying on a standardized curriculum aligned with common core standards, *School Counselors apply mindsets and behaviors* when implementing school counseling curriculum. In addition to classroom curriculum focusing on academic, career, and social emotional growth, they are trained to work in small groups and brief, solution-focused counseling techniques for students.

Indirect Services

System Consultants. In addition to the direct service interventions described above, School Counselors engage in a myriad of system support services. As trained system consultants, School Counselors collaborate and coordinate input from teachers, administration, other support service personnel, parents, and the community. This unique aspect of their role distinguishes them from other support personnel. The School Counselor values all sources input, collects and integrates this into a strengths-based intervention(s) at the direct site level described above. One primary focus of School Counselors is to close the achievement gap by supporting all learners in school settings and in building strong relationships in the internal and external school community. A recent Education Week article (2016), Savistz-Romer, a Harvard researcher in the field of school counseling stated, “[Counselors] should also partner with teachers to integrate career-and college-readiness into the curriculum. Principals can play a pivotal role in bringing about those changes” (para. 24). Several states such as Minnesota, Tennessee, and Colorado are taking advantage of over \$7 million in federal grants to increase the availability of School Counselors and help increase more manageable counselor: student ratios (Gewertz, 2016).

School Counselors are trained consultants that operate in tandem with teachers, faculty and other support personnel so that every student is supported. They have a pulse on school climate and culture and interface between the school and community and school and parents. Their unique training in counseling helps them to facilitate and manage challenging dialogues that focus on student advocacy and support. School Counselors have many tools available to them in the comprehensive model that facilitate increased parent involvement and a positive school culture. Research has indicated that when students-especially low income students-feel a sense of

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belonging, they perform better academically and have far fewer disciplinary referrals (Carey, Harrington, Marin, & Hoffman, 2012; Dimmit, Wilkerson, & Lapan 2012; Reback, 2010).

Findings from implemented comprehensive school counseling models and recent national statistics and financial planning for recommended number of School Counselors will be provided in the second section of this paper. Additional highlights will include evidence-based, positive impact Professional School Counselors (School Counselors) have on student academic success when operating in a fully implemented, Comprehensive School Counseling Model. The School Counselors follows a nationally renowned comprehensive developmental approach designed to reach all students and the school community. Its emphasis is on a proactive approach with crisis services also built in when needed, to promote academic success among all students.

Data Informed Practitioners

Another unique aspect of School Counselors is the models built in emphasis on accountability. School Counselors work within and in collaboration with their district school improvement plans to set SMART goals and utilize data collected for future targeted interventions (Demitt, Carey, & Hatch, 2007). They follow a structured curriculum and a national set of learning standards aligned with national common core standards (ASCA, 2016).

A major consideration for districts when determining funding are ways to demonstrate student successes. School Counselor models take this into account with the system support piece of their comprehensive model. School Counselors are specifically trained on the application and use of data to measure the efficacy of their interventions. Systems support functions serve as continual feedback loops, helping inform ongoing improvement. Below is an excerpt directly

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from the American School Counselor Association website detailing the role of accountability in the Professional School Counselor's role.

An emphasis on evidence-based practices-especially accountability and outcomes measures- as part of the comprehensive school counseling model is recommended by many in the field (Maclem, 2011; Gysbers & Henderson, 2006; Stevens & Wilkerson; Whiston, Tai, Rahardja & Eder, 2011). Instruction for students on how to implement a fully functioning guidance model is in the best interest of the students in the state of Illinois.

ASCA National Model: Accountability

To demonstrate the effectiveness of the school counseling program in measurable terms, School Counselors analyze school and school counseling program data to determine how students are different as a result of the school counseling program. School Counselors use data to show the impact of the school counseling program on student achievement, attendance and behavior and analyze school counseling program assessments to guide future action and improve future results for all students. The performance of the School Counselor is evaluated on basic standards of practice expected of School Counselors implementing a comprehensive school counseling program. (ASCA National Model, retrieved 11/7/16).

Research shows that a more fully implemented program can help students:

- earn higher grades and test scores (Nelson, Gardner & Fox, 1998)
- improve academic performance among high-risk populations (Slaten, Irby, Tate, & Rivera, 2015)
- experience less externalizing behaviors (Lapan, Gysbers, & Petroski, 2001).

Other major findings regarding attitude toward school and academics with students in school with more fully developed guidance programs tend to have the following experiences with school:

- school was more relevant for them
- they had positive relationships with teachers
- they were more satisfied with their education
- they felt safer in school

(Lapan, Gysbers, & Sun, 1997)

In sum, the schools where School Counselors are utilized can expect positive outcomes across the criteria of attendance, academics and behavior. Students are taught through classroom lessons and small groups to take more responsibility for decision making, problem solving, and display increased self-regulation leading to less disciplinary problems in the school setting, especially when resources are allocated equitably to high risk students (Darling-Hammond, Wilhoit, & Pittenger, 2014; Engberg, M.E. & Allen, D.J., 2011).

Ultimately, the School Counselor aims to close the achievement gap by ensuring that all students have equal access to services to help them be successful and create intentional, tiered interventions with those that need it. Working proactively with administrators, teachers, and other support personnel helps the School Counselor to promote optimal human development. The School Counselor's pulse on the school climate and culture increases their effectiveness in promoting positive academic successes and healthy post-secondary decision making processes. Training in the comprehensive school counseling model allows them to differentiate interventions based on the needs of current students. Schools where counselors who can implement this model

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have noted a reduction in disciplinary issues (Amatea, Thompson, Rankin-Clemons, & Ettinger, 2010; Cross & Peisner, 2009), increases in attendance (Gysbers & Lapan, 2009), and significant improvement in reading and math scores (Carrell & Hoekstra, 2014).

The remaining sections of the paper will further support the important consideration of School Counselors into the new educational funding formula. For all students to have maximum benefit from the school counseling model, and the effectiveness of School Counselors to be maximized, the state of Illinois should adhere closer to the national ratios established by the American School Counselor Association and expect school districts to implement a Comprehensive School Counseling Model as most states do. The remaining sections will discuss the following key talking points:

- Career and College Readiness: Research based effects on the School Counselor's impact on student achievement and increase post-secondary readiness.
- Lasting benefits of social-emotional development of students in a comprehensive school counseling model.
- Importance of the investment in School Counselors and District Benefits.
- Status of the current Illinois School Counselor Ratios as compared to National Averages.

Research-evidence based summaries on the educational value of providing counseling services, especially for low income students. School Counselor's Impact on the pk-12

Student: A Summary of National Findings

This section will focus on the instrumental support role School Counselors play in promoting academic success through increasing attitudes, knowledge and skill areas in the arenas of College and Career Readiness and Social Emotional Learning. Specific attention will cover high risk student benefits, with an attempt to highlight Illinois research findings as much as possible. Ultimately, the goal is to close the achievement gap for all students by supporting their academic, college and career, and social emotional functioning. Consider following quote:

The gap that separates poor students and students of color from other young Americans is wide and getting wider. Although the 1970s and 1980s saw progress in narrowing the gap, by 1990 the achievement gap began to widen again and continues to grow wider (Jencks & Phillips, 1998; National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2001; Reyes, Wagstaff, & Fusarelli, 1999; The Education Trust, 2001). More African-American and Latino-American students are graduating from high school and entering college, but often these high school diplomas are of limited value (Lomotey, 1990; Reyes, Scribner, & Paredes Scribner, 1999; Shujaa, 1994; Valenzuela, 1999). This is supported by the fact that the proportion of African Americans and Latinos earning a college degree has barely changed in more than 2 decades (NCES, 2001). Thus, many poor students and students of color leave high school, if they even make it through, without the skills and knowledge necessary to enter, or be successful, in college or the workplace. (House & Hayes, 2002, para.4)

The evidence to date supports that with a well-functioning Comprehensive School Counseling Program in a school, are measurable, positive outcomes such as increasing college and career readiness among students (Lapan & Harrington, 2010), higher graduation rates and lower disciplinary incidents in the school system (Lapan, Gysbers, Stanley, & Pierce, 2012). Looking specifically at the State of Illinois, in the Chicago Public Schools, it was found that the, "...level of college readiness was related to both the number of non-guidance tasks for which

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counselors were responsible and the range of individual planning services delivered by counselors.” (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012, p. 148) When administrative duties such as scheduling are kept to a minimum (10-15% of their time), it allows for the School Counselors to interface with the school community at large. When providing responsive services, School Counselors can make measurable positive change in the school and assist the principal with meeting AYP and the top ten by twenty goals of college and career readiness.

