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Perceptions of Georgia School Counselors on the Implementation of a Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program and Accountability

Victoria Nauful Sanders

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PERCEPTIONS OF GEORGIA SCHOOL COUNSELORS ON THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING
PROGRAM AND ACCOUNTABILITY

by

VICTORIA NAUFUL SANDERS

(Under the Direction of Michael D. Richardson)

ABSTRACT

In the era of accountability, school counselors are under pressure to accurately determine their role. No Child Left Behind has created standards that are tied to and driven by accountability and academic standards. School counselors' roles and responsibilities vary from district to district and from school to school. School counselors are often asked to perform duties that are not congruent with the curriculum they are asked to implement. The Georgia Curriculum for counselors has outlined tasks, duties, and responsibilities for school counselors. The task dimensions are aligned with the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) model and defines roles and tasks that are appropriate and inappropriate for school counselors. The purpose of this study was to determine to what extent school counselors in Georgia are implementing the state Guidance Curriculum.

Georgia school counselors who are members of ASCA were sent surveys via email and were asked to click on a link that directed them to a site for them to respond to the survey. The number of actual delivered emails was 328 and the return rate was 33.84%. School counselors were asked a series of questions that asked them to respond to items that listed a variety of tasks and duties that are listed as part of the state guidance

curriculum. Included in the survey were tasks and duties that, according to ASCA are deemed inappropriate for counselors to perform. Counselors' response to the survey items determined their beliefs regarding the tasks they perform on a daily/weekly basis and if they believe specific tasks they perform have an impact on student achievement. The findings of this study indicated that the majority of Georgia school counselors who responded to the survey are implementing the Georgia curriculum. The results also indicated that counselors believe that many of the tasks and duties they perform have an impact on student achievement. In addition to these findings, it was determined by counselor report that Georgia school counselors are still performing some inappropriate clerical and administrative tasks.

INDEX WORDS: School counselors, Accountability, Comprehensive guidance and counseling programs, Counselor's role

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PROGRAM AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to the memory of my parents, Ernest J. and Elizabeth Joseph Nauful who through their love and sacrifices instilled in all of their children a love of education, a strong sense of values and respect for our heritage, and beliefs that encouraged us to always be our best. To my brothers and sisters, through good times and bad, through both conditional and unconditional love, inspired me to live my convictions, to be strong, and move forward with determination.

I also dedicate this dissertation in honor of my daughter Rose Elizabeth Sanders, who has taught me to love unconditionally, to my son Ignatius H. Sanders, Jr. (Nish), whose love and smile and have taught me that humor is the food of the soul; to my grandchildren Tyler Harris Hopkins and Andrew Joseph Hopkins, who enrich my life each and every day; and finally, to my husband Ignatius Harris Sanders, Sr. whose love, support, and constant encouragement led me on this path and helped me to succeed. Without the love and support of my family, this degree would not have been possible.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The changing role of the school counselor is one that those in the profession are still struggling to understand and with its many facets, have yet to embrace. Even though school counseling has been around since the middle of the 20th century, counselors are still trying to define and refine their roles in the schools (Dahir, 2004). Professional school counselors have traditionally performed a variety of tasks and depending on the observers' role in the school be it teacher, principal, parent, or student, their expectations of what a school counselor is expected to do can be just as varied (Hardy, 1999). With the current school reform movement, counselors are expected to take on their own unique role in working with other school professionals to support student achievement and meet accountability standards (Brown, 1999).

Historical Perspective

Historically, school counseling has its roots in the vocational guidance movement of the early part of the 20th century. Pioneered by Frank Parsons and established in major school systems by others such as Eli Weaver and Jesse B. Davis, the main focus of vocational guidance was to match youth with jobs (Erford, 2004; Gysbers, 1994; Myrick, 1997). As the century progressed and technology expanded, Congress passed the National Defense Act of 1958, which led to funds being provided for school counselor preparation programs (Myrick, 1997; Gysbers, 1994). As a result, by the 1960s and 1970s more counselors were being placed in the schools. With the focus on developmental guidance and the emergence of more school counselors, the role and function of the school counselor was being developed (Gysbers, 1994).

The Counselor's Role

The school counselor's role has evolved since the 1970s from one that provided vocational guidance to students, to one of remediation and crisis response in the 1980s and 1990s, and currently to a role of intervention and prevention (American School Counseling Association (ASCA), (2004). Gysbers and Henderson (1994) stated that the need to evaluate guidance programs, as well as a process for assessing the school counselor's impact on student achievement, has existed for quite some time. With school reform and accountability initiatives at the forefront of education, the need to assess and evaluate counselor effectiveness in promoting student achievement is especially valid (ASCA, 2004; Gysbers, 2004; Gysbers & Henderson, 1994). Fairfield (1993) surveyed school counselors across the nation and counselors were asked to what extent they used data methods to assess the accountability of guidance programs. Although the majority of counselors responded that they gathered accountability data, fewer stated that the data was used to define or drive guidance programs (Fairfield).

Current school reform has contributed to redefining the role of the school counselor. The American School Counseling Association (2004), defines the school counselor as a professional whose role is multifaceted. The counselor's role is one that encompasses advocating for student success, working in collaboration with other school professionals, and understanding and interpreting data that can be used to promote academic achievement. Counselors continue to perform duties that are commiserate with student support services, such as addressing the social/emotional and developmental needs of students while promoting a safe school environment that is conducive to learning (ASCA).

Ponec and Brock (2000), discussed how the role of the school counselor has seen dramatic changes over the last several years. Due to the many challenges that No Child Left Behind has brought to schools there is a need for collaboration between the principal and the school counselor (Niebuhr, Niebuhr, & Cleveland, 1999). As is often the case, the school counselor has become the second in command and a close ally of the principal in addressing a variety of school-related issues. It is reasonable to assume that the counselor's role in supporting academic programs has become more important and their collaboration with principals crucial to student success (Niebuhr, Niebuhr, & Cleveland, 1999; Shoffner & Williamson, 2000). But, Thompson, Loesch, and Seraphine (2003), stated that it is extremely difficult for counselors to communicate to principals exactly what their role is in the schools and principals are not sure exactly what school counselors are supposed to do. Many professional school counselors are still functioning as highly paid secretarial staff in the execution of their daily duties (Thompson, et al.). In order for counselors to perform to their fullest potential as trained professionals, counselors must educate school principals as to what their role is in its truest sense (Martin, 2002; Lambie & Williamson, 2004).

Guidance and Counseling Programs

Ponec and Brock (2000), stated that guidance and counseling programs are new to many elementary schools and the principal's support of comprehensive guidance and counseling programs determine their effectiveness and success. Educators in Virginia have known for some time the importance of counselors in the schools and as a result, counselors have been mandated in all elementary schools since 1983 (Pascopelia, 2004). In Virginia schools, educators rely on counselors to work on the frontline with children to

see that they adjust to school early on and learn to cope with difficult issues throughout their elementary years. The guidance programs that are implemented in elementary school in turn help children to perform better and transition better to the upper grades where the demands and pressures are greater (Pascopelia; Virginia Public Schools, 2004).

Georgia law (GDOE, 2005), states that school counselors are to provide counseling services to students (or parents) for “five of six segments of each school day” (§ 1). The State of Georgia has also outlined state defined roles and responsibilities for counselors (GDOE, 2005). Under these roles and responsibilities, counselors are to have in place a school-based guidance plan, and an individual plan of action and are to implement a guidance curriculum and deliver counseling services in the areas of “self-knowledge, educational and occupation exploration, and career planning to facilitate academic achievement” (GDOE, § 2). The guidance and counseling curriculum also dictates that counselors should serve as collaborators with other school personnel in the delivery of services as well act as a consultant to other school entities in promoting student success (GDOE).

Another aspect of the Georgia guidance curriculum is its alignment with the ASCA National Model for school counselors and the distinction between what is considered appropriate and inappropriate tasks for school counselors. This model lists a variety of duties and responsibilities that are appropriate for school counselors to perform and just as specifically outlines those duties and tasks that are deemed inappropriate for counselors to perform in a school setting (ASCA, 2005; GDOE, 2005).

Accountability

The competing force that drives accountability is No Child Left Behind in addition to an accountability standard known as Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) (U.S. Department of Education, 2005). Although No Child Left Behind is a controversial topic and there exists much opposition to its overshadowing mandates, educators such as school counselors have found themselves working overtime to define their role and to fit into the accountability equation (Dahir, 2004; Kymes, 2004).

Brigman and Campbell (2003), stated that No Child Left Behind calls upon educators to use interventions that are empirically based to support student achievement. Brigman and Campbell stated that interventions are part of the guidance and counseling curriculum that is implemented by school counselors. Dahir (2004), outlined Goals 4 and 5 of No Child Left Behind that required educators to address the issue of safe and drug free schools and to ensure high school graduation for all students. These goals, Dahir continued, are the “heart and soul of school counseling” (p. 352).

According to the U.S. Department of Education (ED.gov) (2002), No Child Left Behind, which is another label given to the Elementary and Secondary School Act of 2001, is “an act to close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice, so that no child is left behind” (§ 2). Part of this equation deals with schools meeting AYP and all of the indicators that are part of its makeup (ED.gov, 2005). The AYP mandate includes state-based-standards testing. If schools fail to meet any one standard, they do not make AYP. The school will then go on to the ‘needs improvement’ phase and are subject to a variety of sanctions if improvement is not made (National Education Association, 2005).

Accountability in education is not new. Asp (2000), points out that the first efforts at “external accountability” occurred in Boston in the mid 1800s under the direction of the Secretary of the State Board of Education, Horace Mann. The initial objective was to monitor the effectiveness of school programs and to develop a method that would allow teachers “to better meet the needs of the students” (p. 126). Though the idea of accountability is not something from which to shrink, it can be intimidating to many educators. Richardson and Lane (1997), assert that continuous improvement in education takes time, commitment, and effort. It is accomplished by “hundreds of small, positive, incremental changes implemented in schools over a multi-year period. Therefore, continuous improvement is about improving systems not attempting to locate or place blame” (p. 58).

Much controversy goes along with high stakes testing as a measure for student achievement as well as how the education mandates No Child Left Behind has affected public education. According to Hoff (2005), Texas is challenging many of the testing mandates set forth by No Child Left Behind and has set its own bar which has enabled most of the states schools to make AYP. Because the State of Texas is not following the strict guidelines that have been set by the legislation, they are jeopardizing millions and millions of dollars in federal money. The National Education Association (NEA), the largest teachers’ organization in the U.S., (NEA, 2005), decries No Child Left Behind as a mandate that is not funded by the lawmakers who have imposed it and that there are punishments without support and that No Child Left Behind focuses on testing rather than teaching.

In separate studies, Sink and Stroh (2002), and Stroh (2003), presented findings that investigated the impact of comprehensive school counseling programs (CGCP) on student success and student achievement. These findings supported the notion that over time, these programs had a positive effect on student achievement as measured by certain standardized tests. School districts are now integrating the role of school counselors into their efforts towards meeting the new national standards for school reform by promoting the programs that are implemented by many school counselors (Brown, 1999). These programs include counselors working with at-risk students, creating incentive programs for students, as well as identifying students who may participate in at-risk behaviors that may hinder their learning (Brown).

In 2003, the Education Trust, which was funded by the Dewitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund and MetLife Foundation, established the National Center for Transforming School Counseling (NCTSC). The NCTSC has promoted many of the initiatives that have influenced the changing role of the school counselor (Education Trust, 2003). The NCTSC's goal is to work with state departments of education in planning and conducting professional development, seminars and creating publications that are helping to drive school counselor reform. According to the NCTSC (2003), the guiding principles of the reform are to "ensure school counselors across the country are trained and ready to help ALL groups of students reach high academic standards" (§ 1). The Trust has also been involved in working with more than twenty-five American universities in assessing their counselor education programs that train school counselors. Selected universities across the U.S. have evaluated their school counseling preparation programs and are in the

process of making revisions to these programs in order to meet reform standards. Among these institutions is Georgia Southern University (Education Trust, 2003).

Stone and Clark (2001), stated that school counselors are both trained and possess the skills to collaborate with principals in promoting an environment for students that is emotionally and physically safe, thus creating an environment that will foster learning and achievement. In fact, Sink and Stroh (2003), stated that if the job description for school counselors were to include as part of it “the advancement of student achievement” that the gap between low achieving students and other students would “diminish” (p.7).

Breen and Quaglia (1991), asserted that school guidance and counseling programs that address students developmental and social/emotional needs support students’ aspirations and that principals and counselors need to work together to meet the needs of the students. When principals understand and support the school counselor’s role, counselors are better equipped to implement programs that will support the needs of the students (Breen & Quaglia).

Counselors and principals may view the role of the school counselor differently. Cummings (2002), stated that from a principal’s perspective the role of the school counselor is often administrative in nature and are often viewed as support personnel. When surveyed, Cummings found that principals perceived the counselor as someone to be called upon to perform a variety of administrative and clerical tasks and were expected to perform many non-counseling related duties. Due to the many other tasks that principals sometimes expect counselors to perform Cummings contends that many times there is little time for counselors to perform the counseling duties that students need. Lieberman (2004), noted that effective leadership in the schools can clarify much of the

confusion regarding the role of the school counselor. Lieberman continued that since principals are the leaders in the schools that it is contingent upon them to provide role clarity for all school personnel. Lieberman went on to say that when school leaders are able to offer support for appropriate roles for school counselors, school counselors are able to function in a way that is most beneficial to the student population.

Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2004), discussed the role of the principal in promoting student learning and achievement. The authors noted that the leadership role principals play impacts student achievement. In short, according to Waters, et al., leadership matters. When school leaders demonstrated an understanding of their own roles in shaping the culture and environment of a school, where learning was at the center, it impacted on student achievement (Waters, et al.).

Many times the sometimes-ambiguous role of what school counselors do in schools is dictated by school districts and this role definition is then dictated to school principals (Louis, 2001). Louis then suggested that because of role confusion, principals, who are not trained to understand how counselors are best utilized, must rely on counselors to educate them as to their role, which leads to uncertainty. Louis continued, that as new principals come into a school, the counselor must revisit, reeducate, and renegotiate their roles and responsibilities.

Counselors many times know first hand what goes on in the schools with both students and teachers. Because of their visibility they are more aware than others in the school of what issues need to be addressed in order to promote a positive school climate (Niebuhr, et al., 1999). It is reasonable to assume that the counselor's role in supporting

academic programs has become more important and their collaboration with principals crucial to student success (Niebuhr, et al.; Shoffner & Williamson, 2000).

According to Aluede and Imonikhe (2002), secondary school students and teachers agreed that school counselors are best in their roles as supporters of student achievement by implementing their knowledge, skills and attitudes that are commiserate with their role definition. Paisley and Hayes (2003), stated that today's school counselor is "envisioned to be a school leader who advocates for the academic, career, social, and personal success of every student" (p. 199).

There are a variety of factors that influence whether or not schools meet AYP standards. Because students today face a myriad of family and societal related issues, principals and teachers call upon the school counselor to assist them with dealing with the issues that interfere with student learning and ultimately achievement (Christiansen, 1997). Christiansen also noted that counselors are viewed as a major supporter within the school and many times help to bridge the gap that may exist among principals, teachers and students. Beesley (2004), stated that teachers also view the counselor's role as an important factor in the overall development of student success in the school.

Thompson, Loesch, and Seraphine (2003), stated that comprehensive-counseling programs should be data driven but pointed out that there is little evidence that school counselors conduct the necessary assessments that will guide them toward building better programs to meet the needs of students. Program assessment is a task that many counselors feel ill experienced to execute as well as to analyze the results.

Statement of the Problem

In the era of accountability and school reform school personnel have become likely stakeholders in the education of students. School reform has had an effect on the roles and responsibilities of the school counselor. The role of the school counselor has changed over the past several decades yet, there is still a great deal of ambiguity as to how they fit into school reform initiatives. Counselors are struggling to understand their changing role, while staying true to their traditional role of providing social/emotional support and individual and group counseling to the student populations at the elementary level. Counselor education training programs tend to focus on the clinical and therapeutic aspect of the counseling role often to the detriment of other counseling roles.

One of the problems associated with No Child Left Behind is that the counselor's role is still undefined. Schools are given the task of meeting accountability standards by demonstrating student proficiency in state mandated tests. Since counselors are viewed as support personnel, they are often called on to assist administrators and teachers to help students achieve proficiency on high stakes tests that are tied to accountability standards.

School counselors in the state of Georgia have been given a set curriculum to implement that encompasses tasks that are associated with the accountability standards that are attached to No Child Left Behind. Due to the multiplicity of roles that school counselors play and the fact that counselors are given duties to perform, many times they do not have the support to fully implement the state curriculum.

