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COUNSELOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ASCA NATIONAL MODEL AT TITLE I ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

by

ARONICA GLOSTER

(Under the Direction of Leon Spencer)

ABSTRACT

Bridging the achievement gap between students in poverty and their more advantaged peers has been a key focus of contemporary reform efforts. Principals have been encouraged to utilize distributed leadership principles to facilitate school improvement. Research has indicated that counselors have been absent from school reform initiatives. Moreover, a dearth of literature exists regarding the activities of counselors with students who live in poverty. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) asserted that counselors can play in important role as facilitators of school reform by utilizing the ASCA National Model as a foundation for school counseling programs. A study was conducted to examine how counselors implemented the ASCA National Model in Title I elementary schools.

A descriptive, quantitative study was conducted. Participants completed a survey indicating the frequency with which they performed activities recommended by the National Model and activities classified as inappropriate by ASCA. Responses from 94 participants indicated that these counselors frequently performed many of the recommended activities, which suggests a high level of implementation of the Model and comprehensive guidance programs. Of 51 recommended activities, 32 were performed frequently or routinely by more than 50% of the participants. Inappropriate activities were performed infrequently. Performing hall, bus or cafeteria duty was the most frequently performed inappropriate activity. Counselors spent most of their time performing activities in the guidance curriculum and individual planning domains. Few differences were found in the implementation of activities according to 10 demographic survey items relating to work setting, counselor training, and experience. The relationships between the demographic variables and activities were weak. The leadership skills of collaboration and advocacy were found to be used on regular basis.

The findings of the study revealed that elementary counselors at Title I schools largely implemented activities recommended by the ASCA National Model. Also, the findings indicated that while counselors have not been considered important in school reform efforts, they performed activities that promote the achievement of students who are poor, as well as many leadership activities that informally integrated them into the reform loop. A new paradigm for school leadership and reform which integrates counselors was suggested.

INDEX WORDS: Counselors, School Reform, Leadership, ASCA National Model

COUNSELOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ASCA NATIONAL MODEL AT TITLE I ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

by

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B.S.Ed., University of Georgia, 1995

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DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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2009

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Electronic Version Approved:

December 2009

DEDICATION

"Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established"

Proverbs 16:3

In addition to the Father, I dedicate this study to several important people in my life:

My mother, *Irma B. Gloster*, who has been my backbone for all of my life. Her unwavering love and support, manifested in innumerable ways, has enabled me to complete not only this study, but all other accomplishments in my life. She even took care of me when I injured my ankle during this process. She is truly a blessing and the real "Superwoman!"

My father, *Rhennevor Gloster* and my uncle, *Donnie J. Bittle* who are both deceased but whose presence is always still felt. Their belief and pride in my abilities fueled my desire to do all that I can with what I have been given. Their work ethic and testimony of perseverance has, and will always be inspirational and empowering.

My brother, *Ronnie Gloster,* and nephew *Cole A. J. Gloster*. They have always been there to gently "push me," ask me about my progress, and even get me up when I didn't feel like working. I pray that this achievement will remind them that all things are possible with God and that with Him, nothing is impossible.

My extended family that has continually supported me from afar and saw the completion of this project before it was a reality for me. I pray that I've made you proud by adding a "Doctor to the family!"

Last, this study is dedicated to the children whose lives have blessed me so, and those that I have yet to encounter.

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"*Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falls; for he hath not another to help him up. …And if one prevails against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.*"

Ecclesiastes 4: 9 - 12

I am grateful to so many people who have led and accompanied me along this dissertation journey. I express sincere gratitude to:

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Public education has been under increased scrutiny and accountability requirements in regards to meeting student needs and promoting learning since the release of *A Nation at Risk*: *The Educational Imperative* (1983). There was a call for school reform, as no longer was the public willing to accept “effort” as a substitute for “evidence” (Paisley & Hayes, 2003). Many reform efforts have been implemented, ranging from professional learning communities, to whole language curriculum, to block scheduling. Effective school reform, however, requires the integration and utilization of all the skills and talents possessed by personnel (Hall & Hord, 2006; Lieberman, 2004). Indeed, human resource development is one of the notable trends in education (Owens, 2001). In this poststructuralist perspective, school leaders have been challenged to reconsider how they view the roles of all personnel such that they can be used most effectively. One key player needed to help address the diverse academic, social and emotional problems students face is the school counselor. Further, it has been argued that systemic change in the education of all students will not occur without the sustained involvement of all the critical players in the school setting, including school counselors (Paisley & Hayes).

Mandates including counselors have been absent in state and local school improvement initiatives (Dahir, 2004; Colbert, R., Vernon-Jones, R., & Pransky, K., 2006; Paisley & Hayes, 2003). Research and policy has focused on curriculum, teaching and formal leadership as manipulable variables impacting student learning. However, goals four and five of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* require all educators to address the importance of safe and drug-free learning communities and to ensure that all students will graduate from high school (U.S. Department of Education [U.S. ED], 2002; Dahir, 2004). Principals have been encouraged to utilize distributed leadership principles to better incorporate teachers and other personnel in school improvement efforts (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Hulme, 2006; Sergiovanni, 1992). Accordingly, it is incumbent upon school leaders to consider how counselors function in schools in efforts to meet student needs and improve academic achievement. Specifically, counselors' efforts to help students at risk for failure must be examined. In this research study, the researcher examined the activities of counselors in schools with high poverty rates to understand the extent to which national standards were used in those schools to guide counselors' activities. Additionally, the use of counselors' leadership skills as a component of school reform was examined.