The following section highlights some of the main research findings on student academic success when a comprehensive school counseling model is implemented. First, the critical role School Counselors play in supporting college and career readiness and academics when a comprehensive school counseling model is implemented. Second, the impact on social-emotional learning and how it supports lifelong learning and academic achievement will be covered.

**Talking Point 2:
Impacts of how school counseling / career services positively impact student achievement and increase post-secondary readiness.**

This section will discuss the concept of college and career readiness. Illinois youth are graduating high school in a simultaneously exciting and daunting time. School Counselors are unique professional service providers who are trained to be “leaders in making education equitable for all students” (ASCA, 2012). Professional School Counselors serve as specialists for access around college and career readiness, but have often been omitted from conversations around building, district, and state education policy reform (ASCA, 2012). When allowed to meet the needs of students as intended by ASCA, School Counselors can provide well-planned, thoughtfully delivered, targeted, and critically assessed interventions around academic and career development, two critical components of college and career readiness (ASCA, 2012). In addition, they serve as a bridge to foster vital community connections with college access specialists in various organizations and post-secondary institutions (ASCA, 2016). Finally, it is important to look at what has worked as an impetus to gain momentum toward a future model of school counseling in Illinois that **CONSISTENTLY** prepares **ALL** graduates for a multitude of potential future options.

The Illinois School Board of Education (2008) has jointly approved support for these efforts, too. Serving as a blueprint for the next decade, the Illinois Agenda for College and Career Success generated, four goals aligned with the ASCA goals. They are:

- Increase educational attainment to match the best-performing states and world countries.
- “Ensure college affordability for students, families, and taxpayers.

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- Increase production of high-quality postsecondary credentials to meet the demands of the economy and an increasingly global society.
- Better integrate Illinois' educational, research, and innovation assets to meet the economic needs of the state and its regions” (<http://ibhe.org/aboutBHE/default.htm>, para. 4).

In addition to the above Illinois initiative, a newer act signed into law in 2016 further emphasizes a top priority need for Illinois students to have the skills necessary to obtain meaningful employment. The Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act relies on competencies students need when leaving high school upon entry into college or Many students are unprepared with several skill sets prior to leaving the post-secondary environment (Advance Illinois, 2016). School Counselors work in conjunction with educators to build these essential skills required by today’s employers across the pk-12 development so that students are well equipped to build upon prior competencies in these work readiness areas.

David Conley, professor of educational policy and leadership, director of the Center for Education Policy Research (CEPR), and CEO of the Education Policy Improvement Center (EPIC) has long studied and compiled information on the college going process, and more recently has examined the larger concept of college and career readiness and what educators can do to assist students in being prepared for post-secondary life. In the context of the U.S. Education system, college and career readiness can mean many things, Conley sums it up to mean, “High schools should be considered successful in proportion to the degree to which they prepare their students to continue to learn beyond high school” (2010, p. 9). We can look around the state and see where success is being achieved to varying degrees and where system-wide deficits exists regarding this monumental task.

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Specialist for Access

Academic and Career counseling are key components of the ASCA model framework and Professional School Counselors' appropriate job duties. As outlined in ASCA's various statements regarding the School Counselor's role, academic and career work should comprise a significant proportion of School Counselors direct services provided through classroom guidance, individual student planning, responsive services, and system support endeavors with students, parents, school staff, and community members. Furthermore, the most recent researched-based ASCA Behaviors and Mindsets (2014), were compiled by experts in the field based on the findings of more than a dozen professional research organizations including; ACT, AVID, the College Board, the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, CASEL, and the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research to name a few. Their findings synthesize that vast quantity of information and detail non-cognitive factors across thirty-five behaviors and mindsets at the heart of achieving college and career readiness in the 21st century (ASCA, 2014). School Counselors are at the heart of facilitating these behaviors and mindsets through creating a climate and curriculum conducive to making this happen.

To facilitate the development of effective Behaviors and Mindsets, School Counselors focus on students' academic, career, and social/ emotional development. While social/ emotional wellness is vital for students' ability to focus on academic and career planning, the college and career readiness component is tied directly to the latter and is define as:

Academic Development – Standards guiding school counseling programs to implement strategies and activities to support and maximize each student's ability to learn.

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Career Development – Standards guiding school counseling programs to help students 1) understand the connection between school and the world of work and 2) plan for and make a successful transition from school to postsecondary education and/or the world of work and from job to job across the lifespan. (ASCA, 2014)

The ASCA domains (2005, 2012), ASCA Student Behaviors and Mindsets (2014), along with ASCA School Counselor Competencies provide the framework and standards from which to assess vital college and career readiness. Based on comprehensive training, the School Counselor Competencies describe the knowledge, skills and attitudes to which Professional School Counselors ascribe. The competencies related to academic and career development include:

School Counselors should articulate and demonstrate an understanding of:

- I-A-5. Individual counseling, group counseling and classroom instruction ensuring equitable access to resources promoting **academic** achievement, **career** development and personal/social development for **EVERY** student
- I-A-8. Developmental theory, learning theories, social justice theory, multiculturalism, counseling theories and **career** counseling theories
- II-A-8. The three domains of academic achievement, career planning and personal/social development

School Counselors demonstrate their attitudes and beliefs that all students deserve access to a comprehensive program that:

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- II-C-3. Promotes and supports **academic** achievement, **career** planning and personal/social development for **EVERY** student

An effective School Counselor can accomplish measurable objectives demonstrating the following abilities and skills:

- III-B-6a. Uses appropriate **academic** and behavioral data to develop school counseling core curriculum, small-group and closing-the-gap action plans and determines appropriate students for the target group or interventions
- III-B-6d. Determines the intended impact on **academics**, attendance and behavior

School Counselors should articulate and demonstrate an understanding of:

- IV-A-6. Principles of **career** planning and **college** admissions, including financial aid and athletic eligibility

An effective School Counselor can accomplish measurable objectives demonstrating the following abilities and skills.

Individual Planning:

- IV-B-2d. Understands **career** opportunities, labor market trends and global economics and uses various **career** assessment techniques to help students understand their abilities and **career** interests
- IV-B-2f. Understands the relationship of **academic** performance to the world of work, family life and community service
- IV-B-2g. Understands methods for helping students monitor and direct their own learning and personal/social and **career** development

Responsive Services

- IV-B-3g. Understands the nature of **academic, career** and personal/social counseling in schools and the similarities and differences among school counseling and other types of counseling, such as mental health, marriage and family and substance abuse counseling, within a continuum of care

Few other school based practitioners are prepared to offer more expertise regarding comprehensive academic and career development. Chen-Hayes and Ockerman stated, “transformed School Counselors assist every student to reach their academic, career, and college dreams starting in kindergarten” (2015, p. 242). They reviewed the current literature and reported that School Counselors are key advocates for all students, but underserved and underrepresented populations (students of color, low income students, sexual minorities, students with mental health concerns, and students from non-dominant family types) who are not “achieving consistent academic success that leads to well-paying careers and college access” (2015, p. 242). School Counselors create interventions and utilize data to recognize those at risk of dropping out and strive to better meet their needs starting in elementary school, in particular, those who face the greatest obstacles to success, young men of color (ASCA, 2012; Holcombe-McCoy, 2007a, 2007b). Finally, with ever increasing student to counselor ratios, professional School Counselors must work differently, more effectively and efficiently to meet the needs of all students. This includes the use of proactive strategies, not waiting for students to trickle into the counseling office (Bryan, Holcomb-McCoy, Moore-Thomas, & Day-Vines, 2009; Chen-Hayes & Ockerman, 2015). When thinking about equity and access,

professional School Counselors who regularly deliver competencies in career and college access can substantially raise college application rates and build social capital, especially for students who have been least likely to receive it from schools or elsewhere. (Bryan et al., 2011)

Meeting Student Needs

Conley (2010) and Roderick, Nagoka, and Coca (2009) asserted that there are four key components to focus on regarding college and career readiness needs, these include (a) content knowledge in subject areas (b) core academic skills (critical thinking, analysis, and writing) (c) executive functioning skills (time management, self-regulation, and problem solving), and (d) “college knowledge” (college admissions and financial aid). Professional School Counselors can use their collaboration skills to ally with teachers to accomplish the first two areas, but they must utilize their specialized training and skills to deliver and assess curriculum related to college knowledge and executive functioning (Chen-Hayes & Okerman, 2015). Even if all goes well as students apply to college or pursue the world of work directly, a counselor’s job is not done until students matriculate, persist, and complete. A study by Roderick, Nagaoka, Coca, and Moeller (2008) found that only 41% of Chicago area seniors who stated they wanted to attend college actually enrolled, and similarly a Harvard study found that 10-20% of high school seniors who said they planned to go to college ever enroll in a college course (Harvard Graduate School of Education and Center for Education Policy Research, 2012). Professional School Counselors are prepared to understand that their job, related to college a career readiness is a K-16 endeavor.