This researcher will examine the role of the school counselor in Georgia schools and to what degree counselors are implementing the state of Georgia guidance curriculum, how counselors view the impact of the curriculum on accountability

standards and how counselors view the relevancy of their daily tasks to both the curriculum and to accountability standards and student achievement.

Research Questions

In looking at the history of the school counselor and reviewing the many changes in the counselor's role over the past several years, the primary question that drove this study was: to what extent do Georgia school counselors implement the state mandated guidance curriculum?

The research questions that were addressed and answered in this study are as follows:

1. To what extent do Georgia school counselors rate the implementation of the various components of the state guidance curriculum?
2. To what extent do Georgia school counselors engage in the performance of inappropriate tasks?
3. To what degree of frequency do Georgia school counselors rate their performance of various tasks outlined in the Georgia guidance curriculum?
4. To what extent do the perceptions of Georgia school counselors differ by grade level and demographic setting on their implementation of the Georgia curriculum?
5. To what extent do Georgia school counselors perceive that the performance of specific tasks and duties support student achievement?

Significance of the Study

In the era of accountability, schools across the nation are feeling the pressure of meeting the demands of No Child Left Behind and finding ways to involve all members

of their staff in the process. School counselors have traditionally served a role that has not always been clearly defined and as a result are often given tasks that are not always part of their area of responsibility.

Counselors, who are all educated at the Master's level, are sometimes confused by their role as well and often are looking for ways to cement their position in the schools they are assigned. In the past, counselors have accomplished the task of securing their role by often acting as an assistant principal, clerical worker, student support team chair, testing coordinator, and in high schools they act as registrar, and purveyors of scholarship information.

With school reform at the helm of education, the school counselor's role now includes working with students who are at-risk and who may have challenges that affect their learning and achievement. What school counselors have been asking is for a clearly defined role that supports working with students to meet accountability standards and a role that will assist schools to make academic gains.

As a former elementary school counselor who currently works with elementary counselors in developing their guidance programs, this researcher is keenly aware of the non-uniformity of the counselor role from school to school. School counselors are regarded as support personnel and are often compelled to perform tasks that tend to stretch them too thin and leave them feeling professionally frustrated and ill-equipped to meet the needs of the students. Through this study, this researcher will explore the school counselor's role and to what extent school counselors in Georgia are implementing the state guidance curriculum and how counselors view the impact of the curriculum on accountability standards that are part of No Child Left Behind.

Procedures

This section will discuss the methods and procedures that were employed in conducting this study. This researcher will discuss the parameters of the study, the participants, the type of study, and the limitations and delimitations of the study. The researcher used a quantitative study that analyzed a set of data that was gathered by survey (Sandelowski, 2000). A researcher-constructed survey was used to ask Georgia school counselors to rate the level of implementation of a comprehensive guidance curriculum that is outlined as the state curriculum for the State of Georgia. Because the role of the school counselor has been impacted by No Child Left Behind, counselors were also asked to rate to what degree the programs they are asked to implement support student achievement.

A researcher-constructed survey was developed using a Likert scale to rate the degree of implementation of components of the guidance program of each participating counselor as well as their responses to a rating scale of items relating to how degree of program implementation relates to accountability. An expert panel reviewed the survey and a pilot study was conducted to validate the instrument.

Participants

The study participants consisted of a sampling of Georgia school counselors who are members of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). Permission was granted by ASCA to access the organization's data base of school counselors from Georgia who are listed as members. The participants represented the 16 Regional Education Service Agencies (RESA) in Georgia (GDOE, 2006). There are more than 2000 schools elementary, middle and high schools which are part of the 181 school

systems in the state of Georgia (GDOE, 2005). According to the GDOE, there are 1,257 elementary schools, 429 middle schools and 373 high schools in Georgia's school system that spans 159 counties and 21 cities (GDOE, 2005).

Data Collection

The survey was emailed to the available listserv of Georgia school counselors who are members of the ASCA. The email consisted of a cover letter explaining the research study and directions for completing the survey. Counselors were asked to click on a link that directed them to the survey and instructions on responding to and submitting the survey. Participants were asked to complete a multi-item Likert survey questionnaire that asked them to rate their responses on a scale from strongly disagree (1), somewhat disagree (2), agree (3) to strongly agree (4). Questions regarding the degree of implementation of the school counselor's tasks, duties and functioning in implementing a comprehensive guidance curriculum and how those items relate to accountability were asked of the respondents.

Data Analysis

A data analysis of the questionnaires was completed by totaling the item responses from the Likert survey that was completed by each participant. Percentages were calculated to determine to the degree of implementation for each of the items, the degree of frequency that each task was performed as well as how each respondent related the task to student achievement. All survey items were reported in table form by percentages of the levels of response. Demographic information was reported in table form as well as a histogram to give the reader a more visual representation of the data.

The demographic data was also disaggregated by areas that may have impacted on the counselors' responses such as grade level and work setting.

Limitations/Delimitations of the Study

Several of the limitations that may have affected this study were the use of a researcher constructed survey which may impact on the validity and reliability of the instrument. Also, there are limitations in the use of self-reported data in determining if respondents were partial or biased in their responses. The researcher was limited in the ability to verify individual responses from all participants. Another limitation was the use of an electronic survey, which may have impacted on the response rate of the participants, and the time of the school year the survey was administered. Another limitation of the study is the effect of any researcher bias in interpreting the results of the surveys and reporting the results. Due to the small sample size, the researcher was limited to using a descriptive study.

Delimitations of the study have to do with the small sample size which may hinder the researcher from being able to make generalizations in regard to the survey results. Another delimitation of the study was surveying only Georgia school counselors who are members of ASCA which may impact on the results not being representative of a larger population. Due to this method of sampling, the results of the survey may also not be representative of school counselors across the nation in implementing a comprehensive guidance program.

Definition of Terms

Accountability – According to the Research Center at Education Week (2005), accountability in education is defined as “the idea of holding schools, districts, educators, and students responsible for results” (§ 1).

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) – According to the Georgia Department of Education (2005), AYP is defined as “a measure of year-to-year student achievement on statewide assessments” (§ 3).

Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Programs (CGCP) – According to the America School Counseling Association (ASCA) (2005), CGCP are based on a curriculum that is developmental in nature and that skills are developed based on each student’s developmental stage. CGCP are data driven for student success and will affect change for each student for positive outcomes (ASCA, 2005).

No Child Left Behind– According to the U.S. Department of Education (2005), No Child Left Behind is a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 that imposes stronger accountability standards for all schools.

School Reform – “The Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) program is designed to increase student achievement by assisting public schools across the country with implementing comprehensive reforms that are grounded in scientifically based research and effective practices” (U.S. Department of Education, 2005, § 1).

Summary

The school counselor is a professional that has traditionally performed many duties that have not always been clearly defined. With current school reform initiatives and accountability standards at the helm of educational decision-making, there is more

and more pressure on schools to meet standards and for all school personnel to be used as a resource in meeting Adequate Yearly Progress. School counselors in Georgia, by virtue of training and job description, are directed by a state curriculum to implement a comprehensive guidance curriculum that addresses students' social/emotional and academic needs. It is not always known to what extent counselors are implementing these programs or if they agree that the programs are effective in meeting accountability. This study is designed to address to what extent Georgia school counselors are using the curriculum that they have been directed to use and how they view its impact on accountability.

As much of the literature stated, the programs that school counselors implement have ties to student achievement. In addition, school principals rely on the school counselor to deliver programs that address the academic needs of students as well as respond to the social/emotional needs of students. With accountability standards bearing down on schools and school administrators, the counselor is seen as a professional whose expertise can be put to work to address accountability standards and to assist principals and schools to make AYP.

With the many changes that have impacted on the role of school counselors and changes in the programs that counselors are asked to implement, this researcher will explore to what extent Georgia school counselors are implementing the comprehensive guidance and counseling programs guided by the state curriculum. By the use of a researcher constructed survey, this researcher will ask counselors to respond to items that ask them to rate their implementation of the state guidance curriculum as well as rate

their response as to the relevancy of these tasks to accountability standards and student achievement.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

School counselors are trained to provide a variety of tasks and according to ASCA, these tasks are to be that of supporting and promoting academic achievement, personal/social development and career development (ASCA, 2005). Often though, school counselors are asked by administrators and other school professionals to perform roles that are not part of their role definition (ASCA, 2005). Counselors have consistently performed duties that are clerical and administrative in nature and as a result, counselors have sometimes struggles to define their role in the school that is more in line with current definitions and to establish their contributions to the accountability movement (ASCA, 2005; Brown, 1999; Hardy, 1999). With the advent of accountability, NCLB, and with school districts targeting efforts towards meeting AYP, the school counselor's role has again been redefined and school counselors' efforts have been focused towards implementing comprehensive guidance and counseling programs that meet the academic needs of students (ASCA, 2003; Education Trust, 2003; Gysbers & Henderson, 1997).

History of School Counseling

Within the framework of education, guidance and counseling in schools is a fairly new concept, having emerged in the early 1900s with its origins in vocational guidance (Lambie & Williamson, 2004). The Department of Vocational Guidance was established in 1915 as an education entity of Boston public schools. In conjunction with that event, the process of certifying school counselors was also established (Smith, 1951). Frank Parsons, who many times is referred to as the father of school counseling, was a pioneer

in developing vocational counseling in the schools (Nugent, 1994; O'Brien, 2001). Parsons encouraged career counselors to effect social change and social justice promoted programs for young people to explore careers (O'Brien). Around the same time that Parsons was conducting his work with vocational counseling, 'mental hygiene' a term, coined by Adolf Meyer, became the focus of guidance in the schools. Mental hygiene was described as a process that counselors were trained in for the benefit of understanding and working with an individual in dealing every day stressors (Smith, 1951).

The term, vocational guidance emerged after Parson's death but during the 1930s guidance all but disappeared from the schools (Nugent, 1994). Guidance and counseling reappeared in the late 1930s, with E.G. Williamson's development of the trait-factor theory of vocational and educational guidance, and 1940s with the work of Carl Rogers (Gysbers & Henderson, 1997; Gysbers & Henderson, 2001; Lambie, 2004; Nugent, 1994). Since the emergence of school guidance and counseling as a profession in the 1940s, there has been an attempt to clearly define and develop standards for school counselors (Gysbers & Henderson, 1997; Nugent, 1994).

The National Defense Education Act (NDEA), which was enacted in 1958, quickly impacted on the field of guidance and counseling in the schools by funding and training "individuals to become school counselors". School counseling as a profession was further advanced during the 1960s with the advent of developmental guidance, the term used to describe how school guidance programs needed to be developed (Gysbers, 2004). A decade later the developmental guidance movement was stepped up to meet the growing accountability movement (Gysbers & Henderson, 1997; Lambie & Williamson,

2004). During the 1980s, school guidance became more and more incorporated into the schools and guidance began to emerge as a unique discipline and ultimately a mainstay of education from the perspective of “guidance-as-education” and the use of classroom teachers as “teacher counselors” (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994, p. 11-12).

Myrick (1997) stated that many times guidance and counseling are often interchanged to describe the role and function of the school counselor which only adds to the confusion between role and function. Myrick (1997), makes clarification in defining guidance as program-based initiatives, whereas counseling is based on a more personal relationship between counselor and counselee and describes a helping process that supports students’ concerns and anxieties. According to ASCA (2004), school counselors are educated at the master’s level and beyond the school counselor is now defined in the following terms:

The professional school counselor is a certified/licensed educator trained in school counseling with unique qualifications and skills to address all students’ academic, personal/social and career development needs. Professional school counselors implement a comprehensive school counseling program that promotes and enhances student achievement. ¶1)

Role of the School Counselor

The Education Trust (2003), has initiated a movement to transform the role of the school counselors from one of providing services to one that has a direct and substantial impact on student learning and achievement. According to Reese House (2003), Director of the new National Center for Transforming School Counseling, “This new Center will arm practicing school counselors with the data and knowledge to lead schools efforts to raise achievement of all students and close the gap between groups once and for all” ¶ 6.

When surveyed, teachers have definite ideas about what types of services that they want school counselors to perform (Clark & Amatea, 2004). It is reported that the school counselor is viewed as a valuable resource for not only the students, but to teachers as well by giving support their instructional programs. Teachers believe that school the counselor's role is to provide direct services to students by conducting classroom guidance and conducting individual counseling with students (Clark & Amatea, 2004; Hughey & Gysbers, 1993). When asked for suggestions, teachers, students and parents point out the need for more school counselors and the need for better communication as to the programs that counselors offer to students (Hughey & Gysbers, 1993). (Dahir (2004), stated that school counselors are professionals that are still working to adequately define their role and establish program standards for delivering counseling services. In a 1990 study conducted by Ginter and Scalise, they found that teachers divided elementary school counselors' role into two separate dimensions, a helper dimension, providing individual counseling, classroom guidance and addressing student concerns. The second role was as a consultant in providing professional expertise and guidance for teachers in implementing tactics for impacting student's behavior, classroom assessment, and curriculum planning.

Principals view the school counselor as an integral part of the school team, see them as collaborators, and value counselors' contributions to the overall academic program in the school (Stone & Clark, 2001; Ponc & Brock, 2000). Beale (2003), stated that principals need counselors to fulfill their primary role in helping students to achieve. To achieve this, counselors must be direct service providers by conducting small group counseling, in-service coordinators for teachers, while serving as a school and

community collaborator (Beale, 2003; Beman, 2000). Both counselors and principals believe that counselors are most effective when there is a mutual understanding and respect for the counselor's role. But, school counselors must continually educate others, including teachers and principals, as to their role and what tasks are appropriate and those which are not (Beale, 2003; Perusse, Goodnough, Donegan, & Jones, 2004; Ponec & Brock, 2000). It is many times the job of the school principal to select their school counselor and it is also the principal who is able to determine to what extent the school counselor is able to direct the kind of counseling program they will have (Beale, 1995; Dahir, 2000).

Although principals did not list specific administrative tasks as part of how they perceive the counselor's role, according to Fullwood (2004), principals many times listed certain activities that are now deemed administrative as part of expected counselor duties. Some of these duties included coordinating the master schedule, filling in for teachers and also acting as an assistant principal in some cases (Fullwood, 2004). Myers (2003), stated that role confusion for school counselors has surrounded the profession since its inception and that is many times compounded by school principals who do not understand the function and role of the counselor. According to Stone and Clark (2001), school counselors are in a unique position to exert their own brand of leadership and become part of the leadership team who collaborates with the principal to drive a shared vision of student success. "School counselors and principals can act as powerful allies in school reform focusing on helping students access and be successful in more rigorous academic standards" (Stone & Clark, 2001, p. 46). All agree that the perceived role of the school counselor and the counselor's actual role are not always in sync with one

another and that much work needs to be done in order for the school counselor to operate under the guidelines of their profession (Myers, 2003; Schalesky, 1993; Huffman, Fasko, Weikel, and Owen, 1993). According to Feller, Daly, Gloeckner, Cobb, Stefan, Love, Lamm, & Grant (1992), though the role of the school counselor can sometimes be ambiguous, they also stated the following:

While it is unwise to assume that there is one right role for school counselors, it is clear that a stronger relationship between the tasks of the school counselor and the educational priorities of the nation will support the continuing evolution of the profession. (p. 46)

ASCA (2005), has set standards for what are appropriate and inappropriate activities for school counselors (see Figure 1). The tenets detail, with great specificity, how counselors are to utilize their time in the schools and are adapted from the Gysbers and Henderson model of distribution of school counselor time (ASCA, 2003; Gysbers & Henderson, 2006). As outlined in the figure, counselor tasks that include clerical duties of any kind are clearly inappropriate tasks for practicing school counselors (ASCA, 2003). In addition to clerical duties, activities that involve the school counselor acting as a disciplinarian, substitute teacher or even working with students in a clinical and therapeutic mode, are not an appropriate use of the professional school counselor (ASCA, 2003).

Figure 1. ASCA National Model List of Appropriate and Inappropriate Counselor Activities.

Appropriate Activities For School Counselors	Inappropriate Activities For School Counselors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individual academic program planning • interpreting cognitive, aptitude and achievement tests • counseling students who are tardy or absent • counseling students with disciplinary problems • counseling students as to appropriate dress • collaboration with teachers to present guidance curriculum lessons • analyzing grade-point averages in relationship to achievement • interpreting student records • providing teachers with suggestions for better management of study halls • ensuring that student records are maintained as per state and federal regulations • assisting the school principal with identifying and resolving student issues, needs and problems • working with students to provide small and large group counseling services • advocating for students at individual education plan meetings, student study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • registration and scheduling of all new students • coordinating or administering cognitive, aptitude and achievement tests • responsibility for signing excuses for students are tardy or absent • performing disciplinary actions • sending students home who are not appropriately dressed • teaching classes when teachers are absent • computing grade point averages • maintaining student records • supervising study halls • clerical record keeping • assisting with duties in the principal's office • work with one student at a time in a therapeutic, clinical mode • preparation of individual education plans, student study teams and school review boards • data entrv

Adapted from: American School Counseling Association (2005). The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs, (2nd ed.), p. 56. Alexandria, VA: The Author. Adapted with permission of the author.

As mentioned previously in this chapter, the school counselor's role is often blurred by a set of duties that have been traditionally assigned to the school counselor due to lack of clarification of what is deemed appropriate and inappropriate program tasks (Huffman et al. (1993). As Myrick (2005) stated, "history shows that unless the role of the school counselor is clearly established, the whims of the times can threaten the very existence of counselor positions" (p. 6). As Hatch (2002), points out, counselors agree that even though ASCA lists certain tasks as inappropriate for school counselors, there is much frustration over their actual role and function. One school counselor reported that the performance of non-counseling duties had become such a part of her daily routine during her tenure as counselor that it was difficult for her to see changing her role because she had in essence had become the expert in performing those tasks and was concerned about who would them take over (Hatch).

In a qualitative study conducted by Brott and Myers (1999), they found that when school counselors develop a professional identity their role is more clearly defined. The clarity of the school counselor role translates into program development that enables counselors to provide more appropriate services to students.

Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Programs

Comprehensive guidance and counseling programs (CGCP) has its roots in the 1970s and came about as a result of a federally funded project at the University of Missouri where a conference was held to develop a model for school guidance programs for the state of Missouri (Gysbers & Henderson, 1997). Prior to the development of this model, Gysbers and Henderson stated that the focus of school counseling was placed on the position

(counselor), the services to be delivered (counseling), but little or no emphasis was placed on the program itself (guidance).

This paradigm shift from counselors as vocational counselors, to counselor teachers and career counselors, to school counselors who worked from a comprehensive guidance model, was done under the direction of Norman Gysbers (Gysbers & Henderson, 1997). Gysbers was also responsible for the refinements of this model into a comprehensive, developmental guidance program (Gysbers & Henderson, 1997; Gysbers & Henderson, 2002). In an interview, Gysbers and Lapan (2003), stated that the uniqueness of the CGCP model is career guidance, student competencies, an organizational framework, developmental and its evaluative component.

Comprehensive guidance and counseling programs are, by definition, comprehensive and according to Sink and MacDonald (1998); Gysbers and Henderson (1994), true comprehensive programs do not place emphasis on administrative or clerical duties, but rather promote programs that are designed to support students in personal, social, educational and career skills. Comprehensive guidance and counseling programs promote structure, individual planning and is proactive and preventative rather than response driven Gysbers (1997), outlines the various components that make up CGCP. There are three elements of the model program: content, organizational, framework and resources. Under program components, Gysbers lists the following: guidance curriculum, which is described as being made up of structured groups and classroom presentations; individual planning includes advisement, assessment, placement, and follow-up; responsive services are comprised of individual counseling, small group counseling, consultation and referral; and system support is management activities, consultation,

community outreach and public relations. Student competencies that are listed under the program model content are : career planning and exploration, knowledge of self and others, and educational/career-technical development. In this comprehensive model, there is also a suggested distribution of time allocated for each activity. Gysbers suggests that the majority of the counselor's time and tasks should be placed on implementing a guidance curriculum and response services. These model guidance programs are being adopted and adapted by school systems various school systems all over the nation, such as Arizona, Maryland, Nebraska, South Carolina, and Texas.

According to Gysbers (2004), school counselors are being asked more and more to demonstrate how the implementation of CGCP contributes not only to student success, but to academic achievement. There is an abundance of literature to support the notion that when comprehensive guidance and counseling programs are part of the school counselor's curriculum and are implemented with a transformative focus, it is the school counselor's best strategy to support and promote academic success for students (ASCA, 2005; Sink & Stroh, 2003; Rowley, Stroh, & Sink, 2005). When school counselors focus on certain developmental domains as part of their curricula and make use of a curriculum that addressed risk behaviors of students, which school counselors believed this had a positive effect on student learning (Rowley, Stroh, & Sink, 2005).

Dahir (2000), stated that the purpose of school guidance and counseling programs is to "impart specific skills and facilitate learning opportunities in a proactive and preventative manner. This insures that all students can achieve school success through academic, career, and personal/social development experiences" (p.13).

Georgia Law

The Georgia Department of Education (2000), makes several distinctions when defining and differentiating guidance, counseling and school guidance. Guidance is defined as “a process of regular assistance that all students receive from parents, teachers, school counselors, and others to assist them in making appropriate educational and career choices” (p. 1). Counseling is defined as “a process where some students receive assistance from professionals who assist them to overcome emotional and social problems or concerns which may interfere with learning” (p. 1). And finally, school counseling and guidance is defined as “guidance program planning, implementation and evaluation; individual and group counseling; classroom and small group guidance; career and educational development; parent and teacher consultation; and referral” (p. 1).

School guidance and counseling programs fall under the umbrella of the GDOE Student Support Services, which also includes school social workers, psychologists, school nurses and other such entities that provide direct student support services. These services are guided by Georgia state law §2-2-182, and Georgia is one of a handful of states that school counseling is mandated in grades K-12 (GDOE, 2005). Subsequently, local boards of education are directed to “develop a Student Services Plan that prescribes and identifies programs and services that incorporate school climate improvement and management processes” (GDOE, 2000, p. 2).

Guidance Curriculum

In addition to the requirements that are guided by state law, Georgia School counselors have a set of duties and responsibilities that are outlined as follows by the GDOE:

Table 1. Georgia Guidance Rule for School Counselors

1. Insuring that each school counselor is engaged in counseling or guidance activities, including advising students, parents, or guardians, for a minimum of five of six fulltime segments or the equivalent.
(2) Including the following as duties of the school counselor:
(i) Program design, planning, and leadership
(I) Develops a written school-based guidance and counseling program.
(II) Implements an individual plan of action.
(ii) Counseling
(I) Coordinates and implements delivery of counseling services in areas of self knowledge, educational and occupational exploration, and career planning to facilitate academic achievement
(II) Schedules time to provide opportunities for various types of counseling.
(III) Counsels learners individually by actively listening, identifying and defining issues, discussing alternative solutions, and formulating a plan of action.
(IV) Adheres to established system policies and procedures in scheduling appointments and obtaining parental permission.
(V) Leads counseling or support groups for learners experiencing similar problems.
(VI) Evaluates effectiveness of group counseling and makes revisions as necessary.
(iii) Guidance and collaboration
(I) Coordinates with school staff to provide supportive instructional guidance activities that relate to students' self knowledge, educational and occupational exploration, and career planning to facilitate academic achievement.
(II) Conducts classroom guidance activities related to identified goals and objectives.
(III) Gathers and evaluates data to determine effectiveness of classroom and student comprehension, making revisions when necessary.
(IV) Provides direct/indirect educationally based guidance assistance to learners preparing for test taking.
(V) Provides information to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and, when appropriate, to the community on student test scores.
(VI) Provides information to students and parents on career planning.
(iv) Consultation and coordination
(I) Consults, as needed or requested, with system/staff, parents, and community about issues and concerns.
(II) Collaborates with school staff in developing a strategy or plan for improving school climate.
(III) Follows up on counseling and consultative referrals.
(IV) Consults with school system in making referrals to community agencies.
(V) Implementation of a comprehensive and developmental guidance and counseling curriculum to assist all students.
(v) Insuring that each school counselor is engaged in other functions for no more than one of the six program segments or the equivalent

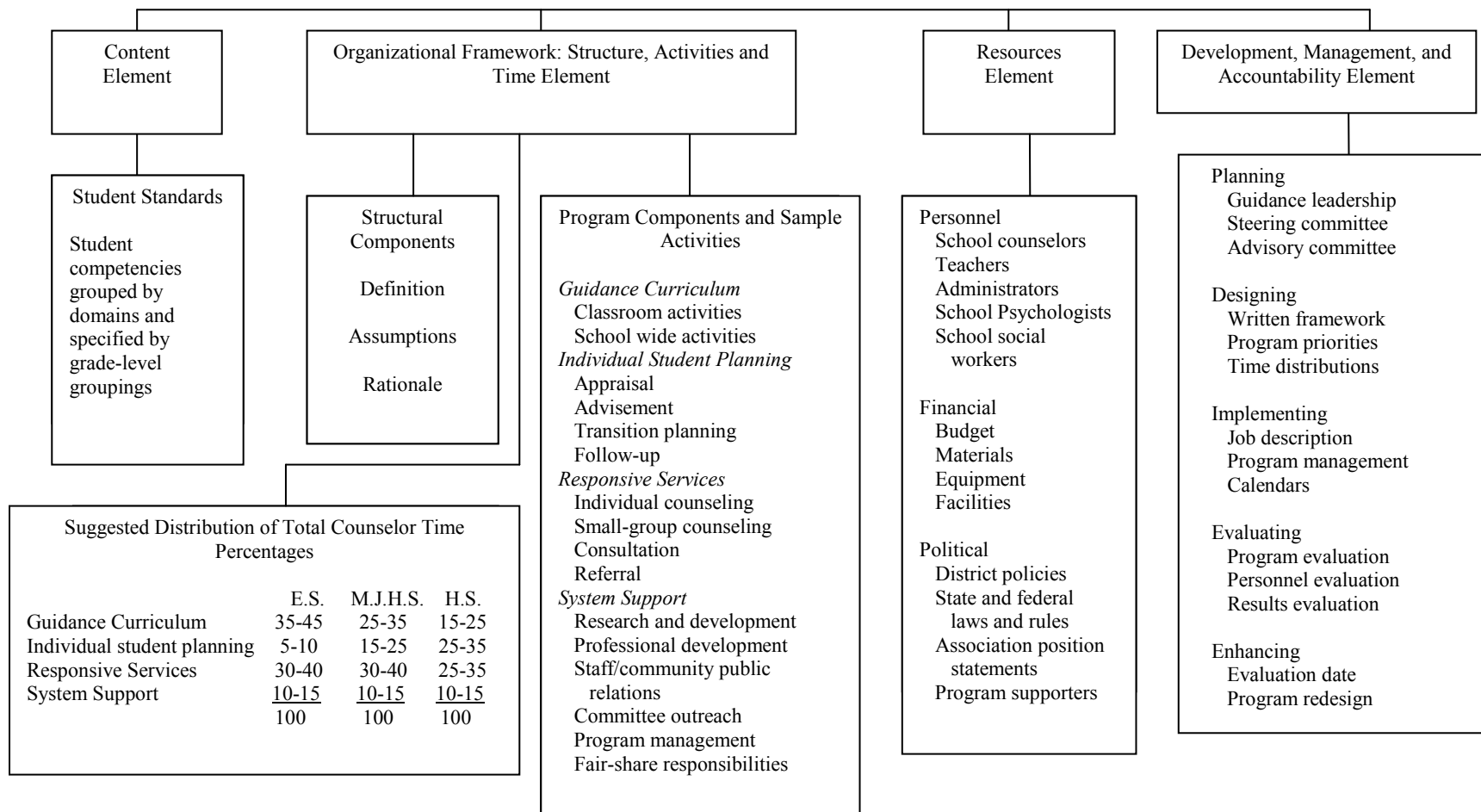
Adapted from the Georgia Department of Education, 2005.

This specific list of duties and responsibilities for school counselors specifically

points out the following: “Georgia State Law and State Board rule require that school counselors provide counseling services to students or parents for five of six segments of each school day” (GDOE, 2005, ¶1). Gysbers and Henderson (2006), suggested in the outline of Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Elements (see Figure 2) that there be an equitable distribution of time allotted to the specific program elements which are: guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services and system support. The distributions for elementary, middle and high school, though outlined somewhat differently based on the needs of each grade level, translates into the majority of time being given to direct student services.

As outlined in the model by Gysbers and Henderson, the organization of the various components of the guidance program elements is a comprehensive program that has both scope and sequence and addresses a variety of essential elements (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006). The program elements are all inclusive and driven by planning, design, implementation, evaluation and follow-up. In a personal communication with the author, Gysbers (2006), commented that this model has undergone many changes over the years (see Figure 2). The model has expanded and evolved to create a more comprehensive structure of program model and to demonstrate how the school counselor is engaged in the implementation of various program elements that address development, management, and accountability (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006). The duties and responsibilities that are outlined in Georgia’s curriculum have been adapted from many of the tenets of the Gysbers and Henderson model and in addition list specific objectives for school counselors to follow in directing school guidance programs (GDOE, 2005).

Figure 2. Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program Elements (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006, p. 59)



Note: E.S. = elementary, M.J.H.S. = middle/junior high school, H.S. = high school
 Used with permission from the author.

According to ASCA (2005), the state of Georgia is one of 30 states that has implemented a comprehensive guidance curriculum statewide. In addition, Georgia is one of only 27 states where school counseling in grades K-12 is mandated with funding coming from both the state and local supplements. Although ASCA suggests that the counselor-pupil ratio be 1 – 250, the average is about 1 – 488 with Georgia’s average being 1 – 456. In comparison to other states (see Table 2.), Georgia fares better than some, worse than others, but better than the national average cited by ASCA (ASCA, 2005). Thorn (2002), stated that school counselors often feel overwhelmed, especially in elementary schools, when many times there is only one counselor. Counselors reported frustration over trying to perform all of the non- counseling tasks that they were delegated to perform, while many times counseling duties were not performed to the degree they felt were needed. Although Fitch and Marshall (2004), found that the counselor/student ratio was actually greater in some of the high-achieving schools, the school counselors’ ability to manage and coordinate programs made a difference as opposed to counselors in lower-achieving schools where the counselor/student ratio was smaller. The difference appeared to be the program management and coordination (Fitch & Marshall, 2004).

In a personal communication with Jacqueline Melendez, Program Specialist of School Counseling and School Social Work from the Georgia Department of Education (2006), she stated that the road towards aligning Georgia school counseling programs with National Standards is ongoing. While the department promotes many of the components of the ASCA model for school counseling programs, the GDOE does not

mandate its implementation . Individual school systems in Georgia are given autonomy over the implementation of any of the National Standards. Several school systems in Georgia have adopted the National Model and are using it as its standard for school counseling programs (Personal Communication, 2006).

Several states, including Arkansas, Connecticut, and Washington, have created a crosswalk between the ASCA National Standards and their own state's guidance curriculum (ASCA, 2005). Georgia is also one of the states that has developed a crosswalk that bridges the ASCA National Standards with the Georgia Guidance Curriculum. The Georgia crosswalk supports many of ASCA's tenets while adhering to state and local curriculum standards (ASCA, 2004; Chandler & Bergin, 2002).

In 2006, Georgia systems will have other issues to deal with in terms of funding school counselors. The legislation passed a law called the 65% solution that in essence mandates that 65% of all education funds go directly for teachers and classroom services, leaving school counselors and some others out of the funding loop (Williams, 2006).

Table 2. Ratio of School Counselor to Student by Nation and State.

	# of School Counselors	# of Students	Ratio
NATIONAL	99,395	48,540,725	488
Alabama	1,682	731,220	435
Alaska	274	133,933	489
Arizona	1,292	1,012,068	783
Arkansas	1,218	454,523	373
California	6,640	6,413,862	966
Colorado	1,371	757,693	553
Connecticut	1,327	577,203	435
Delaware	262	117,668	449
District of Columbia	60	78,057	1301
Florida	5,772	2,587,628	448
Georgia	3,338	1,522,611	456
Hawaii	648	183,609	283
Idaho	575	252,120	438
Illinois	3,049	2,100,961	689
Indiana	1,804	1,011,130	560
Iowa	1,180	481,226	408
Kansas	1,118	470,490	421
Kentucky	1,471	663,885	451
Louisiana	3,155	727,709	231
Maine	627	202,084	322
Maryland	2,241	869,113	388
Massachusetts	2,118	980,459	463
Michigan	2,708	1,757,604	649
Minnesota	1,064	842,854	792
Mississippi	1009	493,540	489
Missouri	2,608	905,941	347
Montana	431	148,356	344
Nebraska	757	285,542	377
Nevada	719	385,401	536
New Hampshire	772	207,417	269
New Jersey	3,673	1,380,753	376
New Mexico	769	323,066	420
New York	6,440	2,864,775	445
North Carolina	3,444	1,360,209	395
North Dakota	278	102,233	368
Ohio	3,694	1,845,428	500
Oklahoma	1,495	626,160	419

Table (continued).