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As mentioned earlier, Professional School Counselors must be creative to get the job done while working against significant student needs, barriers, and student to counselor ratios. Another way to meet student needs around college and career readiness is through valuable community partnerships with organizations and post-secondary institutions. As stated by ASCA in their position statement on *The School Counselor and College Access Professionals*:

School Counselors play a critical role in preparing all students for life-long learning and success in a global environment. To ensure students have opportunity to reach their full potential, School Counselors collaborate with community-based organizations, including college access organizations and college access professionals, within the framework of a comprehensive school counseling program. (ASCA, Adopted 2016)

Our professional School Counselors serve as the connection to make these relationships possible. If allowed the time and resources necessary in their systems, they bring these relationships in as part of their comprehensive counseling program and increase the scope of their services around college and career access and readiness. As part of this process, school counseling programs benefit students and the community by:

- beginning conversations regarding community needs with community stakeholders
- planning a community wide response to college preparation and access
- setting community wide goals and action plans for college access
- sharing common data with community stakeholders
- implementing collaborative interventions in college access
- assisting students in completing the steps necessary for participating in college access programs or postsecondary programs, such as registering for tests or applying for financial aid

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- referring/nominating students for programs (ASCA, 2016)

Without time, proper staffing, and financial support School Counselors are unable to embark on proactive endeavors such as building vital community connections to support students' college and career readiness.

Gaining Momentum

1. In 2011, the National Office of School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA) launched their "Own the Turf" campaign highlight 8 key components of college and career readiness to guide Professional School Counselors work as a response to a Public Agenda (2010) reported that cited that School Counselors had a poor reputation, spent less than 38 minutes/student of college/career planning per year, and that many constituents were dissatisfied with the work of School Counselors.

The NOSCA Eight Critical Components include:

1. College Aspirations
2. Academic planning for college and career readiness
3. Enrichments and extracurricular engagement
4. College and career exploration and selection process
5. College and career assessments
6. College affordability planning
7. College and career admissions processes
8. Transitions from high school graduation to college enrollment (2011)

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Later that same year, the College Board's Office of Advocacy and Public Relations along with the National Office of School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA) found that over 5,000 middle and secondary counselors across all 50 states were committed to the eight components, but sadly lacked the training or resources to implement them (NOSCA, 2011).

Since 2011, strides have been made through partnerships with post-secondary institutions for training and continuing education around college and career readiness. For example, here in Illinois, Northern Illinois University offers a three-credit course in Post-Secondary and College Counselor for School Counselors (a requirement for School Counselors in training and continuing education credit for those who have graduated) which teaches counselors how to prepare youth for the myriad of options that exist after high school. Yet, remaining barriers exist, most importantly staffing and time allocation. Without proper student to counselor ratios (250:1 recommended by ASCA), and with non-essential duties (discipline, testing, lunch/bus monitoring, case management) School Counselors have less time for direct services with students. Time that could be spent fully engaging and sustaining the momentum built to better meet students' needs around college and career readiness.

**Talking Point 3:
Short and long-term benefits and advantages on social-emotional
development of students in a comprehensive school counseling model.**

Grit

Duckworth & Seligman (2005) laid some of the groundwork regarding the critical role of ‘non-cognitive’ factors on academic success. Non-cognitive factors may include perseverance, frustration tolerance, and self-discipline. These necessary skills help student continue trying despite frustration or failure from previous attempts. Conscientiousness and self-control are a major factor leading to academic success. Researchers have begun to explore how these noncognitive factors could explain socio-cultural differences in behaviors leading to higher grades (Duckworth & Seligman, 2005; Dweck, Walton, & Cohen, 2014). Evidence continues to be gathered regarding the presence and application of these factors among different student groups. Non-cognitive factors-coined ***grit***-has indicated they play a larger role on report card grades than standardized test scores.

“Self-discipline measured in the fall accounted for more than twice as much variance as IQ in final grades, high school selection, school attendance, hours spent doing homework, hours spent watching television (inversely), and the time of day students began their homework.” (Duckworth & Seligman, 2005, p. 939)

School Counselors have the unique advantage from other school support personnel (i.e., social workers and school psychologists) to directly engage in noncognitive skill building with all students. Grit research continues to evolve. More recently, it has been recently suggested that grades and standardized tests may be measuring two different constructs (Duckworth, Quinn, & Tsuayama, 2013). Report card grades may tend to measure self-control while standardized tests are could be measuring something entirely different-knowledge competencies. When focusing on

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closing the gap, research has emphasized an increased alignment of grades with standardized testing competencies (Duckworth, Quinn, & Tsukayama, 2013). Theoretically, this could place a larger emphasis on non-cognitive factors since they help drive students to develop the study habits leading themselves to higher standardized test scores.

Three standardized and developmentally designed curricular strands work at skill building in this arena. The three areas of curriculum are academic, career, and social emotional. Based on school needs, different areas may be emphasized by the School Counselor.

Table One. 2007 Correlations between Student Outcomes and School Counseling Practice Domains. *

TABLE 5 2007 CORRELATIONS BETWEEN STUDENT OUTCOMES AND SCHOOL COUNSELING PRACTICE DOMAINS

Student Outcomes	Counselor Practice Domains				
	AS	CC	PS	UD	PI
1. Student Belonging	.33*	.16	.29*	.15	.28*
2. Hassles with Other Students	-.23	-.32*	-.21	-.10	-.40**
3. Hassles with Teachers	-.02	-.22	.04	-.31*	.02
4. Getting Teased/Bullied	-.02	-.26*	.01	-.30*	-.06
5. Attendance	.01	.03	.31*	.08	.24
6. Getting Suspended	-.17	-.17	.03	-.20	-.24
7. Responsiveness to Parents	-.02	.04	.07	.11	.28*

Note: AS=counselors focusing on the academic success of students; CC=counselors providing college and career counseling services to students; PS=counselors addressing personal and social needs of students; UD=counselors using data; PI=counseling working to involve parents.
N=50 schools. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

*Note. From Dimmitt, Wilkerson & Lapan, 2014, p. 132.

In the table above taken from Dimmitt, Wilkerson, and Lapan (2014; p.132) further illustrated the measurable impact School Counselor roles and responsibilities in these curricular areas have on student outcomes. As depicted, almost half of all School Counselor interventions were significantly positively correlated at the $p < .05$ level. For example, regarding attendance, personal social counseling was correlated highest ($r = .31$). Additional social skill areas that were targeted had significant positive impact on student outcomes such as addressing bullying and interpersonal issue with other students. When school address academics, attendance and behaviors with students while using their standardized model, students benefit in a variety of academic ways but

also increase inter and intra personal insight. These developments may lead to better preparation for college and career readiness and overall life skills.

Applying Grit to support Student Academic Growth: Mindsets and Behaviors

The University of Chicago and Chicago Consortium (Urban Education Initiative, 2016) has applied the grit research to develop the critical mental perspectives students adopt when they are most successful. Termed mindsets, these non-cognitive strategies employed by School Counselors help determine what attitudes, skills and knowledge do our students need to be successful despite inequity of resources and educational opportunities. Mindsets and behaviors comprise three areas of curriculum: social-emotional, college and career readiness, and academic and guide the targeted interventions School Counselors select when delivering appropriate tiered interventions in the school.

The American School Counselor Association defines mindsets and behaviors as follows:

- **Category 1: Mindset Standards** – Includes standards related to the psycho-social attitudes or beliefs students have about themselves in relation to academic work. These make up the students’ belief system as exhibited in behaviors.
- **Category 2: Behavior Standards** – These standards include behaviors commonly associated with being a successful student. These behaviors are visible, outward signs that a student is engaged and putting forth effort to learn. The behaviors are grouped into three subcategories.

a. Learning Strategies: Processes and tactics students employ to aid in the cognitive work of thinking, remembering or learning.