	# of School Counselors	# of Students	Ratio
Oregon	1, 114	551,273	495
Pennsylvania	4,344	1,821,146	419
Rhode Island	380	159,375	419
South Carolina	1,699	699,198	412
South Dakota	328	125,537	383
Tennessee	1,918	936,681	488
Texas	9,937	4,331,751	436
Utah	683	495,981	726
Vermont	426	99,103	233
Virginia	2,564	1,192,092	465
Washington	1,955	1,021,349	522
West Virginia	660	281,215	426
Wisconsin	1,910	880,031	461
Wyoming	394	87,462	222

Source – U.S. Department of Education; National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data; Public Elementary and Secondary Students, Staff, Schools, and School Districts: School Year 2003-04. Adapted from American School Counselor Association, 2005.

Accountability

Linn (2003), stated that the biggest issue with accountability in education is being able to answer two key questions: “what counts and who is accountable” (p. 3). Linn contends that the answer to both questions is often oversimplified, and therefore fails to get answered effectively. According to Myrick (2003), being accountable means “being responsible for one’s own actions and contributions in terms of objectives, procedures and results...collecting information and data that support (sic) accomplishments” (p.174). Finn (2002), wrote that as long as things in education were going well, then there was no need for accountability but as things go wrong, “the demand for accountability arises” (p.85).

Long before NCLB, the majority of school counselors were involved to some degree in accountability (Fairchild, 1993; Fairchild & Seeley, 1995). Myrick continued that when school counselors were initially left out of the accountability equation, they began to feel pressure to become more assertive in their role and to make their contributions known. According to Education Week (n/d), accountability is linked to high-stakes testing and this becomes the measure that students, schools and school districts are held to in order to determine success in meeting standards. Ironically, the president of Educational Testing Service, Kurt Landgraf, was quoted as saying, “We’ve got to stop using assessments as a hammer and begin to use them appropriately, as a diagnostic and learning tool” (Olsen, 2005, p. 7).

Under NCLB, each state submits an accountability plan that defines and outlines a strategy for implementing the guidelines and for making AYP. In Georgia, accountability requirements are linked to both state and local education agencies (LEAs) and each LEA

has the responsibility to meet the standards that are set. Accountability is linked to participation and proficiency in statewide assessments for each grade level and schools and systems must show that an Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) has been met and for secondary schools, graduation rate is another assessed indicator (State of Georgia, 2003). In addition to assessment proficiency, LEAs must demonstrate inclusion of all students and have a plan in place for including all students and subgroups including students with disabilities, students who are economically disadvantaged, students from all racial and ethnic groups and students with limited English proficiency (Education Week, 2006; State of Georgia).

Accountability, under Georgia Law is defined in the following terms:

Under the No Child Left Behind legislation, and as mandated by state law, Georgia is required to develop a Single Statewide Accountability System (SSAS) which includes awards and consequences. Georgia's Single Statewide Accountability System includes an Accountability Profile for every public school and local educational agency (LEA) in the state. The Accountability Profile is composed of (1) an absolute performance determination, based on Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP); (2) a Performance Index, based on annual growth in academic achievement as measured by statewide assessments; and (3) Performance Highlights which provides recognition for schools and LEAs based on academic-related indicators. The LEA Profile consists of two components – AYP and Performance Highlights (GDOE, 2005, p. 4).

School Counseling Programs and Accountability

When school counselors find ways to fully implement CGCP, changes happen and students benefit by being more prepared for their future, they have more career and college information presented to them, and overall perform better academically (Gysbers, Lapan, & Blair, 1999). But, Stone and Dahir (2004), stated that school counselors many times believe that the variability of their role makes it very difficult to measure their effectiveness. Stone and Dahir continue that when school counselors work towards improving student results, that student achievement will be raised. According to ASCA (2004), accountability for school counselors is defined in these terms:

To demonstrate the effectiveness of the school counseling program in measurable terms, professional school counselors report on immediate, intermediate and long-range results showing how students are different as a result of the school counseling program. Professional school counselors use data to show the impact of the school counseling program on school improvement and student achievement. Professional school counselors conduct school counseling program audits to guide future action and improve future results for all students. The performance of the professional school counselor is evaluated on basic standards of practice expected of professional school counselors implementing a school counseling program. (¶ 7)

Evaluating the effectiveness of comprehensive guidance and counseling programs are still rather new, but there is evidence to show that there is a positive effect between program implementation and student success behaviors (Lapan, 2001; Sink & Stroh, 2003). Evaluation and feedback of guidance programs from all stakeholders is crucial to

establish the link between the program implementation and the impact programs have on students and their school communities (Hughey & Gysbers, 1993; Schmidt, 1995).

According to Hayes, Nelson, Tabin, Pearson, & Worthy (2002), because school counselors have access to a variety of student data on a regular basis, they are in a position to provide the needed services for students that will allow them to meet the goal of graduation.

Student results are now the focus of accountability and school counselors can no longer work in isolation, but rather collaborate with others as part of a leadership team to promote student achievement (Johnson & Johnson, 2003; Lapan, 2001; Sink & Stroh, 2003). Johnson (2000), calls for school counselors to become more assertive in defining and refining their professional identity by utilizing skills as trained practitioners to facilitate programs that promote student success. As Stone and Dahir (2004), stated that accountability for school counselors means more than just adding up services that are delivered or marking a checklist. Accountability for student success means showing direct results for the populations that school counselors impact through program implementation. Stone and Dahir cite examples of counselors who reach out to students who are being affected by divorce or other family issues and through counseling groups or individual counseling, the students learn to cope with the stresses of family issues so they can concentrate on their academics and in turn impact on the percentage of students who go on to further their education, or students who improve their attendance rate. These are all measurable results for implementing counseling programs (Stone & Dahir, 2004). Fitch and Marshall (2004), found that school counselors in high achieving schools spent more time performing tasks that aligned with national and state standards and

promoting programs that contribute to a positive school climate in contrast with the types of tasks that counselors spent in lower-achieving schools.

Summary

Historically the school counselor profession evolved as a result of vocational education then surged with the career guidance movement. Since that time, the role of the professional school counselor has seen many changes during the 20th century, and again as a result of the move towards school reform and No Child Left Behind in the new millennium. As school counselors struggle to find their niche in the era of school reform and accountability, entities such as Norman Gysbers' comprehensive guidance and counseling programs (CGCP), the Education Trust, and the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) have provided guidelines for school counselors to follow in shaping their identity and the programs they implement.

School counselors in Georgia have a state guided curriculum that aligns itself to ASCA's National Model for School Counseling. The National Model's focus is to arm school counselors with resources and vision to transform their role and their programs with the focus being on results. School guidance and counseling programs are designed to support student success behaviors, which will translate into closing the achievement gap. The National Standards for School Counseling also outline specific tasks and duties for school counselors that are deemed appropriate and inappropriate. When school counselors have a clearly defined role and are free to implement programs for which they are uniquely qualified and are skilled to perform by virtue of their training and education, then students will benefit.

Table 3. Literature Matrix

Study	Participants	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	Design/Analysis	Outcomes
Brown, Galassi & Akos (2004)	Counselor members of the North Carolina Counselor Association (NCSCA), n=141		-Counselor perception of impact of high states testing on their role	Questionnaire/ Descriptive	-Although study suggests that the use of school counselors as test coordinators was not a valuable use of time, only 6 % and 18% suggested that someone other than the counselor be given that role.
Brigman & Campbell (2003)	Students in schools with counselor led interventions (tx group, n = 97), students without counselor led interventions (control group, n = 125)	- School counselor led group counseling and classroom guidance	- Teacher rating of student classroom behavior and math and reading scores on an achievement test	Pre/post test, ANCOVA	-Student behavior improved - Student achievement showed improvement
Clark & Amatea (2004)	23 Teachers from all grade-levels from the Southeastern United States		- Teacher perceptions and expectations of school counselors' contributions	Descriptive qualitative grounded theory design/ Interview	- Communication and collaboration among teachers and counselor important - Counselor's perform tasks that are valuable to student success

Study	Participants	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	Design/Analysis	Outcomes
Dahir (2004)	K-12 School Counselors (n = 1127)	- The need to develop a national model for school counselors	-Counselors' response to a researcher constructed survey	Likert scale survey Qualitative ANOVA	- School counselors are in favor of national standards - Standards should reflect practice over theory - Any differences among responders was due to grade level assigned
Fairchild (1993)	Practicing School Counselors (n = 206)	-The need for accountability standards for school counselors - The need to collect accountability data	-Counselors' responses to a researcher constructed survey	Quantitative/ ANOVA	School counselors who were in the field from 1 – 10 years were more likely to collect accountability data and to see its importance
Sink & Stroh (2003)	Students (n=20, 131) Counselors (n = 119)	- Elementary students in CGCP schools - Elementary students in non-CGCP schools	- Student Achievement	Quantitative/Box's test of equality of covariance matrices, Levene's test of error variance/ MANCOVA	Elementary students enrolled in schools where a CGCP was implemented showed higher achievement than those in schools where a CGCP was not implemented

Study	Participants	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	Design/Analysis	Outcomes
Beesley (2004)	K-12 classroom teachers (n = 188)	- Teacher perceptions of school counselors and the services they render	- Teacher response to researcher constructed survey	Quantitative/ ANOVA	-Teachers are satisfied with services rendered by counselors - Satisfaction ratings for elementary counselors higher than other grade levels

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this chapter the researcher will outline the methods and procedures for conducting the research study. The methodology section includes the research questions that were addressed in the study, the research design that was used, the population and participants that were part of the study, the procedures for developing and administering the survey and how the data was collected and analyzed.

Research Questions

In looking at the history of the school counselor and reviewing the many changes in the counselor's role over the past several years, the primary questions that drove this study were: To what extent do Georgia school counselors implement the state guidance curriculum; do counselors believe that implementation of the guidance curriculum meets accountability standards by supporting student achievement; and how do counselors perceive their role?

The research questions that were addressed in this study were as follows:

1. To what extent do Georgia school counselors rate the implementation of the various components of the state guidance curriculum?
2. To what extent do Georgia school counselors engage in the performance of inappropriate tasks?
3. To what degree of frequency do Georgia school counselors rate their performance of various tasks outlined in the Georgia guidance curriculum?

4. To what extent do the perceptions of Georgia school counselors differ by grade level and demographic setting on their implementation of the Georgia curriculum?
5. To what extent do Georgia school counselors perceive that the performance of specific tasks and duties support student achievement?

Research Design

A quantitative method was used for this research study for the purpose of answering a series of research questions and analyzing and comparing the results of the responses. This study was a non-experimental design study that measured responses by the participants by rating the frequency or degree (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). According to Kerlinger and Lee, quantitative research consists of the use of numerical data to make observations or assumptions and is scientific in its nature and the results will be generalized to the population that is being studied. The use of a quantitative design was more appropriate for this study so that results could be generalized to the entire population (Kerlinger & Lee).

Population and Data Source

Kerlinger and Lee (2000), stated that researchers seldom study whole populations but rely on samples that are drawn from populations. According to Huck (2004), a random sample allows an equal chance of all members of a group to be chosen as part of the sample group. As Kerlinger and Lee (2000) stated, “A sample drawn at random is unbiased in the sense that no member of the population has more chance of being selected than any other member” (p. 166). For this quantitative study, the participants consisted of a sampling of Georgia school counselors.

A database of Georgia school counselors was available to ASCA members and is an exhaustive list of Georgia school counselors who are members of ASCA. The database included school counselors in Georgia, listed by discipline, such as, elementary, middle and high school. The list of Georgia counselors comprised a representation from across the State of Georgia and included respondents from each of the 16 Regional Education Service Agencies (RESA) (GDOE, 2006). There are more than 18,000 members of ASCA nationwide and a current list of 620 Georgia members. The list includes counselors from elementary, middle and high schools that are part of the 181 school systems in the state of Georgia (GDOE, 2005). According to the GDOE, there are 1,257 elementary schools, 429 middle schools and 373 high schools in Georgia's school system that spans 159 counties and 21 cities (GDOE, 2005).

Participants

The current list of school counselors who are listed as member on the ASCA database are members who subscribe to the organization and pay membership dues (ASCA, 2005). Access to this database was requested in writing by this researcher via email to the appropriate member of ASCA's membership department and permission was granted to use the membership list for survey purposes. The membership list of Georgia members at the time of the request was 620, and since this list is exhaustive, this was the representative sample of Georgia school counselors that were participants for the survey study. Since many of the ASCA members are actively employed school counselors, information that was addressed in this study is pertinent to school counselors' interest in work and task related activities that counselors are asked to perform on a daily basis. School counselors are eager to have their roles within the school more clearly defined and

consistent with the ASCA National Standards for school counselors. This study allowed counselors to respond to items that relate to actual work experiences.

Instrumentation

A researcher constructed survey was used that asked participants to respond to items that rate the degree of implementation of the state guidance curriculum in a Likert scale format (Huck, 2004; Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). According to Kerlinger & Lee (2000), and Huck (2004), survey research such as Likert scale surveys are popular methods of gauging attitudes of participants by using an ordinal scale rating system that asked the participant to rate their level of agreement or disagreement to certain statements in the survey.

The Likert scale survey consisted of items that were created by examining the tenets outlined from the Georgia curriculum for school counselors that is defined by law, the State of Georgia list of defined roles and responsibilities, which includes a list of both appropriate and inappropriate tasks for school counselors, and the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2004; GDOE, 2005). In constructing the survey, the researcher chose several tasks and duties from a list of suggested inappropriate duties. This list was not exhaustive.

In the survey, counselors were also asked to rate to what extent they believed the individual components of the state guidance curriculum promote student achievement. Another aspect that was examined is the extent to which each of the tasks that are outlined in the survey were performed by the school counselor. The use of a quantitative study allowed this researcher to rate the participants' degree of implementation of the state guidance curriculum and rate their responses on a variety of tasks and objectives in

regard to the relevancy to student achievement and the counselors' frequency of performance of the tasks and responsibilities that are outlined in the survey.

Pilot Survey

A pilot survey was constructed for the purpose of sharing information with fellow Georgia school counselors about the implementation of the Georgia curriculum and the ASCA National Model. The pilot survey was shared with members of the Region Eight District of the Georgia School Counselors Association at the request of the Region Eight chair (P. Graziano, personal communication, October 14, 2005). The surveys were distributed to 35 counselors representing all grade levels from schools in the region at the GSCA conference held in November, 2005, during the scheduled Region Eight meeting. Region Eight consists of the following Georgia counties: Burke, Columbia, Glascock, Hancock, Jefferson, Jenkins, McDuffie, Richmond, Warren and Washington (GSCA, 2006). Discussion of the survey ensued and feedback was solicited as to the clarity and relevancy of the individual survey items. Although this was not an actual pilot study, Wiersma (1995), stated that smaller survey studies are conducted prior to major studies in an effort to collect valuable information that will help to improve and refine the instrument being used. Further validation of the instrument was conducted through the selection of an expert panel consisting of Jacqueline Melendez, Program Specialist of School Counseling and School Social Work from the Georgia Department of Education, Dr. Carol Rountree, Director of Guidance, Testing and Research for Richmond County Schools, Dr. Mary Jane Anderson and Dr. Leslie Riley from the Counselor Education Department of Augusta State University, reviewed the survey instrument and offered suggestions for revisions to the survey.

Data Collection

Once permission was granted from IRB and certain criteria set for the completion of the instrument, the survey was set up on a secure and independent website. A letter was distributed via email with an explanation of the study, along with the informed consent information for each participant. The counselors were instructed to click on a link that would take them to the survey. This allowed counselors to complete the survey online and submit it electronically and anonymously to the secure website. The participants were asked to return the surveys within seven days. A follow-up email was sent to all participants seven days after the first contact to encourage their response. The same process was employed and one final follow-up email was sent two weeks later to remind counselors of the survey and to again solicit their participation.

Data Analysis

The research questions that were answered by this study were: the extent that Georgia school counselors implement the Georgia comprehensive guidance curriculum, and the degree that school counselors believe certain tasks they perform support student achievement. Also, counselors were asked to rate the frequency of certain tasks, questions regarding support they receive in their schools for program implementation as well as demographic information. Through the counselors' responses to the survey items, it was also determined to what extent school counselors were performing tasks that are deemed inappropriate in accordance with ASCA's national standards (ASCA, 2005).

For each Likert survey item, the researcher calculated percentages for the degree of implementation of certain tasks, the degree of frequency that certain duties and tasks are performed, with the choices being on a daily (4), weekly (3), monthly basis (2), or

yearly (1). Finally, counselors were also asked to rate to what extent they agreed or disagreed that the performance of certain tasks supported student achievement. By calculating percentages the researcher gained information as to the range of responses by school counselors for each survey item. Due to the relatively small return rate and without an adequate number of responses for each of the levels of response, a descriptive method of reporting the data was used rather than a multivariate analysis.

Using the software program Microsoft Excel and its companion statistical package, the researcher sorted the data and calculated percentages for survey questions regarding tasks and calculated means for open-ended questions regarding years of experience of the school counselors and the counselor/student ratios. An analysis was used to rank responses that addressed the demographics for each of the respondents by grade level of elementary counselors, middle school counselors and high school counselors in their responses to the survey and how the responders answered according to the work setting of suburban, urban and rural.