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b. Self-management Skills: Continued focus on a goal despite obstacles (grit or persistence) and avoidance of distractions or temptations to prioritize higher pursuits over lower pleasures (delayed gratification, self-discipline, self-control).

c. Social Skills: Acceptable behaviors that improve social interactions, such as those between peers or between students and adults. (ASCA, 2016) (For specific listing of all 35 mindsets and behaviors, please click on the link or go to:

<https://schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/home/MindsetsBehaviors.pdf>)

One of the standardized mindsets is a sense of safety in the school setting. A sense of safety and positive school climate primes students for optimized learning experiences across the grade levels (Ferguson, 2016). An ethnographic study in the inner city of Chicago focused on factors of resilience among African American males when choosing to make the most of their education.

“Acting rough [sic] it’s hard to turn...off. When I walk into school, the danger does not end at the school door. I always have to stay on guard, even when I don’t want to. It is difficult trying to learn under all that pressure.” (Mcgee, 2013, p. 461)

The study recorded the struggles of 11 at-risk African American students who were also honors students in an urban school setting, living in dangerous neighborhoods. This study demonstrated this group of students had measurably higher levels of grit in some areas than their white peers. Second, it illustrates how the School Counselor would work with this student to establish a safe environment conducive to maximize learning. When applying the mindsets and behavior standards, a practicing School Counselor might select the mindset addressing a sense of safety. Especially, since a compromised sense of safety can neurologically prevent us from

learning new information and retrieving learned information (Siegel & Bryson, 2011; Siegel, 2009).

Another key researcher Siegel (2011; 2009) has described in depth that we are wired beings and learn best through social interaction. Like a sense of safety, if students do not have the social skill set for positive conflict management resolution or empathy, it can interfere with learning process, too. *In an urban Illinois school, Velsor (2009) discovered students with more social skills as taught by the School Counselor had less aggression and violence. Most importantly, this was evidenced internally, too. Students with higher social skills were better self-regulated and were more capable of inhibiting stresses from home that could have been interfering in their ability to attend to academics while at school (Velsor, 2009).* Caprara et al. (2008) discovered further evidence that *higher self-regulation increases academic performance*. Over time, it has been found that there is a decrease in self-efficacy in middle school and beyond as students get older (Caprara, 2008), the higher students' self-efficacy starting in elementary years will show slower declines of self-efficacy over time when compared to those who do not feel a sense of cognitive competence when approaching difficult or novel tasks. A social emotional skill set such as self-regulation is one of the non-cognitive factors addressed in the classroom.

School Counselor Impact at High Risk Schools

It has been concluded that schools higher in poverty and containing more at-risk students have much less access to the School Counselor than other schools (Dimmit, Wilkerson, & Lapan, 2012; Lapan, Gysbers, Bragg & Pierce, 2012). This suggests the students who most need the services of a comprehensive school counseling program targeting developmentally appropriate delivery of services in the areas of academic support, social-emotional, and career curriculum

have the least access to these services. This is truer for comprehensive counseling programs that do not meet the ratio requirements outlined by the American School Counselor Association.

Further, it has been discovered that School Counselors make a larger impact in schools with high at-risk populations (Lapan, Gysbers, Stanley, & Pierce, 2012; Slaten, Irby, Tate & Rivera, 2015).

Does a Sense of Belonging Reduce Disciplinary Actions?

Suspension rates clearly differ by race in the United States. The US Department of Education report on Crime from 2015 (Zhang, Musu-Gillette, & Oudekerk, 2016) indicated that the majority of 9th grade students expelled most likely never finished high school in four years. In addition, black students were three times more likely to be suspended than Whites. Hispanics were two times as likely than whites to be suspended. Generally, students who were less engaged in their schools faced higher expulsion and suspension rates than peers. A low sense of school belonging was higher for those who were expelled or suspended more often.

To reduce behavioral issues, it has been suggested higher engagement of all students in the school can increase a feeling of belonging and accountability among students, increase grades, and reduce violence (Farrington et al., 2012). The U.S. Department of Education released its 2015

Indicators of Crime and Safety with findings. Students who rated themselves as low on engagement in their schools were more likely to have experienced expulsion or suspension.

Likewise, students who felt they did not belong in the school were nearly twice as likely to be suspended or expelled (Zhang, Musu-Gillette & Oudekerk, 2016). Creating environments where students are engaged and feel a sense of belonging have been demonstrated in the work of School Counselors. A sample of recent findings:

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- Higher poverty schools are more likely to succeed behaviorally and academically when they can access their School Counselor (i.e., proper 1:250 ratios) (Lapan, Gysbers, Bragg, & Pierce, 2012).
- In one high poverty school, a School Counselor led an initiative to increase social support and relational trust that increased the graduation rate from 49% in 2009 to 78.8% in only three years (Salina, et al., 2014).
- Targeted use of School Counselors' time working with students in need of study skills increased and improved relationships with the students and school community as a whole (Kayler & Sherman, 2009)

“Students who are at risk nationally are more likely to drop out (Price, Pepper, & Brocato, 2006 as cited in Slaten, 2015)...Therefore, students in these settings have arguably the highest need for social and emotional learning (SEL), but these schools typically have few resources to address these needs. These students are often placed in alternative schools ill-equipped to address SEL needs. (p.42)”

From this urban Illinois study, four social emotional and career areas of focus would increase protective factors among these students:

1. In addition to instructional learning, social emotional learning needs to be incorporated
2. Greater emphasis on community and interpersonal skills
3. Curriculum should focus on social emotional learning elements of relevant socio-cultural themes specific to the needs of that student population
4. Raising internal consciousness to raise career expectations post high school

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One additional study in Cicero, Illinois found a 60% reduction in behavioral disruptions after introducing a behavioral management game and the introduction of classroom interventions and protocol. Applying a comprehensive school counseling model would be advantageous in the areas of college and career readiness and self-regulation and there is substantial evidence to support this claim.

Additional research has indicated that fostering positive relationships among peers can facilitate learning. If there is a sense of connectedness, there is often increased academic achievement. To create these relationships, students need to be taught targeted social skills activities (SCORE, 2013). The national School Counselor model has created targeted, measured interventions of these skills and developed their social emotional strand of development around this idea. Implementation of interventions that focus on encouraging positive relationships between students and their peers as well as their teachers. These lessons promote increased school safety, thereby eliminating one barrier conducive to learning as described in marginalized populations above.

State Expenses of Low Social Emotional Skills

More and more evidence is being gathered regarding the cost of low Social Emotional skills in our existing state systems. If the skills are low, they create disruptions and learning problems requiring additional support staff services. In addition, externalizing behaviors such as injuring self or others leads to additional costs in terms of sick leave, insurance and training due to turnover (Belfield, et al., 2015). This does not include the valuable instruction time that other students lose through the lack of social emotional regulation of their peers in the classroom.

Talking Point 4
District Benefits of Investing in School Counselors.

Economists have attempted to quantify the monetary value of having one FTE School Counselor in a school.

“... [given prior research that shows] reducing class size by 7 increased test scores in the 1st year by 4 percentile points...calculation shown...suggests that hiring a counselor is approximately twice as effective as hiring an additional teacher.”

(Carrell & Hoekstra, 2014, p. 68)

There were other significant effects when the addition of one School Counselor was placed into the equation, such as 29% reduction in behavior issues among boys and a 20% reduction in behavior issues among girls. Using a linear regression model and controlling for gender, race, median income and free and reduced lunch status, they found the greater the number of counselors (and closer to the 1:250 ratio of School Counselor to students) that existed, the lower the incidence of behavioral disruptions and the higher math and reading scores were. This is one of the first studies to control for these demographic variables and use predictive statistical modeling to note trends instead of correlations. The table summarizing these findings is listed below. The reader will notice not only were there significant increases in math and reading scores, there were reductions in behavioral infractions.

Table 2. The Effect of Counselors on Academic Achievement and Misbehavior. *

Table 2. The effect of counselors on academic achievement and misbehavior.							
Indep. variable:							
number of counselors							
1-7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Panel A: Boys</i>							
Reading and mathematics score	1.404*	1.370*	1.339**	1.213**	1.429**	1.123*	0.834**
Observations	20,859	20,859	20,859	20,859	20,859	20,859	20,859
Disciplinary Infractions	-0.159*	-0.157*	-0.154	-0.164*	-0.128	0.186**	0.204**
Observations	22,120	22,120	22,120	22,120	22,120	13,990	22,120
<i>Panel B: Girls</i>							
Reading and mathematics score	0.312	0.287	0.405	0.0456	0.916*	0.623	0.188
Observations	21,619	21,619	21,619	21,619	21,619	14	21,619
Disciplinary infractions	0.089**	0.090**	0.083**	0.085**	-0.051	-0.075*	-0.059
Observations.	22,762	22,762	22,762	22,762	22,762	14,067	22,762

Notes:

*Taken from Carrell & Hoekstra, 2014.