Reporting the Data

The data in this research study included the demographic information that was asked at the end of the counselor survey. The researcher disaggregated each of the school counselors' demographic information that they responded to in the survey. This information is presented in Chapter 4 in table and graph form. Other information from the demographic part of the survey that is included is the work setting of each counselor (grade level). This was categorized into elementary, middle or high school. The tables also included the mean of years that each respondent has been a school counselor, the counselor to student ratio of the participants and the demographic location where the

counselors work which, urban, suburban, or rural. The educational degree level of each respondent, masters, specialist or doctorate was also solicited. Counselors were also be asked to respond as to whether or not they have had prior teaching experience and this will also be reported in table form.

A table was constructed that listed each of the survey questions by appropriate and inappropriate tasks. The percentages of each of the Likert responses to each question were calculated and itemized in the table as to how each question is answered by the participants. This table lists the possible response items, such as and the percentage of responders to each item response. Each research question was answered in coordination with the items on the survey instrument and these are included in table form. Each table is accompanied by explanations for each item in narrative form.

Summary

With the demands of accountability in education and the pressure for schools to meet accountability standards, school counselors are facing the reality of assisting principals and other school personnel to meet those standards. Since research supports the notion that school counselors perform many duties that are not related to their stated curriculum, the survey questions in this study will ask counselors to assess the degree to which they perform certain tasks and duties. This quantitative study consisted of a researcher developed and constructed survey that asked Georgia school counselors to rate several Likert scale questions that relate to tasks, duties and responsibilities that they perform as school counselors. Georgia school counselors were asked to respond questions that will assess their degree of implementation of the Georgia curriculum for school counselors. Counselors were also asked to rate the frequency that they perform certain

tasks and whether they believed that tasks they performed were relevant to student achievement. The survey also listed tasks that are deemed inappropriate for school counselors to perform and they rated these tasks in terms of implementation, frequency and relevance to student achievement.

The population that was used in this study was a sampling of Georgia members of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). This sample was representative of the nearly 18,000 members of ASCA nationwide and of the nearly 2000 schools in the state of Georgia in 159 counties. Of the 620 Georgia ASCA members, 10% were not school counselors and another 10% did not have an email address listed. Of that population, 503 surveys were sent via email and were asked to respond to the survey and submit. Of the total number of emails sent, 175 emails came back as non-deliverable. Follow-up email reminders were sent in order to garner a higher return rate of return. Data analysis of the collected surveys involved calculating the percentages of each response to the survey items, and a mean score for each question response. A series of tables were used to report the data and to report the responses to each survey item by each variable listed as well as the demographic portion of the survey.

Table 4. Quantitative Item Analysis

Item	Research	Research Question
1. Schedule and provide various types of counseling to all students.	ASCA, 2005; GDOE 2005	1, 2
2. Coordinate and lead counseling groups for students who are experiencing similar problems.	GDOE, 2005	1, 2
3. Provide information to students and parents on career development and planning.	ASCA, 2005; GDOE, 2005	1, 2
4. Conduct guidance sessions for students to prepare for test-taking.	GDOE, 2005	1, 2, 3, 5
5. Maintain student records.	ASCA, 2005	4
6. Analyze grade-point averages in relationship to achievement.	GDOE, 2005	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
7. Perform data entry duties.	ASCA, 2005	4
8. Work with students individually in a clinical and therapeutic mode.	ASCA, 2005	4
9. Disaggregate and analyze student test score data.	ASCA, 2005; GDOE, 2005	1, 4, 5
10. Coordinate and/or administer student testing.	ASCA, 2005	4
11. Coordinate and/or chair student support team meetings.	ASCA, 2005	4
12. Provide input to administration in developing a master schedule.	ASCA, 2005	4
13. Academic advising/sharing post-secondary options for students.	GDOE, 2005	1, 4
14. Consults with school system in making referrals to community agencies	GDOE, 2005	1
15. Assist principals and teachers in addressing discipline issues with students.	GDOE, 2005	4
16. Register and schedule new students.	ASCA, 2005	4
17. Monitor student behavior during the course of the school day.	ASCA, 2005	4
18. Plan and conduct career day activities for students.	ASCA, 2005	1
19. Transport student records from school to school.	ASCA, 2005	4
20. Use technology to access and analyze student data.	ASCA, 2005; GDOE, 2005	1,3, 5
21. Plan and conduct classroom guidance activities to promote academic achievement.	ASCA, 2005; GDOE , 2005	1, 3
22. Develop a plan that works to close the achievement gap.	ASCA, 2005; GDOE, 2005	3, 5
23. Outline a plan for teachers and staff for handling student crises.	ASCA, 2005; GDOE, 2005	1, 2
24. Conduct needs assessments for teachers, parents, and students in developing guidance program.	ASCA, 2005; GDOE, 2005	1, 2, 3, 4
25. Act as an administrator in the absence of the principal.	ASCA, 2005; GDOE , 2005	4
26. Fill in and cover for teachers in their classrooms.	ASCA, 2005	1, 4

Table 4 (continued).		
27. There is support in my school from teachers and administrators to implement a comprehensive guidance and counseling program	Beale, 2003; Dahir, 2000	1
28. In my district, school counselors are given direction and support from district level personnel in regard to program implementation and guidelines.	ASCA, 2005	4
29. In my district, the role of the school counselor is clearly defined.	ASCA, 2005; Dahir, 2000	1, 2
30. I have a method of follow-up and evaluation of my program components.	GDOE, 2005; Brown, 1999; Fairchild, 1993	1, 4
31. I routinely collect data on the programs I implement.	Fairchild, 1993	4, 5
32. Grade Level	Aluede & Imonikhe, 2000	4
33. Years of school counseling experience	National Center for School Counseling Outcome Research, 2006	
34. Previous teaching experience	Beale, 1995	
35. Years of teaching experience	Beale, 1995	
36. A Career Center is operated and maintained in my school	ASCA, 2005	
37. Education Level	Education Trust, 2003	
38. Gender	National Center for School Counseling Outcome Research, 2006	
39. Race	National Center for School Counseling Outcome Research, 2006	
40. Work setting demographic	Cummings (2002)	
41. What RESA district?	GDOE, 2005	
42. Number of students in school.	National Center for School Counseling Outcome Research, 2006	
43. Number of students per counselor	ASCA (2005); GDOE (2005)	
Table 3 (continued).		
44. Number of full-time counselors	GDOE, 2005	
45. Number of part-time counselors	GDOE, 2005	
46. Did your school make AYP?	Edweek.org, 2006; GDOE, 2005	1, 2

Table 4 (continued).		
47. Did your school system make AYP?	Creative Research Systems, 2003; Kerlinger & Lee, 2000	
48. Please make additional comments/thoughts that you may have regarding the role of the school counselor.	Fitch & Marshall, 2004	1,2

CHAPTER 4
REPORT OF DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine to what degree Georgia school counselors are implementing a comprehensive guidance and counseling program that is the foundation of the Georgia curriculum for school counselors. The results of this study will be outlined in this chapter with a detailed analysis of the degree of frequency that tasks are performed as well as the degree of implementation that counselors performed various tasks.

The research questions that guided this study were as follows:

1. To what extent do Georgia school counselors rate the implementation of the various components of the state guidance curriculum?
2. To what extent do Georgia school counselors engage in the performance of inappropriate tasks?
3. To what degree of frequency do Georgia school counselors rate their performance of various tasks outlined in the Georgia guidance curriculum?
4. To what extent do the perceptions of Georgia school counselors differ by grade level and demographic setting on their implementation of the Georgia curriculum?
5. To what extent do Georgia school counselors perceive that the performance of specific tasks and duties support student achievement?

Pilot Survey

A pilot of the survey instrument was conducted during the scheduled Region Eight meeting of the Georgia School Counselors Association Fall Conference with the members of the region. Region Eight consists of the following Georgia counties: Burke, Columbia, Glascock, Hancock, Jefferson, Jenkins, McDuffie, Richmond, Warren and Washington (GSCA, 2006). The surveys were distributed to the 35 members in attendance and as a result of their comments and feedback that was received, the researcher made revisions to the survey.

Research Design

The research design for this study was a descriptive quantitative design which includes categorical data on how each respondent completed the answers to the survey questions in the Likert scale format. Percentages of each selection response was calculated to determine the extent of implementation of the guidance program elements, the degree of frequency that the specific tasks were performed, and the extent that the respondents agreed or disagreed that a task impacted student achievement. The possible responses were strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, agree, and strongly agree. For each survey question, the possible responses regarding the frequency of implementation were as follows: (a) I perform this task daily (strongly agree), weekly (agree), monthly (somewhat agree), yearly (strongly disagree).

Responses to the demographic questions were reported in a table to detail the grade level that they worked in percentages of elementary, middle and high school counselors as well as the demographic setting of suburban, urban and rural. The

participants were also categorized by gender and race in percentages to gather more information about the participants.

Respondents

For the purpose of this study, a sample of Georgia school counselors who were members of ASCA were emailed surveys. ASCA's membership base includes professionals who are practicing school counselors, counselor educators, retirees from the field of counseling, students who are enrolled in a counselor education program at a college or university, or affiliate members who do not fall into the previous categories (ASCA, 2005). The population of school counselors who responded to the survey were representative of the 16 RESA districts which serve the Georgia school systems.

Survey Response Rate

The population that this researcher had access to was the Georgia membership of the American School Counseling Association (ASCA). The number of members listed for the State of Georgia at the time of my inquiry was 620 and represented school counselors from all over the State of Georgia. Approximately 10% of the Georgia membership by virtue of response or address listed, are members who do not work as school counselors but represent other entities such as those who work in higher education, are retired, or are either students or affiliates (ASCA, 2006). Another 10% did not list an email address under their contact information, which left a viable group of 503. The initial email, with attached survey, was sent to the 503 members of the listserv. Approximately 175 emails bounced back with the initial email as an invalid email address, were either deleted before read, or a message was received that the email was blocked to unknown senders.

Out of a possible population of 328 members who may have received the email, the number of participants who responded to the survey was 111 (33.84%).

Demographic Data

Part of the survey asked school counselors to complete certain demographic information that would assist the researcher in gaining more descriptive information about the respondents. Some of the information given by the participants is reported in Table 5.

The majority of the respondents were female at 92.8% and the male respondents represented 7.2%. In a personal communication on June 14, 2006 with Mera Smith, the Membership Administrator at ASCA, she stated that of the 18,000 ASCA members, approximately 80% are females compared to 20% males which may account for the discrepancy in female versus male respondents in Georgia. The ethnic breakdown for the respondents was White at 70.6%, Black at 24.8% and other groups represented by 4.6%. While ASCA does not collect ethnic data on its members, it appears that White females are overwhelmingly represented in the school counselor population in Georgia (see Figure 3).

The majority of school counselors who responded to the survey were elementary counselors at 37%, middle school at 32% were the second highest group and high school counselors responded at 29%. Administrative and other participants were a combined 3.6% of the total respondents. The work setting demographics of the respondents which were 55% of counselors working in a suburban setting, 19% working in an urban setting and 26% working in a rural setting (see Figure 4).

Also shown in Figure 5 is the number of years that each respondent had as a school counselor. After calculating the responses, the mean was 10.3 years of school counseling experience. The average number of students that each counselor reported serving was a ratio of 1 counselor to 429 students, which is better than the state ratio of 1 to 456 students and even better than the nation with a ratio of 1 school counselor to 488 students (ASCA, 2005).

Other demographic data reported was the number of school counselors who had previous teaching experience. As shown in Figure 5, there were 69 counselors who reported having previous teaching experience (61.1%) and 44 counselors with no previous teaching experience (38.9%). Counselors were also asked to respond to whether or not a career center was operated and maintained in their school and 69.65 reported that there was not. According to ASCA (2005) and the state Guidance curriculum, career development is an integral component of a comprehensive guidance curriculum. The majority of respondents who stated that they had a career center where counselors who worked at the high school level which comprised only 29% of the total respondents.

The education level reported for the participants in the survey are depicted in Figure 6. The minimum level of education required for a school counselor in the state of Georgia is at the masters level (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2006). Of the respondents that answered that question, 56 reported as having a Masters Degree, 49 reported having an Education Specialist Degree, 8 participants reported having a Doctorate, and 4 marked other as their response indicating 'other' and not fitting into any of the other categories.

Table 5. Georgia School Counselor Demographic Data

Race		Gender		Work Setting		Demographic Setting	
Black	24.8%	Male	7.2%	Elementary	37%	Suburban	55%
White	70.6%	Female	92.8%	Middle	32%	Urban	18%
Hispanic	1.8%			High	29%	Rural	27%
Other	2.8%			Other	2%		
Mean years of school counseling experience			10.3				
Mean of counselor to student ratio			1 to 429				

Figure 3. Percentage of Respondents by Race and Gender.

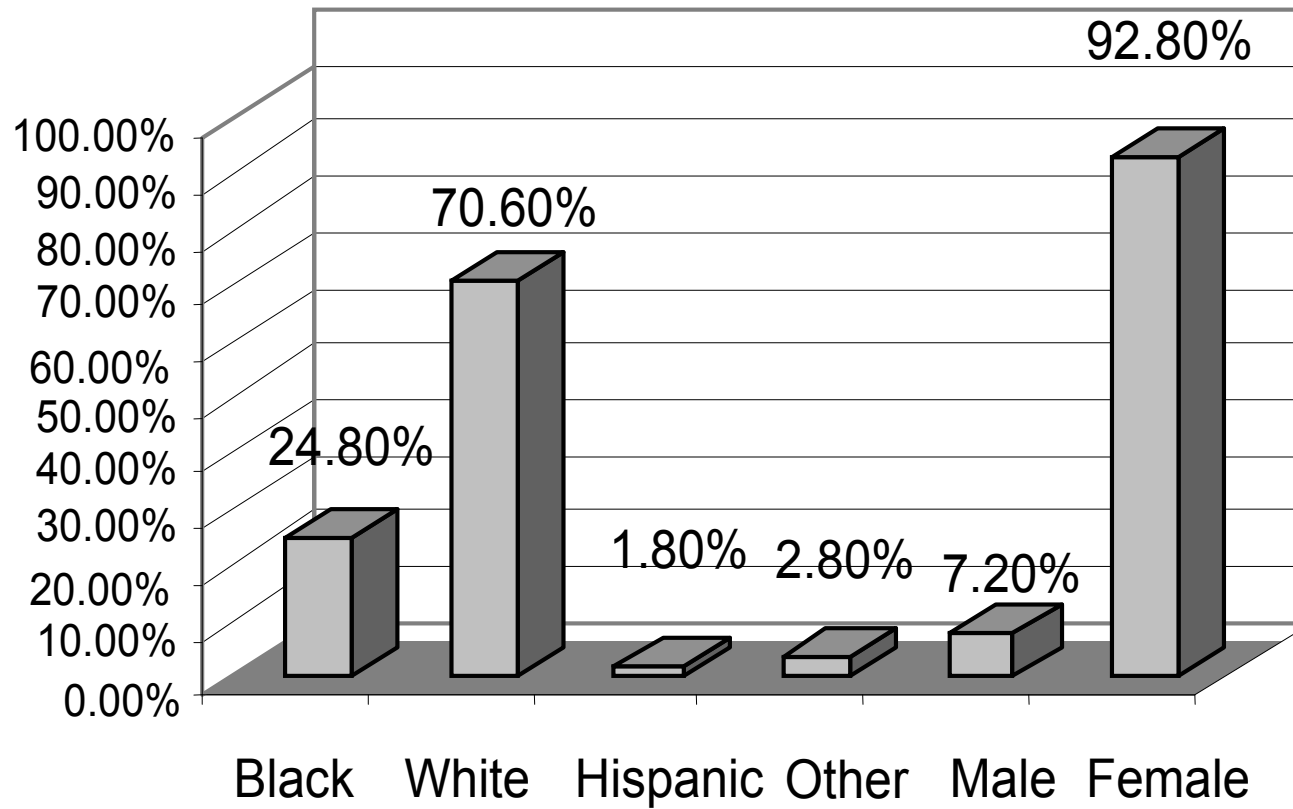


Figure 3

Figure 4. Percentage of Respondents by Grade Level and Demographic Setting.

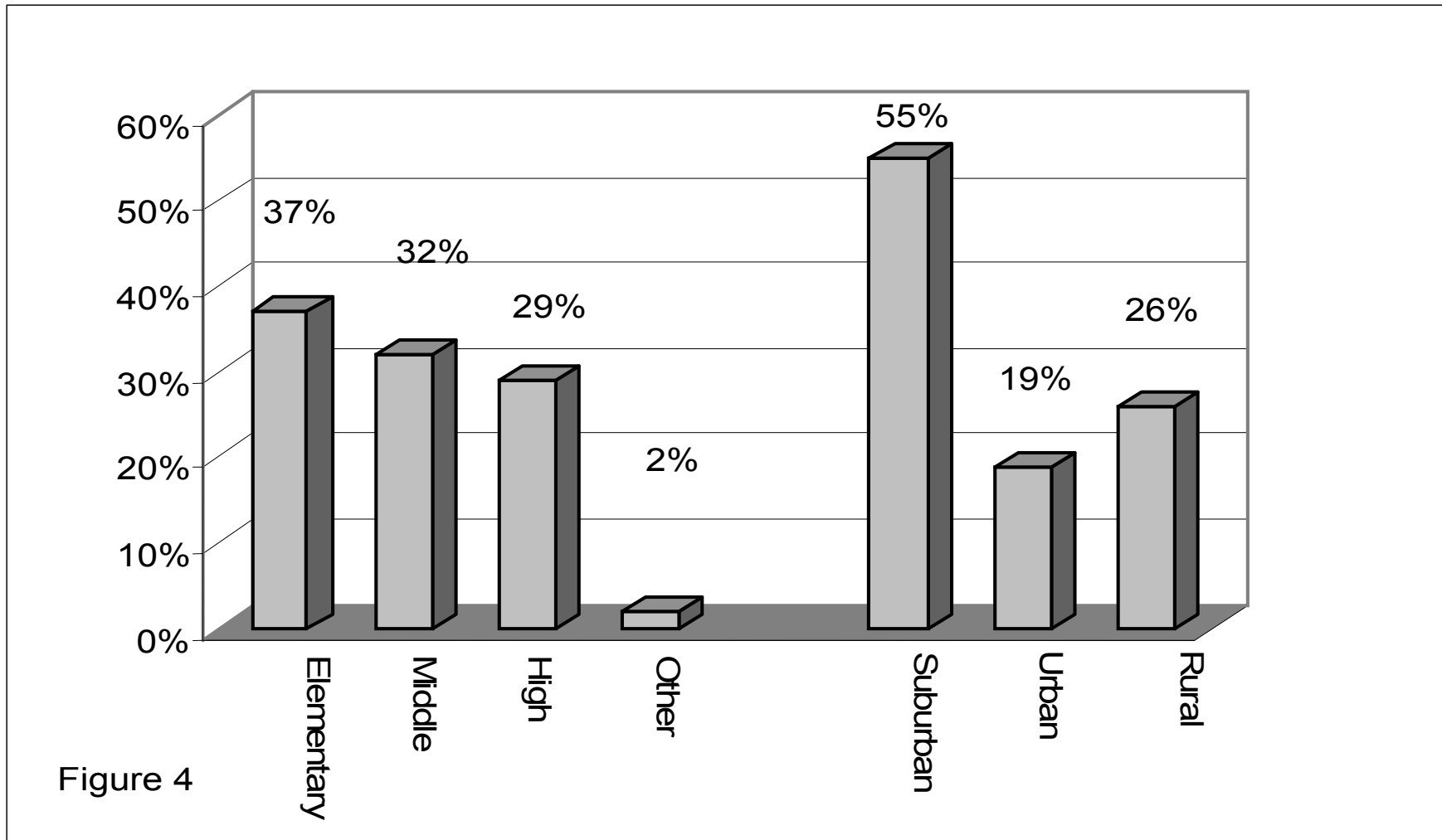


Figure 5. Number of Counselors with Previous Teaching Experience.

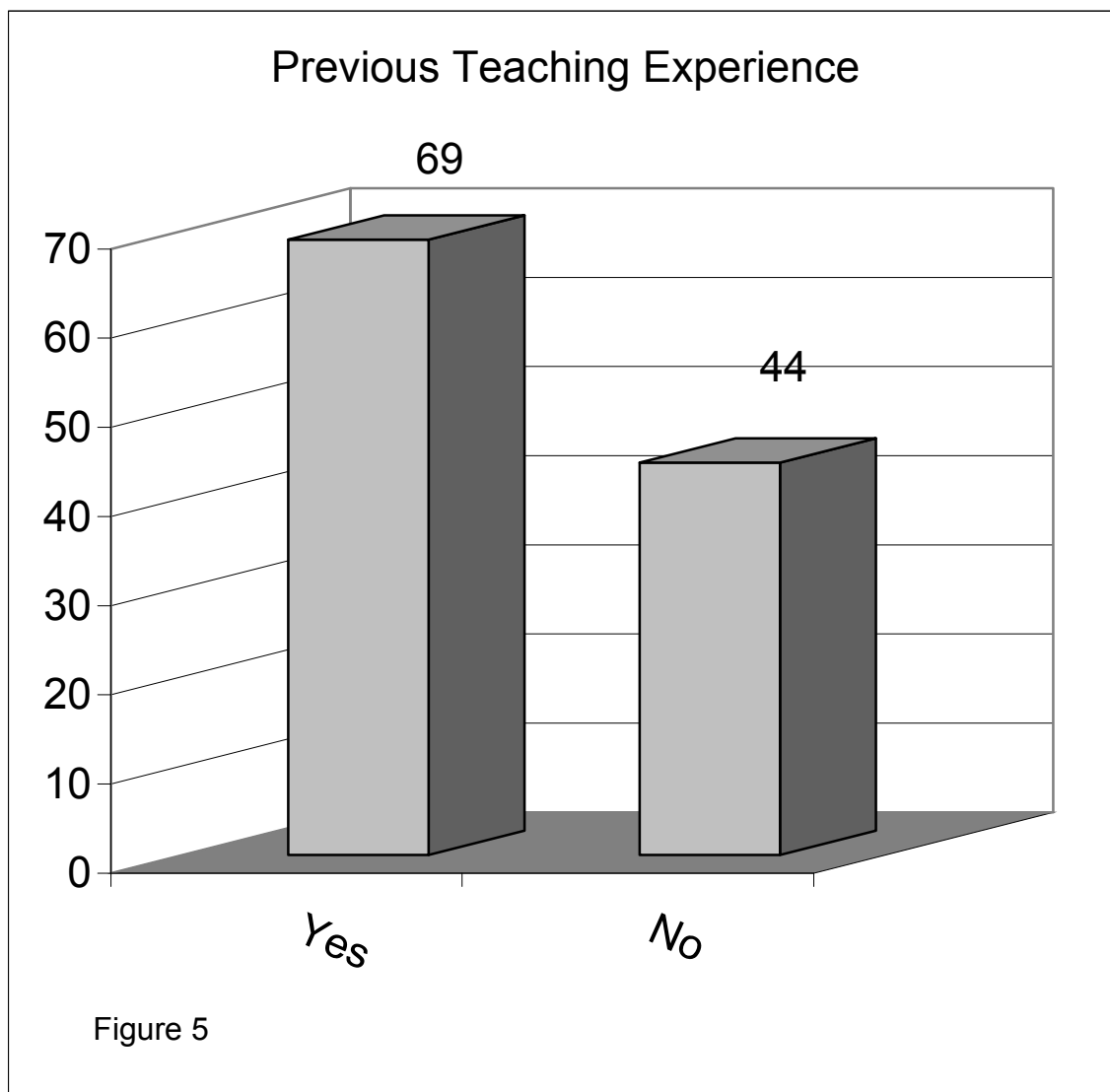
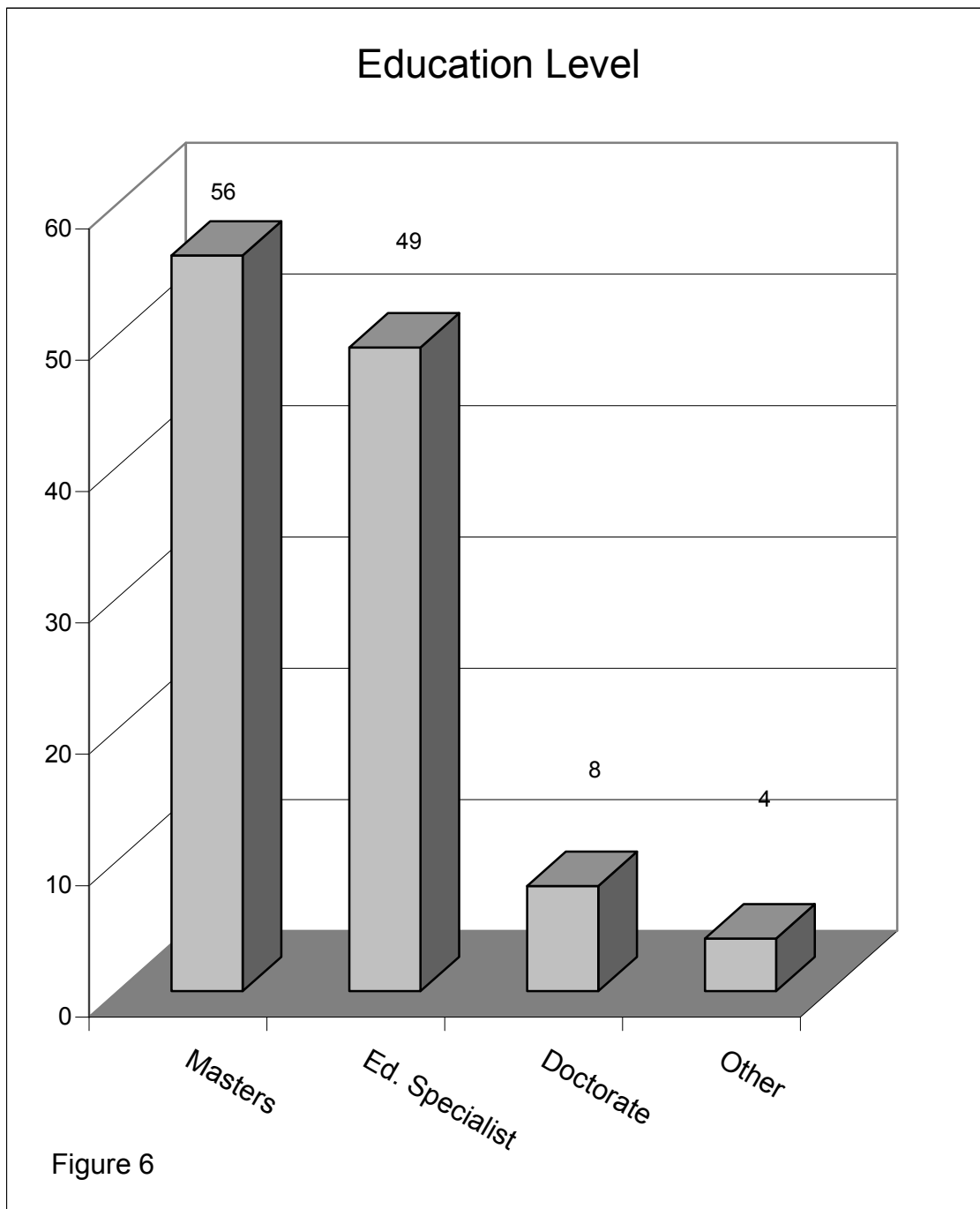


Figure 6. Number of Participants by Each Education Level



Findings

After collecting the surveys from participants, the researcher collected and sorted the data from each participant. The findings of the survey results were analyzed to determine the responses to the research questions. The research questions will be addressed in this section.

Research Question 1. To what extent do Georgia school counselors rate the implementation of the various components of the state guidance curriculum?

Results of the individual survey questions that addressed the extent to which school counselors are implementing appropriate guidance tasks are outlined in Table 6. The level of response depicted in Table 6 is ‘this is part of my implemented guidance plan’. For the purpose of reporting the results of this study, the researcher grouped the participants’ responses into two categories. Due to the small number of responses to each level, the responses ‘strongly disagree’ and ‘somewhat disagree’ were truncated for the purposes of reporting and the table reflects these responses as ‘disagree’. The responses of ‘agree’ and ‘strongly agree’ were combined to reflect ‘agree’.

Table 6. Extent of Implementation of Appropriate Guidance Tasks

	Disagree	Agree	N
Schedule and provide various types of counseling to all students	5%	95%	114
Coordinate and lead counseling groups for students who are experiencing similar problems.	21%	79%	113
Provide information to students and parents on career development and planning.	18%	82%	113
Conduct guidance sessions for students to prepare for test-taking	21%	79%	113
Analyze grade-point averages in relationship to achievement	57%	43%	112
Disaggregate and analyze student test score data	34%	66%	111
Providing input to administration in developing a master schedule	77%	23%	110
Provide academic advising and share post-secondary options to students	38%	62%	111

Table 6 (continued).

	Disagree	Agree	N
Consult with school system in making referrals to community agencies	16%	84%	111
Assist principals and teachers in addressing discipline issues with students	58%	42%	112
Plan and conduct career day activities for students	30%	70%	111
Use technology to access and analyze student data	27%	73%	111
Plan and conduct classroom guidance activities to promote academic achievement	8%	92%	112
Develop a plan that works to close the achievement gap	18%	82%	110
Provide a plan to teachers and staff for handling student crises	17%	83%	111
Conduct needs assessments for teachers, parents and students in developing guidance program	16%	84%	111

Table 6 (continued).

	Disagree	Agree	N
Have a method of follow-up And evaluation of the various Programs that are implemented	30%	70%	111
Routinely collect data on the various programs that are implemented	46%	54%	111

The task that the majority of counselors selected that is performed to the greatest extent as part of their implemented guidance plan was ‘scheduling and providing various types of counseling to all groups of students’ with a response rate of 95%. This task was also the task that was performed to the greatest extent by all groups of counselors from all grade levels and demographic settings.

School counselors also reported that this task had the greatest impact on student achievement with 97% in agreement. The task that was performed to the least extent was ‘providing input to administration in developing a master schedule’ with the response rate of 23%. While ASCA (2005) does not support the counselors’ role in developing the master schedule, an appropriate role for the school counselor is to collaborate and consult with administrators in providing academic planning for all students. Counselors also reported that 42% ‘assisted school administrators in addressing discipline issues’, ASCA (2005), deems it an appropriate task for counselors to work with the administration in counseling students with discipline problems as well as assisting administrators in resolving student issues. While 54% of school counselors report that they ‘routinely

collect data on the various programs that are implemented', there are 46% of counselors who do not. In addition, 70 % of counselors reported that they had 'a method of follow-up and evaluation of the various program components that are implemented' while 30% do not. Counselors also reported that 43% 'analyze grade-point averages in relationship to student achievement' although 51% agreed that this task impacted student achievement. According to Ware and Galassi (2006), school counselors must take advantage of opportunities to collect, disaggregate and analyze student data using basic statistical software to look at patterns of student achievement over time and use the results to assist teachers in making instructional decisions. In response to the research question, to what extent do Georgia school counselors rate the implementation of the various components of the state guidance curriculum the researcher calculated a mean score for all of the response items. As indicated by the researcher's findings, 69% of Georgia school counselors who responded to the survey are implementing the Georgia curriculum.

Research Question 2. To what extent do Georgia school counselors engage in the performance of inappropriate tasks?

In the survey, the researcher included tasks that are deemed inappropriate tasks for school counselors to perform (ASCA, 2005). For the purpose of reporting the results, the responses will be combined to reflect a pairing of 'strongly disagree' and 'somewhat disagree' to 'disagree'. The responses of 'agree' and 'strongly agree' will be combined to reflect 'agree'. N reflects the total number of respondents for each item listed. The results of the responses to the items are shown in Table 7 and also reflect the response level of 'this is part of my implemented guidance plan'.

Table 7. Extent of Implementation of Inappropriate Guidance Tasks

	Disagree	Agree	N
Maintain student Records	59%	41%	111
Perform data entry Duties	78%	22%	112
Work with students individually in a clinical and therapeutic mode	46%	54%	112
Coordinate and/or administering student testing	66%	34%	112
Coordinate and chair student support team meetings	64%	36%	112
Register and schedule new students	66%	34%	112
Monitor student behavior during the course of the school day	71%	29%	112
Transport student records from school to school	90%	10%	111
Act as administrator in the absence of the principal	90%	10%	111
Fill in and cover for teachers in their classrooms	96%	4%	110

The inappropriate task that school counselors reported as being performed least was to ‘fill in and cover for teachers in their classrooms’. While this was a relatively small number at only 4% it still indicates that this practice has not totally disappeared from the list of counselors’ duties. Counselors are also at times put in the position to fill in as an administrator in their absence (10%). The inappropriate task that was rated as the one counselors performed most often was ‘work with students in a clinical and therapeutic mode’. According to ASCA (2005), school counselors need to view their role as that of a prevention/intervention specialist in the school and not one of individual therapist for students. There are indications that counselors are still performing certain clerical duties such as maintaining student records (41%), and registering and scheduling students (34%). Other duties performed such as test administration and coordination (34%), and chairing student support teams (36%), indicate that counselors are still to some degree given these tasks to perform.