-each cell reports results from a separate regression. Standard errors in parentheses are two-way clustered at the school-by-year and individual level. Individual controls include gender, race, median family income, and subsidized lunch status.

* Significant at the 0.10 level.

** Significant at the 0.05 level.

*** Significant at the 0.01 level.

Adapted from Carrell & Hoekstra (2014) Table 2, page 68

As mentioned under talking point one, the role of the School Counselor, the recommended ratios are in place to insure the comprehensive school counseling model's effects can be optimized for all students to have the support for academic and postsecondary success.

A school system wide comprehensive school counseling program in several Washington State schools found that a more fully implemented model resulted in higher standardized test scores.

"The school with a less than totally engaged Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP) have significantly lower initial academic achievement than similar pupils in the comparison group, the CSCP participants, *over a 2 to 3-year time, closed the achievement gap.* Furthermore, children benefit academically, whether they are economically disadvantaged or not, by remaining in schools for multiple years (at least 3 years) with a well-established (3 or more years of implementation) comprehensive school counseling program." (Sink & Stroh, 2003, p. 184)

Talking Point 5

Status of the Illinois School Counselor Current Ratios of Illinois School Counselor Compared to National Averages

In 2014, the joint report titled, Developmental Counseling Model for Illinois Schools Guidelines for Program Development and Recommended Practices & Procedures for School Counselors Illinois was created. Through the partnership efforts of the Counselor Educators and Supervisors, Illinois School Counselor Association and the Illinois Counseling Association in consultation with Illinois State Board of Education a roadmap to student success in Illinois was suggested. We face a major shortage of School Counselors across the State of Illinois. The American School Counselor Association recommends a ratio of 1 School Counselor to every 250 students. Illinois ranks in the bottom 90% nationally with School Counselor to student ratio upon comparison to all 50 states (U. S. Department of Education). *As of 2013, the ratio of School Counselors to students was lower only in 5-6% of the total United States.* This means there is, on average, one professional School Counselor (School Counselors) to every 701 students leaving only 5 states with lower ratios than Illinois.

Table 3. States and School Counselor (SC) Grade Level Mandates

State Mandate for Districts to hire School Counselors Y/N	IL	IA	WI	NE	VA	ND
Elementary SC	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Middle SC	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
High School SC	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mandated Ratio of School Counselors per district	n/a	1:350	n/a	1:350	1:350	1:300

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As indicated above, 64% of States have created state mandates regarding the employment of School Counselors at varying grade levels. 75% of these states require the numbers of School Counselor to student ratios. The purpose of this illustration is to stress the imperative role of the School Counselor in the school settings and the current ‘status quo’ of School Counselor presence in the school system.

Funding

In the entire United States, most choose to require a comprehensive school counseling system be in place [Table 3]. We have included a map highlighting states which require school counseling services. Illinois suggests that school districts have school counseling services and Illinois law defines what those services may be but there is no requirement for those services or that the services be provided by qualified School Counselors.

States encourage comprehensive school counseling programs be implemented in a variety of ways. Some states require that schools provide “comprehensive school counseling services or require every school to have School Counselors” (Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, Tennessee and Wisconsin are among the 32 states with required school counseling services) some states provide financial incentives to schools providing School Counselors (Missouri) and some states specify a minimum number of School Counselors based upon the student population (Nebraska, North Dakota, Virginia are among at least 9 states requiring a specific ratio of School Counselors to students ranging from 1:300 to 1:450). The ratio in Illinois averages 1:701. This ranks Illinois 45th (or 5 from the bottom.) A few states specify specific responsibilities and detail the required services that must be provided and is incorporated into the school district accreditation process (Nebraska).

One of the best examples is Iowa:

“The board of directors of each school district shall establish a K-12 comprehensive school counseling program, driven by student data and based on standards in academic, career, personal, and social areas, which supports the student achievement goals of the total school curriculum and to which all students have equitable access.”

This document provides additional details on the benefits to students and their social, emotional, career and academic achievement when they receive services from a comprehensive school counseling model provided by qualified and licensed School Counselors.

Alabama details a comprehensive, outcome-based school counseling model for all schools.

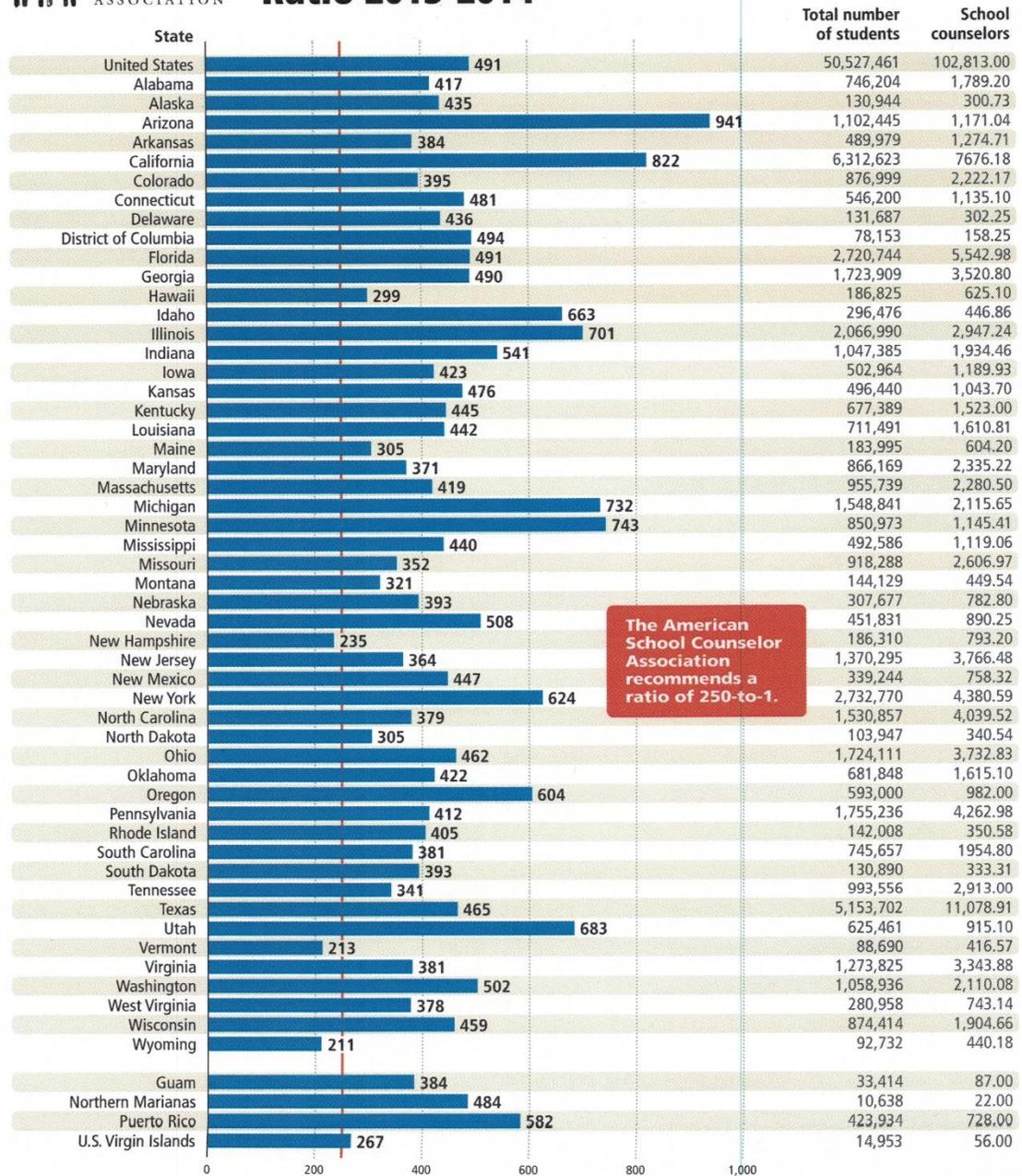
Delaware requires every school in each district to implement a comprehensive school counseling program aligned with the American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) National Model.

Illinois needs to examine where to best spend its financial resources for education and what services will provide the most cost/benefit results.

Ratios



Student-to-School-Counselor Ratio 2013-2014



The American School Counselor Association recommends a ratio of 250-to-1.

DATA SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS, COMMON CORE OF DATA (CCD), "STATE NONFISCAL PUBLIC ELEMENTARY/SECONDARY EDUCATION SURVEY", 2013-14 v1.a.