Research Question 3. To what degree of frequency do Georgia school counselors rate their performance of various tasks outlined in the Georgia guidance curriculum? The responses to this research question are shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Most Frequently Performed Tasks by Percentages.

Task	Percentage Agree/Strongly Agree	N
Schedule and provide various types of counseling to all students	98%	114
Plan and conduct classroom guidance activities that promote student achievement	68%	112
Use technology to analyze student data	64%	111
Develop a plan that works to close the achievement gap	63%	110
Consult with school system in making referrals to community agencies.	62%	111
Coordinate and lead counseling groups for students who are experiencing similar problems.	60%	113
Provide a plan to teachers for handling student crisis	58%	111
*Work with students in a clinical and therapeutic mode	56%	112
Assist principals and teachers in addressing discipline issues with students	54%	112
*Maintain student records	55%	111
Disaggregate and analyze student test score data	43%	111

Note: * Denotes that task is deemed inappropriate

Research Question 4. To what extent do Georgia school counselors differ in their perceptions by grade level and demographics of their performance of tasks and duties?

In response to research question 4, ‘to what extent do Georgia school counselors differ in their perceptions by grade level and demographics of their performance of tasks and duties?’ the researcher analyzed the survey from each group that showed the greatest degree of differences by grade level. The results are depicted in the following tables.

Table 9 shows the percentages to each response item, and frequency for survey question number 1, ‘schedule and provide various types of counseling to all students’. Possible response items are represented by BIN. The table shows that for each grade level, response 4 is the most frequently chosen which indicates that this is the most frequently performed task for each grade level. Table 8 shows the question that indicated the highest degree of difference for each grade level.

Table 9. Survey Question 1: Schedule and Provide Various Types of Counseling to All Sstudents.

Responses by Grade Level			
	BIN	Frequency	Percentage
Elementary	1	0	0%
	2	1	2.27%
	3	6	13.64%
	4	37	84.09%
Total		44	
Middle	1	3	8.11%
	2	0	5.00%
	3	8	21.62%
	4	26	70.27%
Total		37	
High	1	0	0%
	2	2	6.90%
	3	5	17.25%
	4	22	75.85%
Total		29	

Note: BIN reflects the possible response levels. 1-2 = Disagree, 3-4 = Agree

Table 10 shows that for question 16, 'register and schedule new students' that there is a difference among grade levels as to the frequency and extent that this task is performed. The greatest difference occurs between elementary and high school. Elementary counselors reported that they did not perform by rating it at a response of 1 or 2 for a combined 93.19%. High school counselors reported that this was a task that they frequently performed by rating it as a response of 3 or 4 for a combined 65.52%. For middle schools, the responses were distributed rather evenly among the two combined responses of 1-2 and 3-4. These results indicate that the task of scheduling and registering new students is a task that is most frequently performed by high school counselors, least performed by elementary school counselors and evenly performed by middle school counselors. This task is listed under ASCA's National Standards as not being an appropriate task for school counselors to perform (ASCA, 2005).

Another notable difference among grade levels is question 26 which asks counselors to report to what extent they perform the task of filling in and cover for a teacher's classroom. Elementary counselors reported this task more frequently than middle or high school counselors. This is shown in Table 11. In looking at the data from tables 4, 5, & 6, it shows that there are certain duties and tasks that are consistent between grade levels and some that are not. Counselors' responses to questions pertaining to the support they receive at the school and district level showed that counselors had support to implement a comprehensive guidance and counseling curriculum (74%). Counselors also reported that they were given direction from the district level on program guidelines (60%). But, when counselors were asked if they believed the role of the school counselor was clearly defined in their school district, the response was split at 50% agreeing and

50% disagreeing. The majority of the respondents also reported that both their school system (78%) and their school (77%) made AYP. Another area that showed differences among grade level was survey question 13 which asks counselors to rate the extent and frequency that they performed the task to ‘provide academic advising and share post-secondary options to students’. The responses to survey item number 13 by grade level is shown in Table 12.

According to counselors’ self reporting, counselors at the elementary level perform this task to the least degree at 27.28%, while middle school counselors perform this task at a rate of 67.57%, and high school counselors perform this task to the greatest degree at 86.55%. It is clear from the responses that elementary counselors do not view this task as relevant to elementary-aged students, though ASCA outlines this as an important component of each grade level guidance curriculum (ASCA, 2005).

Counselors’ responses by the school demographic setting was also analyzed. As indicated by the researcher’s findings, no significant trends or differences among counselors that worked in a suburban setting versus a rural or urban setting. Responses to survey questions by this variable were consistent with responses of other variables.

Table 10. Survey Question 16: Register and Schedule New Students.
Responses by Grade Level

	BIN	Frequency	Percentage
Elementary	1	39	88.64%
	2	2	4.55%
	3	1	2.27%
	4	1	2.27%
No response	0	1	2.27%
Total		44	
Middle	1	15	40.54%
	2	3	8.11%
	3	8	21.62%
	4	9	24.32%
No response	0	2	5.41%
Total		37	
High	1	5	17.24%
	2	5	17.24%
	3	12	41.38%
	4	7	24.14%
Total		29	

Table 11. Survey Question 26: Fill In and Cover for Teachers in Their Classrooms.
Responses by grade level

	BIN	Frequency	Percentage
Elementary	1	6	13.64%
	2	12	27.27%
	3	14	31.82%
	4	10	22.73%
No response	0	2	4.55%
Total		44	
Middle	1	32	86.49%
	2	2	5.41%
	3	1	2.70%
	4	0	0%
No response	0	2	5.41%
Total		37	
High	1	24	82.76%
	2	2	6.90%
	3	2	6.90%
	4	1	3.45%
Total		29	

Table 12. Question 13: Provide Academic Advising and Share Post-Secondary Options to Students.

Responses by grade level

	BIN	Frequency	Percentage
Elementary	1	29	65.91%
	2	1	2.27%
	3	10	22.73%
	4	2	4.55%
No response	0	2	4.55%
Total		44	
Middle	1	4	10.81%
	2	7	18.02%
	3	14	37.84%
	4	11	29.73%
No response	0	1	2.70
Total		37	
High	1	0	0%
	2	1	3.45%
	3	9	31.03%
	4	19	65.52%
Total		29	0%

Research Question 5: To what extent do Georgia school counselors perceive that the performance of specific tasks and duties support student achievement?

The third level of response that school counselors were asked to respond to was how they perceived the performance of particular tasks supported student achievement.

The results of how counselors responded this question is reported in Table 13.

School counselors reported that the tasks they perceived as having the greatest impact on student achievement was ‘schedule and provide various types of counseling to all students’ (97%), ‘plan and conduct guidance activities to promote student achievement’ (93%), and ‘coordinate and lead counseling groups for students who are experiencing similar problems’ (90%). The tasks that school counselors reported as having the least impact on student achievement was ‘transport student records from school to school’ (10%) and ‘act as an administrator in the absence of the principal’ (12%), and ‘fill in and cover for teachers in their classrooms’ (11%). The responses to these survey items are consistent with counselors’ extent of implementation.

Open Survey Response Items

At the end of the survey, counselors were given the opportunity to make comments on the role of the school counselor. Although the majority of the responses pertained to the many tasks that counselors are asked to perform, counselors reported that they want and need support from the state level to define their roles. Counselors reported that they were overworked and listed the numerous ‘hats’ they are asked to wear by school administrators. Test coordination is the task that counselors reported most often as being one they would most like to delete from their list of duties. Many counselors also complained of clerical duties and paperwork that impeded them from working more with

students in supporting their social/emotional development and prepare them for post secondary options. Several counselors also stated that they wanted Georgia to adopt the ASCA model and to make it more of a state mandate for school systems to follow. Although the survey results did not reflect it, school counselors responded that they performed more administrative and clerical tasks than they would like to due to pressure from overworked school administrators.

Table 13. Extent of Counselors' Belief that Task Supports Student Achievement

	Disagree	Agree	N
Schedule and provide various types of counseling to all students	3%	97%	114
Coordinate and lead counseling groups for students who are experiencing similar problems	10%	90%	113
Provide information to students and parents on career development and planning	22%	78%	113
Conduct guidance sessions for students to prepare for test-taking	16%	84%	113
Maintain student records*	62%	38%	111
Analyze grade-point averages in relationship to achievement	49%	51%	112
Perform data entry duties*	80%	20%	112
Work with students individually in a clinical and therapeutic mode*	32%	68%	112
Disaggregate and analyze student test score data	28%	72%	111
Coordinate and/or administering student testing*	67%	33%	112

Note: * indicates that this task is deemed inappropriate.

Table 13 (continued).

	Disagree	Agree	N
Coordinate and chair student support team meetings*	45%	55%	112
Providing input to administration in developing a master schedule	64%	36%	110
Provide academic advising and share post-secondary options to students	29%	71%	111
Consult with school system in making referrals to community agencies	16%	84%	111
Assist principals and teachers in addressing discipline issues with students	40%	60%	112
Register and schedule new students*	65%	35%	112
Monitor student behavior during the course of the school day*	54%	46%	112
Plan and conduct career day activities for students	29%	71%	111
Transport student records from school to school*	90%	10%	111
Use technology access and analyze student data	25%	75%	111

Table 13 (continued).

	Disagree	Agree	N
Plan and conduct guidance activities to promote student achievement	7%	93%	112
Develop a plan to close the achievement gap	13%	87%	110
Provide a plan to teachers and staff for handling student crises	18%	82%	111
Conduct a needs assessment for teachers, parents, and students in developing a guidance program	13%	87%	111
Act as an administrator in the absence of the principal*	88%	12%	111
Fill in and cover for teachers in their classrooms*	89%	11%	110

Several private school respondents stated that they felt free from many of the pressures that public school counselors were under due to not being by No Child Left Behind. One counselor wrote in their comment “I do not know what AYP is”. Several counselors in their response to what RESA district they were affiliated with, did not know.

Summary

Georgia school counselors who are members of ASCA comprised the respondents who participated in this study. Members were identified through the membership database for the state of Georgia. After allowing for members who were not practicing school counselors in Georgia schools, and for those members who did not list a viable email addresses, the population was a group of 328 school counselors.

The survey was emailed to the viable list and the return rate was 34.15% (112). The participants answered a series of survey items that related to tasks and duties that are part of the Georgia curriculum for school counselors. Other tasks and duties were listed in the survey that are considered by ASCA to be inappropriate tasks.

While school counselors responded to items that indicated that they are implementing the Georgia curriculum, there were some discrepancies due to grade level functions. School counselors were consistent in their reporting for items that they implemented the most frequent and to the greatest degree as also being the task that had the greatest impact on student achievement. There was little evidence that counselors’ tasks and duties and beliefs about role and function differed based on demographic setting.

School counselors who responded to the survey were frank in their opinions about how they viewed their roles. Counselors reported that they wanted to follow the ASCA National Model but needed the support of the state entities to make it happen in their respective school districts. Counselors felt pressured from school administrators to take on many tasks and “wear many hats”. The overall consensus among the school counselors who participated in this study was that they believed that their role was important for all students and they were an integral part of helping students to achieve but wanted and needed more support to perform the tasks that were necessary to make that happen. Counselors also felt that they felt that students really needed them to be more of a support to their social/emotional needs but that school administrators did not see that as their primary role.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

Georgia school counselors have a curriculum that, by Georgia law §2-2-182, creates a set of guidelines for all school counselors to follow. Much of the Georgia curriculum is designed to support a developmental guidance a counseling model while working on incorporating and promoting certain tenets set by ASCA, as well as follow local policy. This researcher attempted to address issues that face school counselors today in regard to their role and the curriculum they implement. Consequently, the question that drove this study was: To what extent do Georgia school counselors implement the state Guidance curriculum?

School counseling has its roots in the Vocational Guidance movement and since its beginnings, school counselors have struggled to create an identity all of their own (Erford, 2004; Gysbers, 1994; Myrick, 1997). With recent accountability mandates that have resulted from the No Child Left Behind legislation of 2001, the role of the school counselor has been reexamined by the American School Counseling Association (ASCA), and the National Center for Transforming School Counseling (NCTSC), established by the Education Trust (Education Trust, 2003; ASCA, 2005).

Ambiguity still surrounds how counselors function in schools and how their expertise can best be used (Brott & Myers, 1999). Many times the role of the school counselor and what tasks and duties they perform are directed by school administrators (Cummings, 2002; Louis, 2001; Waters, Marzano & McNulty, 2004). The literature indicates that students and schools are best served when counselors collaborate with

principals and school administrators to promote the social/emotional well-being of students and implement programs that support and enhance student success and achievement (Breen & Quaglia, 1991; Niebur, Niebur & Cleveland, 1999; Paisley & Hayes, 2003; Sink & Stroh, 2002). When counselors implement a guidance program that is both comprehensive and developmental, student achievement can be positively impacted (Dahir, 2000; Gysbers, 2004; & Henderson, 2006).

Georgia school counselors are guided by a curriculum that focuses on a comprehensive guidance and counseling program (CGCP) (GDOE, 2005; Gysbers & Henderson, 2006). Another question raised in this study was to what degree of frequency counselors spend on the performance of certain tasks. The Georgia DOE supports the CGCP model in suggesting that counselors spend the majority of their time in the implementation of a guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services, and system support (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006). The Georgia DOE has realigned this proposal to say that counselors are to spend five out of six segments per day in providing services to students and parents (GDOE, 2005).

The ASCA model and the CGCP model both promote programs that align themselves with an accountability component that suggests that counselors use and analyze student data and collect data on programs they are implementing (ASCA, 2005; Gysbers & Henderson, 2006). The study also addressed additional accountability issues and asked counselors to respond to questions regarding their analyzing student data and to what extent they believe that the performance of certain duties and tasks support student achievement.

The population that was identified for the researcher to survey was the active Georgia membership of ASCA. Permission was granted from ASCA to access the database that lists the Georgia members. Provided in this list were email addresses for its members. After IRB approval, the researcher utilized the list of Georgia members and sent emails that directed participants to a link where they could access the survey. Although the original list of Georgia members was 620, there are members of ASCA who are not school counselors and some who did not provide email addresses. Using the ASCA member list of Georgia members, over 500 emails were sent, with over 175 bouncing back as invalid or with an address error. This created a viable population of 328. Of that number, 113 completed the survey. The return rate of the survey was 34.45%.

Analysis of Research Findings

After sorting and analyzing the survey responses for each of the participants, the researcher calculated the percentages of responses to the survey for each survey questions and how each respondent answered each question. The several tables and charts were constructed to display the data, answer each research question and address the demographic data that was presented.

The results of the demographic data indicated that the majority of the school counselors that responded to the survey were female, white, and worked at the elementary level and had 10.3 years of school counseling experience. Most of the counselors worked in a suburban setting and 50% of them were educated beyond the minimum requirement of a Masters degree.

In response to the overarching question as to whether or not Georgia school counselors are implementing the Georgia curriculum, 69% of the participants reported by their responses to the survey items that they are implementing the curriculum. The findings also indicated that a smaller percentage of counselors are still performing tasks that are deemed inappropriate, such as clerical duties and counseling students in a therapeutic mode. In addition, there was a difference in the responses of elementary counselors to that of middle and high school counselors, but little difference in responses based on demographic setting.

The open response item that asked counselors to make comments about their role as a school counselors rendered similar results. The theme of most of the respondents was frustration over the many non-counseling tasks they were asked to perform by school administration and also the amount of paperwork and clerical duties they were asked to perform. Many counselors also commented that they believed that they provided valuable support to both teachers and students that helped students to achieve, but also believed that school administrators were not always fully supportive of their role and that they needed more support from both the state and local systems in recognizing what school counselors do. The results of this researcher's study indicate that school counselors believe that the tasks and duties they perform impact on student achievement.

In a study conducted by Brigman and Campbell (2003), it was concluded that as a result of counselors implementing programs such as counselor led interventions such as classroom guidance and group counseling, students showed improvement in achievement tests scores in reading and math. These findings are also supported by Sink and Stroh (2003), for school counselors who implement a comprehensive guidance and counseling

program (CGCP) students showed improved achievement over those schools where a CGCP was not implemented. Myrick (1997), stated that school counselors are uniquely trained to implement the kinds of programs that promote student achievement.

School counselors are in favor of national standards that give counselors a set of guidelines to follow that implement practice over theory (Dahir, 2004). As indicated by the results of this study in comments made by the participating counselors, school counselors want to see more implementation of the national standards of ASCA and believe that this must be done at the State level as a mandate to local systems. The majority of the Georgia school counselors that were surveyed in this study (74%) believed that they received support from both teachers and administration to implement a comprehensive guidance program. Clark and Amatea (2004); Beesley (2004) , stated that when surveyed teachers supported school counselors as a valuable resource for students were overall satisfied with the services that counselors rendered, and believed that more school counselors were needed to implement more programs to serve students more effectively. It is also widely reported that collaboration and communication between counselors and principals is a primary influence on how school counselors are used in a school (Beale, 2003; Stone & Clark, 2001; Ponec & Brock, 2000). The literature shows that principals are supportive of counselors in their performance of duties and functions in a school setting (Hardy, 1999; Zalaquett, 2005). Since it is usually the job of the principal to select the school counselor, the role that the school counselor assumes is based upon how knowledgeable the school principals is about what school counselors do (Donegan & Jones, 2004; Fullwood, 2004; Ponec & Brock, 2000). Overall, it is reported in the literature that attitudes of teachers and administrators are positive when it comes to

school counselors implementing a comprehensive guidance and counseling program (Hughey & Gysbers, 1993; Hardy, 1999; Ponc & Brock, 2000; Zalaquett, 2005).

As indicated by the researcher's findings, school counselors routinely collected data on the programs that they implement and they also have a method of follow-up and evaluation for the programs. Fairchild (1993), stated that school counselors who were in the field for a period of one to ten years were more likely to collect accountability data and see its importance.

Tasks that counselors reported to be less desirable dealt with duties such as test coordination due increased high stakes testing. In a study by Brown, Galassi, and Akos (2004), though school counselors argued that this was not a task that they felt was appropriate, only 6% in one study and 18% in another suggested that this task be given to someone other than the school counselor.

Conclusions

The overarching question that drove this study was: To what extent do Georgia school counselors implement the Georgia curriculum that is mandated for school counselors? Results of this study indicate that the majority of Georgia school counselors that were surveyed for this study are to the most extent implementing the curriculum. Also indicated by the researcher's findings, school counselors perform certain tasks and duties that are more specific and appropriate for their respective grade levels and there is at least one task that all grade levels perform to the most extent. There was a greater difference between tasks that high school counselors perform and elementary counselors perform. Although the survey shows that elementary counselors do not perform tasks related to career planning and post-secondary options, this task is considered part of the

curriculum for all grade levels of students. According to the findings in this study, school counselors in Georgia are performing more appropriate than inappropriate tasks as outlined by the ASCA model, but there are still counselors at all grade levels engaged in some tasks that are deemed inappropriate. The results of this study do not give evidence of why school counselors continue to perform many of these tasks, but the tasks that counselors perform the most frequently deal with direct services to students and are performed the most frequent, and in their perception have the greatest impact on student achievement. Georgia school counselors believe they are supported by teachers and administration, but teachers and administrators do not fully understand the appropriate roles of the school counselor.

Implications

School counselors perceive their role as one of providing and delivering a guidance curriculum that supports and promotes academic success for all students. While school counselors are implementing the curriculum that is guided by the State of Georgia, school counselors still seek more direction from the State in implementing a comprehensive guidance curriculum that aligns with the ASCA National Standards. As supported by the literature, Ponec & Brock (2000), stated that counselors are many times asked by principals to assume other duties that are not in line with their true role and this creates a dilemma for them since principals are the ones who traditionally hire them.

Policy Implications

While the Georgia DOE has a policy in place that addresses counselor's roles and responsibilities, counselors must become more vocal in bringing this policy to the

attention of school administrators who assign duties. School counselors are many times put in the role of educating administrators as to their appropriate role.

Implications for the Profession

School counselors face many challenges in Georgia as decreased budgets loom large for many school systems. With the recent passing of legislation that dictates to local systems the 65% rule of funding, school counselors are more vulnerable than ever since they are not part of that funding equation. School counselors continue to be that entity that schools can use as a resource to fill other pressing administrative and clerical jobs that understaffed schools need performed. Counselors many times feel powerless to speak out for fear of not being perceived as supportive by school administrators who will be conducting their annual evaluations. Even though the role of the school counselor is clearly defined at the State level in written form, there are few forces in local school systems that hold true to the written law governing what school counselors do. School counselors can no longer afford to not be members of their professional organizations in order to have a collective voice and facilitate a change in their roles.

Implications for Administrators

School administrators usually make the decisions in a school that pertain to personnel choices, instructional programs, as well as make task and duty assignments for members of the school staff. School counselors are many times employed by principals who do not fully understand the appropriate roles for school counselors and make assignments based on the needs of the school rather than the appropriateness of the task.

As the standards for school counseling become more and more prevalent in many school systems, school administrators may face pressure from school counselors as well as State policy makers to adhere to the guidelines that are set for school counselors/

Research Implications

The findings in this research study support earlier findings that school counselors need support, more effective communication and collaboration with teachers and administrators to implement an appropriate guidance . It is only when all members of the education community understand what the true role of the school counselor is, that it will evolve into ASCA's vision of the school counselor as a major contributor to promoting student success and achievement.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are being made by this researcher for implementing results of the study:

1. School counselors want and need more direction from the State level that more clearly defines their role.
2. Make school administrators more aware of the law governing the roles and functions of school counselors.
3. State and local education agencies should conduct workshops with school principals to review of the ASCA model.
4. Administrative and clerical duties should be reconsidered as regular duties for school counselors.

5. School counselors should communicate to principals their expertise in supporting students' social/emotional well-being and how it relates to student success and achievement.
6. School counselors should become active in local and national professional organizations that support school counselors' appropriate roles and functions.

Recommendations for further research are as follows:

1. The survey instrument should include more questions about counselors' attitudes, roles, and functions.
2. A separate survey should be used to survey principals about the counselor's role.
3. The timeliness of the dissemination of the survey should be at a more appropriate time of the school year.
4. A larger population should be surveyed for more reliable results.
5. Surveys should have been mailed out rather than sent out electronically.
6. A mixed method study using both quantitative and qualitative methods should be conducted to gather more comprehensive information from individual school counselors.

Concluding Thoughts

As a former practicing school counselor and now one who works with elementary counselors in to develop programs for their school counseling programs, this researcher is very much aware of the challenges that face today's school counselors. Veteran school counselors are faced with a paradigm shift in how they were trained as counselors and the reality of their role change. Novice school counselors entering the field after their

graduate programs are complete, have been versed in the ASCA model are confronted with the conflict between what they have been taught and the reality of the work place.

Change will come, but change takes time. As the new vision of school counseling emerges with new counselors coming into the field, school administrators may be more willing to listen to the ideas of the new professional school counselor and how their expertise can best be utilized. If school leaders, at all levels, are able to embrace the new standards for school counseling and encourage school counselors to implement a comprehensive guidance and counseling model, it will be a win-win for all involved and students, parents, teachers, and schools will ultimately benefit.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Georgia School Counselors' Program Implementation Survey

Directions: Read and rate each item according to (a) the frequency that you perform this duty as a professional school counselor (b) the extent to which you perform this task as part of your implemented guidance program, and (c) the extent to which you believe this task impacts on student achievement.

1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Somewhat 3 = Somewhat agree 4 = Strongly agree

1. Schedule and provide various types of counseling to all students.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

2. Coordinate and lead counseling groups for students who are experiencing similar problems.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Somewhat 3 = Somewhat agree 4 = Strongly agree

3. Provide information to students and parents on career development and planning.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

4. Conduct guidance sessions for students to prepare for test-taking.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

5. Maintain student records.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Somewhat 3 = Somewhat agree 4 = Strongly agree

6. Analyze grade-point averages in relationship to achievement.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

7. Perform data entry duties.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

8. Work with students individually in a clinical and therapeutic mode.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Somewhat 3 = Somewhat agree 4 = Strongly agree

9. Disaggregate and analyze student test score data.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

10. Coordinate and/or administering student testing.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

11. Coordinate and chair student support team meetings.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Somewhat 3 = Somewhat agree 4 = Strongly agree

12. Providing input to administration in developing a master schedule.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

13. Provide academic advising and share post-secondary options to students.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

14. Consult with school system in making referrals to community agencies.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Somewhat 3 = Somewhat agree 4 = Strongly agree

15. Assist principals and teachers in addressing discipline issues with students.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

16. Register and schedule new students.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

17. Monitor student behavior during the course of the school day.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Somewhat 3 = Somewhat agree 4 = Strongly agree

18. Plan and conduct career day activities for students.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

19. Transport student records from school to school.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

20. Use technology to access and analyze student data.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Somewhat 3 = Somewhat agree 4 = Strongly agree

21. Plan and conduct classroom guidance activities to promote academic achievement.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

22. Develop a plan that works to close the achievement gap.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

23. Provide a plan to teachers and staff for handling student crises.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Somewhat 3 = Somewhat agree 4 = Strongly agree

24. Conduct needs assessments for teachers, parents and students in developing guidance program.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

25. Act as administrator in the absence of the principal.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

26. Fill in and cover for teachers in their classrooms.

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. I perform this task daily
(strongly agree), weekly (agree),
monthly (somewhat agree),
yearly (strongly disagree) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. This is part of my implemented
guidance plan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. This task impacts student
achievement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

40. Work setting demographic: Suburban _____ Urban _____ Rural _____
41. What RESA District? _____
42. Number of students in my school: _____
43. Number of students per counselor _____
44. Number of Full-time counselors _____
45. Number of Part-time counselors _____
46. Did your school make AYP? Yes _____ No _____ In Needs Improvement _____
47. Did your school system make AYP? Yes _____ No _____
48. Please make any additional comments/thoughts that you may have regarding the role of the school counselor:

APPENDIX B

Literature Review Matrix

Studies Related to School Counselors and Achievement

STUDY	Purpose	Participants	Design/Analysis	Outcomes
Brown, Galassi & Akos (2004)	Counselor perception of impact of high stakes testing on their role	Counselor members of the North Carolina Counselor Association (NCSCA), n=141	Questionnaire/ Descriptive	Although study suggests that the use of school counselors as test coordinators was not a valuable use of time, only 6 – 18% suggested that someone other than the counselor be given that role.
Brigman & Campbell (2003)	Teacher perceptions of the effect of school counselor led group counseling and classroom guidance on student classroom behavior and math and reading scores on an achievement test	Students in schools with counselor led interventions (tx group, n = 97), students without counselor led interventions (control group, n = 125)	Quantitative: Pre-post test/ANCOVA	Student behavior Improved/ student achievement showed improvement
Fitch & Marshall (2004)	Counselor's role in low-achieving schools compared to high-achieving schools	Kentucky school counselors, all levels (n= 62)	Quantitative; survey; non-parametric test of significant differences	Counselors in high-achieving schools used programs in line with national standard

Sink & Stroh (2003)	To evaluate the effect of CGCP on achievement of elementary students	Elementary Students (n=20, 131) Counselors (n = 119)	Quantitative/Box's test of equality of covariance matrices, Levene's test of error variance/ MANCOVA	Elementary students in schools with CGCP showed higher achievement than non-CGCP schools
Webb, Brigman & Campbell (2005)	The effect of counselor interventions on student achievement and social competence	5 th & 6 th grade students (n=418) from 20 schools	Quantitative; Pre-test/post-test; ANCOVA	Significant improvement in math scores of tx group
Stroh (2003)	Difference in achievement between sixth graders with CGCP and sixth graders without CGCP	6 th grade students in Washington State schools (n= 4, 062)	Causal/ comparative; MANCOVA	No significant difference in achievement

Studies Related to School Counselor's Role

STUDY	Purpose	Participants	Design/Analysis	Outcomes
Brott & Myers (1999)	Grounded theory of school counselor identity and role	Elementary & middle school counselors (n=9)	Qualitative: Interviews	Identity of school counselors shape role and programs
Ginter & Scalise (1990)	The role of the elementary school counselor as perceived by teachers	Louisiana elementary teachers (n=313)	Quantitative: survey; factor analysis	Role of school counselors are defined in two dimensions, helper and consultant
Zalaquett (2005)	Principal's perceptions of elementary counselors role and function	Elementary principals (n=500)	Quantitative; Chi Square	Elementary principals are supportive of counselor's role and function and job performance

Studies Related to School Counseling Programs

STUDY	Purpose	Participants	Design/Analysis	Outcomes
Dahir (2004)	Counselors' perceptions of the development of a National Model for School Counseling.	K-12 School Counselors.	Quantitative: Survey/ANOVA	Counselors favor National Standards; standards should reflect practice over theory; differences due to grade level assigned.
Hardy (1999)	To rate counselors' and principals' perceptions of counselors' performance of appropriate/inappropriate program tasks	Secondary school counselors and principals	Quantitative; survey; independent/ dependent t-tests	Secondary school counselors and principals perceived counselors' involvement in both appropriate/inappropriate tasks
Hughey & Gysbers (1993)	Perceptions of students, parents & teachers of CGCP	Students (280), parents (125) & teachers (150) in Missouri	Qualitative; Survey	Responses to survey were positive in regard to school counselors' implementation of CGCP.

APPENDIX C

Sanders, Victoria

From: Kathleen Rakestraw [kakestraw@schoolcounselor.org]
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2006 10:31 AM
To: Sanders, Victoria
Subject: Fwd: Permission

Permission granted. Please be sure to cite the American School Counselor Association.

Kathleen Rakestraw
Director of Communications
American School Counselor Association
www.schoolcounselor.org
kakestraw@schoolcounselor.org
(703) 86-48734
(703) 24-29351, fax

----- Original Message -----

From: Sanders, Victoria
To: jcook@schoolcounselor.org
Sent: Thursday, February 02, 2006 12:35 PM
Subject: Permission

Dear Ms. Cook,

I am a professional school counselor working on my dissertation and have been directed to you for permission to use a chart that is part of the ASCA model. I have written to Dr. Dahir, whose name appears at the bottom of a chart that lists appropriate and inappropriate activities for school counselors. She stated that although she would be happy to give her permission and that permission would have to come from ASCA. Please advise as to how I may gain permission to use this chart in my literature review. Thank you in advance for your help.

Victoria N. Sanders, Ed.S.

Guidance, Counseling and Testing Services

Hospital Homebound Services

Phone: (706) 826-1129

Fax: (706) 826-4626

APPENDIX D

Georgia Southern University Office of Research Services & Sponsored Programs Institutional Review Board (IRB)		
Phone: 912-681-5465		Administrative Annex
		P.O. Box 8005
Fax: 912-681-0719	Ovrsight@GeorgiaSouthern.edu	Statesboro, GA 30460

To: Victoria Naufal Sanders
3617 Bermuda Circle West
Augusta, GA 30909

CC: Dr. Michael Richardson, Faculty Advisor
P. O. Box 8131

From: Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs
Administrative Support Office for Research Oversight Committees
(IACUC/IBC/IRB)

Date: April 11, 2006

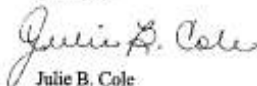
Subject: Status of Application for Approval to Utilize Human Subjects in Research

After a review of your proposed research project numbered: **H06189**, and titled "**Georgia School Counselors' Perceptions of Program Implementation and Accountability**", it appears that (1) the research subjects are at minimal risk, (2) appropriate safeguards are planned, and (3) the research activities involve only procedures which are allowable.

Therefore, as authorized in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to notify you that the Institutional Review Board has approved your proposed research.

This IRB approval is in effect for one year from the date of this letter. If at the end of that time, there have been no changes to the research protocol, you may request an extension of the approval period for an additional year. In the interim, please provide the IRB with any information concerning any significant adverse event, **whether or not it is believed to be related to the study**, within five working days of the event. In addition, if a change or modification of the approved methodology becomes necessary, you must notify the IRB Coordinator **prior to** initiating any such changes or modifications. At that time, an amended application for IRB approval may be submitted. Upon completion of your data collection, you are required to complete a *Research Study Termination* form to notify the IRB Coordinator, so your file may be closed.

Sincerely,



Julie B. Cole
Director of Research Services and Sponsored Programs

APPENDIX E

April 20, 2006

Dear Georgia School Counselors,

As many of you are aware, school counselors are faced with the challenge of defining their own role in the schools. While trying to perform the many tasks they are assigned, school counselors must also assist in the school's efforts to meet accountability standards.

As a doctoral student at Georgia Southern University and school counselor who has worked with a diverse population of students, my dissertation addresses many issues that face today's school counselor. I am asking that you take a few minutes of your time to respond to a survey that asks you to give your opinion on many of the tasks and responsibilities that counselors are asked to perform.

As a counselor who works in support of school counselors in my school system, I know that this is a very busy time of year. I am asking that you take a few minutes to complete this survey by clicking on the link below and responding by May 10, 2006.

Should you decide to participate, attached you will find a copy of the informed consent form that outlines this research project. Your participation will be appreciated. If you are interested in learning the results of this study, you may reply to this email and request the results and they will be sent when the research project has been completed.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to participate in this research study.

Victoria Nauful Sanders

Click on link below to respond to the survey.

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=85182027893>