Conclusion and Future Recommendations

School Counselors must be added to the revised Illinois Support Personnel funding formula. They will increase the types of support services as stated in the ASCA beliefs, for **all students**. Equity and access to support services are requirements of the School Counselor's ethical standards. This means marginalized or at risk students who may feel unsupported in the school system or as if they do not belong, can feel a sense of belonging and benefit from hiring even one School Counselor at each developmental level (PK-12). School Counselors have the tools and resources available to them in the comprehensive model and can address these issues directly.

The information presented here is a survey of current research supporting the real-world schoolwide impact on students' success when School Counselors are present and provided resources to implement a comprehensive program model. In Illinois, the costs of not having School Counselors at all grade levels far outweigh the benefits of hiring even one per grade level building. Beginning with elementary counselors (Wilkerson, Perusse, & Hughes, 2013), there are noticeable differences on math and standardized scores as compared to schools without this valuable asset. The program model does not require additional money; all School Counselors are trained with this model. It does require key stakeholder support for the model to fully materialize and is detailed in the remainder of this paper.

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Some basic recommendations from ASCA (2016) to maximize the use of the school's counselor in the school system and when implementing a comprehensive school counseling program. Basic requirements are

1. 1:250 School Counselor to Student Ratio.
2. Administration who may serve as an advocate and proponent for the program implementation.
3. Increased participation in school day tasks directly related to the ASCA Model.
4. Reduction in non-School Counselor related activities (i.e., testing, discipline, case management and scheduling).
5. School-wide understanding about the roles and responsibilities of the Professional School Counselor.

Largely increased awareness and knowledge of the model capacities among faculty and administration can be the initial investment of the school and or/district.

Lapan, Gysbers, and Kayson (2006) developed some effective ways of developing and implementing school counseling programs in Missouri. Missouri's state model of Comprehensive School Counseling is one of the prototypes of the national models. Thus, the model has evolved over time and lessons have been learned. The founders of the model, Lapan and Gysbers, co-authored, along with Kayson (2006) additional tricks to effective programs. They suggest a pk-12 district-wide policy in writing, allowing School Counselors to spend 100% of their time working with students, parents, teachers and administrators to engage in model relevant tasks, opportunity for leadership. Again, these recommendations have virtually no cost but do

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require key stakeholder support at the state, regional, and district level for the value of the School Counselor's contribution. Appendix A contains additional resources with major finding supporting the impact and necessary role School Counselors play in the school system.

Armed with these model recommendations, professional School Counselors make a measurable difference in the overall school improvement plan. Second, they collect and can provide valuable data to demonstrate the model's efficacy in the school they are working. Finally, they continue to refine their targeted interventions and are accountable for the implementation of these systems-a piece that speak to the new requirements in the ESSA report card in the areas of college and career readiness and social emotional learning. ***“School Counselors are no longer a luxury; they are a necessity.” (Hatch, 2016)***

**Appendix: A Collection of Annotated Research
on the Efficacy of School Counseling**

Amatea, E. S., Thompson, I. A., Rankin-Clemons, L., & Ettinger, M. L. (2010). **Becoming partners: A school-based group intervention for families of young children who are disruptive.** *Journal of School Counseling, 8*(36). Retrieved from <http://www.jsc.montana.edu/articles/v8n36.pdf>

A multiple family discussion group program was implemented and evaluated by School Counselors working with families of young children referred by their teachers^[11] for aggression and attention problems. The logic guiding construction of the program and the program's unique aspects are described. Outcome data revealed that the program was effective in reducing the children's hyperactive, de ant, and aggressive behavior and improving the parents' management skills. The advantages of School Counselors conducting this program are discussed.

Balasco, Andrew S. (2013) **Creating College Opportunity: School Counselors and Their Influence on Postsecondary Enrollment.** *Research in Higher Education, 54* (7), 781-804. Retrieved from: <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11162-013-9297-4>.

School Counselors are the primary facilitators of college transition for many students, yet little is known about their influence on college-going behavior. Analyzing data from the Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002, this study employs coarsened exact matching and multilevel modeling to examine the effects of student-counselor visits on postsecondary enrollment, as well as determine whether the effects of such visits vary by

socioeconomic background.

Berger, C. (2013). **Bringing out the Brilliance: A counseling intervention for underachieving students.** *Professional School Counseling, 17* (1), 86-96. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2013-17.80

This study evaluated the impact of a small group counseling intervention designed for students who underachieve. The results of the study demonstrated significant improvement for ninth- and tenth-grade underachieving students in the areas of organizational skills, time management, and motivation. The author discusses implications and recommendations for School Counselors working with underachieving students.

Bruce, A. M., Getch, Y. Q., & Ziomek-Daigle, J. (2009). **Closing the gap: A group counseling approach to improve test performance of African-American students.** *Professional School Counseling, 12* (6), 450-457. doi:10.5330/PSC.n.2010-12.450

This article evaluated the impact of a group counseling intervention on African-American students' achievement rates during the spring administration of high- stakes testing at a rural high school in Georgia. Eighty percent of eligible students who participated in the intervention received passing scores on the four sections tested during the spring administration of the Georgia High School Graduation Tests (GHS GT), and all participating students received passing scores on the English Language Arts and Math sections of the GHS GT.

Bryan, J., Holcomb-McCoy, C., Moore-Thomas, C., & Day- Vines, N. L. (2009). **Who sees the School Counselor for college information?** *Professional School Counseling, 12* (4), 280-

291. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2010-12.280

Using the 2002 Educational Longitudinal Study database, a national survey conducted by the National Center of Education Statistics, the authors investigated the characteristics of students who seek out professional School Counselors in order to receive college information. Results indicated that African Americans and female students were more likely to contact^[1] the School Counselor for college information.

Bryan, J., Moore-Thomas, C., Day-Vines, N. L., & Holcomb- McCoy, C. (2011). **School Counselors as social capital: The effects of high school college counseling on college application rates.** *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 89 (2), 190-199. doi: 10.1002/j.1556-6678.2011.tb00077.x

Using social capital theory as a framework, the authors examined data from the Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002 (Ingels, Pratt, Rogers, Siegel, & Stutts, 2004) to investigate how student contact with high School Counselors about college information and other college-related variables influence students' college application rates. In addition to some college-related variables, the number of School Counselors and student contacts were significant predictors of college application rates. Implications for School Counselors and counselor training are included.

Carey, J., & Dimmitt, C. (2012). **School counseling and student outcomes: Summary of six statewide studies.** *Professional School Counseling, 16* (2), 146-153. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2012-16.146

This article presents a summary of the six studies featured in this issue of *Professional School Counseling*. These studies use different designs, instruments, and measures and can be integrated to answer various questions related to effective practice in the field of school counseling. They provide valuable examples of the relationship between positive student-to-school-counselor ratios, counselor time use, and specific school counseling activities. These studies should be considered important contributions to a growing body of research indicating the effectiveness of data-driven school counseling programs.

Carey, J., Harrington, K., Marin, I., & Hoffman, D. (2012). **A state-wide evaluation of the outcomes of the implementation of ASCA National Model school counseling programs in rural and suburban Nebraska high schools.** *Professional School Counseling, 16* (2), 100-107. doi: 10.5330/psc.n.2012-16.100

A statewide evaluation of school counseling programs in rural and suburban Nebraska high schools investigated which features of the ASCA National Model were related to student educational outcomes. The authors used hierarchical linear regression and Pearson correlations to explore relationships between program characteristics and student outcomes. Analyses suggested that school counseling program features accounted for statistically significant portions of the variance in a number of important student outcomes.

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Carrell, S. E., & Hoekstra, M. (2014). **Are School Counselors an effective educational input?**

Economic Letters, 125, 66-69. doi: 10.1016/j.econlet.2014.07.020

We exploit within-school variation in counselors and that one additional counselor reduces student misbehavior and increases boys' academic achievement by over one percentile point. These effects compare favorably with those of increased teacher quality and smaller class sizes.

Cole, Rebekah and Grothaus, Tim. (2010). **Meeting the Challenges Together: School**

Counselors Collaborating with Students and Families with Low Income. *Journal of*

School Counseling 8 (27). Retrieved from:

<http://www.alsde.edu/dept/data/Pages/foundationreports-all.aspx>

Given the disproportionately dire educational outcome data for students from families with low income, School Counselors are challenged to advocate, educate, and collaborate with stakeholders to address the pernicious and prevalent achievement and access gaps. After an examination of the inequitable current conditions for these students and families, School Counselor facilitation of school-family partnerships is explored. In addition, School Counselor roles in challenging biases, educating stakeholders, and engaging in advocacy for these students and families are discussed.

Cross, J. E., & Peisner, W. (2009). **RECOGNIZE: A social norms campaign to reduce rumor**

spreading in a junior high school. *Professional School Counseling*, 12 (5), 365-377. doi:

10.5330/PSC.n.2010-12.365

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This article studied changes in rumor spreading and perceptions of peers' rumor spreading among students at one public junior high school following a social norms marketing campaign. Results of the study show that perceptions of peer rumor spreading fell following the campaign, but self-reports of rumor spreading did not decrease. Results suggest that a social norms marketing campaign conducted by a professional School Counselor and delivered to students in a junior high can reduce misperceptions of negative social behaviors.

Curtis, R., Van Horne, J. W., Robertson, P., & Karvonen, M. (2010). **Outcomes of a school-wide positive behavioral support program.** *Professional School Counseling, 13* (3), 159-164.
doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2010-13.159

School-wide positive behavioral support (SWPBS) programs are becoming an increasingly popular and effective way to reduce behavioral disruptions in schools. Results from a 4-year study examining the effects of an SWPBS program in a public elementary school indicated significant reductions in percentages of behavioral referrals, suspensions, and instructional days lost, but the effect sizes were small. Implications for School Counselors and future research are discussed.

Data Center Foundation Reports FY 2017. (2016). *Alabama State Department of Education.*

Retrieved from: <http://www.alsde.edu/dept/data/Pages/foundationreports-all.aspx>.

This webpage provides the foundation reports for the 2017 fiscal year in Alabama.

Davis, P., Davis, M. P., & Mobley, J. A. (2013). **The School Counselor's role in addressing the**

Advanced Placement equity and excellence gap for African American students.

Professional School Counseling, 17 (1), 32-39. doi: 10.5330/ PSC.n.2013-17.32

This study describes the collaboration among a School Counselor, a School Counselor intern, an Advanced Placement Psychology teacher, and a counselor educator to improve African American access to Advanced Placement (AP) coursework and increase success on the AP Psychology national examination.

Dimmitt, C., & Wilkerson, B. (2012). **Comprehensive school counseling in Rhode Island:**

Access to services and student outcomes. *Professional School Counseling*, 16 (2), 125-135. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2012-16.125

This study explored relationships among school counseling practices, secondary school demographics, and student outcomes in the state of Rhode Island during a 2-year period. The results showed strong and consistent correlations between increased amounts of school counseling services and positive student outcomes. Schools with higher percentages of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch status and with higher percentages of minority students provided fewer comprehensive counseling services for their students.

Erickson, A., & Abel, N. R. (2013). **A high School Counselor's leadership in providing school-**

wide screenings for depression and enhancing suicide awareness. *Professional School Counseling*, 16 (5), 283-289. doi: 10.5330/psc.n.2013-16.283

The prevalence of mental health issues and suicidal thoughts and actions among school-aged children and adolescents is a serious issue. This article examines the scope of the

problem nationwide and provides a brief overview of the literature regarding the effectiveness of school-wide screening programs for depression and suicide risk.

Goodman-Scott, E. (2013). **Maximizing School Counselors' efforts by implementing school-wide positive behavioral interventions.** *Professional School Counseling, 17* (1), 111-119.

School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) are school-wide, data-driven frameworks^[1] for promoting safe schools and student learning. This article explains PBIS and provides practical examples of PBIS implementation by describing a School Counselor-run PBIS framework in one elementary school, as part of a larger, district-wide initiative. The author discusses implications for School Counselors, including maximizing School Counselors' efforts to best serve every student by integrating PBIS into existing school counseling programs.

Hurwitz, M., & Howell, J. (2014). **Estimating causal impacts of School Counselors with regression discontinuity designs.** *Journal of Counseling & Development, 92* (3), 316-327.^[1]doi: 10.1002/j.1556-6667.2014.00159.x

This article presents a causal regression discontinuity framework for quantifying the impact of high School Counselors on students' education outcomes. To demonstrate this method, the authors used data from the National Center for Education Statistics' Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS). Using high School Counselor staffing counts and 4-year college-going rates collected through the SASS, the authors found that an additional high

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School Counselor is predicted to induce a 10 percentage point increase in 4-year college enrollment.

Kayler, H., & Sherman, J. (2009). **At-risk ninth-grade students: A psychoeducational group approach to increase study skills and grade point averages.** *Professional School Counseling, 12* (6), 434- 439. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2010-12.434

The purpose of this article is to describe a large-scale psychoeducational study skills group for ninth-grade students whose academic performance is in the bottom 50 percent of their class. The ASCA National Model® (American School Counselor Association, 2005) was used as a framework for development, delivery, and evaluation. The authors found that a small-group counseling intervention strengthened studying behaviors as measured by pretest-posttest design. Additional results include promoting School Counselor visibility and increasing and improving School Counselor relationships with students, parents, and other stakeholders.

Krell, M., & Perusse, R. (2012). **Providing college readiness counseling for students with autism spectrum disorders: A Delphi study to guide School Counselors.** *Professional School Counseling, 16* (1), 29-39. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2012-16.29

This study used the Delphi method to examine School Counselors' roles for providing equitable college readiness counseling for students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). Participants included an expert panel of 19 individuals with experience and knowledge in postsecondary transition for students with ASD.

Lapan, R. T., Whitcomb, S. A., & Aleman, N. M. (2012). **Connecticut professional School Counselors: College and career counseling services and smaller ratios benefit students.** *Professional School Counseling, 16* (2), 117-124. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2012-16.124

Results connect the implementation of the college and career counseling components of a comprehensive school counseling program and lower student-to-school-counselor ratios to a reduction in suspension rates and disciplinary incidents for Connecticut high school students. Principal^[1]_{SEP} ratings of college and career counseling services provided in their school extended benefits for students to include better attendance and graduation rates, as well as lower disciplinary incidents and suspension rates. This article highlights the importance of college and career counseling services and smaller ratios for promoting student success.

Lapan, R. T., Gysbers, N. C., Bragg, S., & Pierce, M. E. (2012). **Missouri professional School Counselors: Ratios matter, especially in high-poverty schools.** *Professional School Counseling, 16* (2), 108-116. doi:10.5330/PSC.n.2012-16.108

Results link lower student-to-school-counselor ratios to better graduation rates and lower disciplinary incidents across Missouri high schools. An interaction favorable for promoting student success in school was found between increasing percentages of students receiving free or reduced-price lunch and smaller student-to-school-counselor ratios. In high-poverty schools, those schools that met the ASCA criteria of having at least one professional School Counselor for every 250 students had better graduation and school attendance rates, and lower disciplinary incidents.

Leon, A., Villares, E., Brigman, G., Webb, L., & Peluso, P. (2011). **Closing the achievement gap of Latina/Latino students: A school counseling response.** *Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation*, 2 (1), 73-86. doi: 10.1177/2150137811400731

This article addresses the achievement gap of Latina/ Latino students and evaluates the impact of a Spanish culturally translated classroom program, delivered by bilingual/bicultural School Counselors in 45-min lessons and three booster lessons.

Malott, K. M., Paone, T. R., Humphreys, K., & Martinez, T. (2010). **Use of group counseling to address ethnic identity development: Application with adolescents of Mexican descent.** *Professional School Counseling*, 13 (5), 257-267. doi: 10.5330/ PSC.n.2010-13.257

This article provides qualitative outcomes from a group counseling intervention whose goal was to facilitate^{[[[}the ethnic identity development of Mexican-origin youth.

Outcomes revealed that participants perceived group participation as meaningful. Themes that emerged from the data included the importance of the relationship to engender change, growth in several aspects of ethnic identity (knowledge of culture, traits, and ethnic pride), and increased relational skills.

Marsico, M., & Getch, Y. Q. (2009). **Transitioning Hispanic seniors from high school to college.** *Professional School Counseling*, 12 (6), 458-462. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2010-12.458

Hispanic seniors who were on track to graduate in May 2006 were invited to participate in

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a program to help them make a successful transition from high school to college. Data indicated that this group might benefit from direct assistance in the college application process. The goal of the intervention was to work with the identified students during the fall semester and to increase the number of Hispanic students who applied to college

Militello, M., Carey, J., Dimmitt, C., Lee, V., & Schweid, J. (2009). **Identifying exemplary school counseling practices in nationally recognized high schools.** *Journal of School Counseling, 7* (13), 1-26. Retrieved from <http://www.jsc.montana.edu/articles/v7n13.pdf>

The National Center for School Counseling Outcome Research (CSCOR) at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst studied exemplary practices of 18 high schools that received recognition for college preparation and placement in 2004 and 2005. Through interviews with key personnel at each of the high schools, the researchers generated a set of ten domains that characterize the work of the School Counselor that seem to be related to improved student enrollment in post-secondary institutions.

Pham, C., & Keenan, T. (2011). **Counseling and college matriculation: Does the availability of counseling affect college-going decisions among highly qualified first-generation college-bound high school graduates?** *Journal of Applied Economics and Business Research, 1* (1), 12-24.

This study examined a unique angle of the relationship between high school counseling and college matriculation by investigating the association between the availability of counseling services to first-generation students and the odds of a highly-qualified student not enrolling in a four-year college (referred to as a mismatch between qualifications and

college attended).

Reback, R. (2010). **Schools' mental health services and young children's emotions, behavior, and learning.** *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 29 (4), 698-727. doi: 10.1002/pam

Recent empirical research has found that children's noncognitive skills play a critical role in their own success, young children's behavioral and psychological disorders can severely harm their future outcomes, and disruptive students harm the behavior and learning of their classmates. Yet relatively little is known about wide scale interventions designed to improve children's behavior and mental health. This is the first nationally representative study of the provision, financing, and impact of school-site mental health services for young children.

Rose, J., & Steen, S. (2014). **The Achieving Success Everyday group counseling model: Fostering resiliency in middle school students.** *Professional School Counseling*, 18 (1), 28-37.

This article discusses a group counseling intervention used to develop and foster resiliency in middle school students by implementing the Achieving Success Everyday (ASE)_{SEP} group counseling model. The authors aimed to discover what impact this group counseling intervention, which focused on resiliency characteristics, would have on students' academic and personal-social success.

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Salina, C., Girtz, S., Eppinga, J., Martinez, D., Blumer Kilian, D., Lozano, E., Shines, T. (2013).

All hands on deck: A comprehensive, results-driven counseling model. *Professional School Counseling*, 17 (1), 63-75. doi: 10.5330/ PSC.n.2014-17.63

A graduation rate of 49% alarmed Sunnyside High School in 2009. With graduation rates in the bottom 5% statewide, Sunnyside was awarded a federally funded School Improvement Grant. The “turnaround” principal and the School Counselors aligned goals with the ASCA National Model through the program All Hands On Deck (AHOD), based on academic press, social support, and relational trust. In 2012, 78.8% of students graduated. This case study describes student success resulting from the counselor-led program AHOD for School Counselors and suggestions for future research are discussed.

Savitz-Romer, Mandy. (2008). **The Urban Challenge.** *ASCA School Counselor*. Retrieved from <http://www.schoolcounselor.org/magazine/blogs/november-december-2008/the-urban-challenge>

This article focuses on the needs of urban students in regards to college preparation. It discusses the importance of using the ASCA National Model, and the importance of School Counselors in the lives of urban students.

School Counselor Corps Grant Program. (2016). *Colorado Department of Education*. Retrieved from: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/schoolcounselorcorps>

This is a webpage highlighting the available 2017 School Counselor grant programs

available and the positive impact these programs have in secondary schools.

Steen, S. (2009). **Group counseling for African American elementary students: An exploratory study.** *Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 34 (2), 101-117. doi: 10.1080/01933920902791929

This article describes a group counseling intervention promoting academic achievement and ethnic identity development for twenty fifth grade African American elementary students. The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) scores of students participating in the treatment group improved significantly over those in the control group. Implications

Steen, S., Henfield, M. S., & Booker, B. (2014). **The Achieving Success Everyday group counseling model: Implications for professional School Counselors.** *Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 39 (1), 29-46. doi: 10.1080/01933922.2013.861886

This article presents the Achieving Success Everyday (ASE) group counseling model, which is designed to help School Counselors integrate students' academic and personal-social development into their group work. We first describe this group model in detail and then offer one case example of a middle School Counselor using the ASE model to conduct a group counseling intervention in a school setting. Finally, implications for School Counselors are presented.

SF 1384 (2016). *Minnesota State Legislature*. Retrieved from:

https://www.revisor.mn.gov/bills/text.php?number=SF1364&version=0&session_year=2015&session_number=0

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This bill establishes a grant program to increase student support services personnel in Minnesota schools; establishing a grant program to provide funding for postsecondary institutions that train student support services personnel, appropriating money, and proposing coding for new law in Minnesota statutes.

Villares, E., Lemberger, M., Brigman, G., & Webb, L. (2011). **Student Success Skills: An evidence-based school counseling program grounded in humanistic theory.** *Journal of Humanistic Counseling, 50*, 42-55. doi: 10.1002/j.2161-1939.2011.tb00105.x

The Student Success Skills program is an evidence-based, counselor-led intervention founded on a variety of humanistic principles. Five studies and a recent meta-analysis provide evidence that integrating human potential practices into the school by teaching students foundational learning skills strengthens the link between school counseling interventions and student achievement.

Watkinson, J. S., & Hersi, A. A. (2014). **School Counselors supporting African immigrant students' career development: A case study.** *The Career Development Quarterly, 62*, 44-55. doi: 10.1002/j.2161-0045.2014.00069.x

School Counselors play a critical role in preparing adolescent immigrant students to be college and career ready^[1] by attending to the complex variables that promote and inhibit career development. This article provides an illustrative case study of a Somali immigrant student's educational journey^[2] to highlight the academic and familial challenges that she

encountered while attending U.S. schools.

Whiston, S. C., & Quinby, R. F. (2009). **Review of school counseling outcome research.**

Psychology in the Schools, 46 (3), 267-272. doi: 10.1002/pits.20372

This article is somewhat unique in this special^[1]_{SEP} issue as it focuses on the effectiveness of an array of school counseling interventions and not solely on individual and group counseling. In summarizing the school counseling outcome literature, the authors found that students who participated^[1]_{SEP} in school counseling interventions tended to score on various outcome measures about a third of a standard deviation above those who did not receive the interventions.

Whiston, S. C., Tai, W. L., Rahardja, D., & Eder, K. (2011). **School counseling outcome: A**

meta-analytic examination of interventions. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 89 (1), 37-55. doi: 10.1002/j.1556-6678.2011.tb00059.x

The effectiveness of school counseling interventions is important in this era of evidence-based practices. In this study, Meta-Analysis 1 involved treatment-control comparisons and Meta-Analysis 2 involved pretest-posttest differences. The overall average weighted effect size for school counseling interventions was .30. The study examined whether pertinent moderator variables influenced effect sizes. The pretest- posttest effect size was not significant, so moderator analyses were conducted on treatment-control comparisons. Analyses of moderator variables indicated school counseling program activities or interventions varied in effectiveness.

Wilkerson, K., Perusse, R., & Hughes, A. (2013). **Comprehensive school counseling programs and student achievement outcomes: A comparative analysis of RAMP versus non-RAMP schools.** *Professional School Counseling, 16* (3), 172- 184. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2013-16.172

This study compares school-wide Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) results in Indiana schools earning the Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP) designation^[1]($n = 75$) with a sample of control schools stratified by level and locale ($n = 226$). K-12 schools earning the RAMP designation in 2007, 2008, and 2009 comprise the experimental group. Findings indicate that school-wide proficiency rates in English/ Language Arts and Math are significantly higher in RAMP- designated elementary schools compared to elementary controls. Four-year longitudinal results indicate a significant positive difference between RAMP-designated elementary schools and their controls in Math. Findings provide support for the impact of comprehensive, data-driven, accountable school counseling programs at the elementary level and suggest further research needed at the middle and secondary levels.

Wyatt, S. (2009). **The Brotherhood: Empowering adolescent African-American males toward excellence.** *Professional School Counseling, 12* (6), 463-470. doi: 10.5330/PSC.n.2010-12.463

A review of the literature reveals that African- American males do not achieve at the same academic levels as their White counterparts. This article reports the effectiveness of a

school-based male mentoring program established by a professional School Counselor in an urban high school that formed a relationship of support for male students enhancing academic achievement.

Ziomek-Dagle, et. al. (2016). **Integrating a Multi-Tiered System of Supports with**

Comprehensive School Counseling Programs. *The Professional Counselor* 6 (3). 220-232. doi:10.15241/jzd.6.3.220.

The purpose of this article is to discuss both a multi-tiered system of supports and comprehensive school counseling programs, demonstrating the overlap between the two frameworks. Specific similarities include: leadership team and collaboration, coordinated services, School Counselor roles, data collection, evidence-based practices, equity, cultural responsiveness, advocacy, prevention, positive school climate, and systemic change.

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