Background of Study

Major Historical Developments in School Counseling

School counseling has its roots in the vocational guidance movement, which has been traced back to the Industrial Revolution of the late 1800s (Herr, 2002; Foster, 2003). During the 1900s, Frank Parsons, "The Father of Guidance," pioneered significant efforts furthering the development of school guidance programs. The focus of guidance programs, however, shifted much between the 1920s and 1950s (Gysbers, 2001). During that time, and even to the present, questions loomed regarding the purpose and functions of counselors. There existed much debate as to whether they should serve as mental health specialists, career guides, or proponents of educational achievement (ASCA, 2005).

It was not until the 1960s that there was a proliferation of school counseling programs, largely due to the federal funding provided through the National Defense Education Act of 1958 (ASCA, 2005; Hardesty & Dillard, 1994). The 1950s, 60s, and 70s, saw guidance programs shift to an emphasis on personal growth and responsibility and an articulation of the expectation that responsibilities of counselors were counseling, consulting and coordination (Foster, 2003; Hardesty & Dillard, 1994). These three primary responsibilities have remained and are evident in the national counselor role statement published in the 1990s. As elementary guidance programs grew, implementation of curriculum was later added as a fourth responsibility.

A renewed vigor for educational reform ushered in by the publication of *A Nation At Risk* and the promulgation of systems thinking during the 1980s also encouraged change in school counseling. Vocational planning continued to be espoused as an important function for counselors, but as counseling continued to evolve, other areas grew in importance through ensuing initiatives. Congressional acts such as the Carl Perkins Vocational Act (1984) and the School to Work Act (1994) promoted the improvement of career education and included specific references to counselor activities (Foster, 2003; ASCA 2005).

Beginning in 1996 and concluding in 2004, The Education Trust and Met Life, funded by a grant from the Dewitt-Wallace Reader’s Digest, researched school counselors’ roles and issued a mandate for transformation—the Transforming School Counseling Initiative (TSCI) (The Education Trust & Met Life National School Counselor Training Initiative, 2002). Counselors were to be dedicated to facilitating educational equity, as well as addressing whole school and systemic concerns (The

Education Trust & Met Life National School Counselor Training Initiative). In 1997, the National Standards for School Counselors were released by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA, 2005). These standards indicated a shift from a vocational focus to a three-component, comprehensive paradigm for providing services to all students in the areas of academic, career, and personal/social development from grades pre-k through 12 (Niebuhr, Niebuhr & Cleveland, 1999; Monteiro-Leitner, Asner-Self, Milde, Leitner, & Skelton, 2006; ASCA). A change in nomenclature from guidance counselor to school counselor was indicative of this shift and an attempt to clarify the role of school counselors (Bemak, 2000). Later, in 2003, ASCA published *The National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs (ASCA National Model)* to create "one vision and one voice for school counseling programs (ASCA, 2005, p.8)."

The ASCA National Model provided a framework for counseling programs to better ensure that they are comprehensive in design and delivered to all students through a four-component system: developmental guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services, and systems support. ASCA maintains that the framework "maximizes the full potential of the National Standards documents and directly addresses current education reform efforts" (ASCA, 2005, p.9). It is based on the fundamental premise that in order for counselors to become key players in educational reform, they must develop and operate school-specific comprehensive, developmental counseling programs that address the academic, personal/social and career domains outlined by the National Standards. These programs are built on the foundational counselor skills and attitudes of leadership, advocacy and collaboration. Moreover, counselors are to be evaluated by the thirteen School Counselor Performance Standards that underpin the activities that have expanded into the National Model (ASCA). Services are provided to students and other stakeholders through the four aforementioned prescribed delivery methods. Additionally, counselors are charged to utilize data, provide results reports, audit their programs and utilize a system for proper management of their programs (ASCA). By activating the ASCA National Model, heavily based in collaboration and accountability, it is argued that counselors' activities will lead to systemic change and facilitate student success.

In efforts to unify and clarify counselor responsibilities, the state of Georgia is one of 30 states that has implemented a comprehensive guidance curriculum statewide (ASCA, 2005). Additionally, efforts are being made to align its programs with the National Standards and the *ASCA National Model* to better integrate counselors with overall school missions in order to improve student achievement (Sanders, 2006). According to Georgia State Board of Education legislation, counselors are to be engaged in counseling or guidance activities including advising students, parents, or guardians, for a minimum of five of six fulltime segments or the equivalent (GDOE, 2006). For example in a 7- hour school day, counselors must spend 5.8 hours involved in counseling or guidance activities with students, parents or guardians. Counselors in Georgia have been charged to implement a comprehensive and developmental guidance and counseling curriculum to assist all students in their schools. Although recommended, full implementation of National Standards and the ASCA National Model is not yet mandatory in Georgia (Sanders, 2006).

Principal Leadership, School Reform and Counselors

While counselors' roles have changed over the decades, so too have ideas about effective school leadership. Contemporary school leadership approaches encourage the utilization of a distributed leadership perspective, as opposed to approaches that rely on the principal as the "great man" who brings about change (Hulme, 2006; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Trail, 2000). The distributed leadership perspective encourages principals to capitalize on the strengths of all school personnel by building a culture that empowers staff to utilize their specific skills and knowledge to pursue a collective vision based on shared values that support progress for schools (Leithwood & Mascall). Most models of distributed leadership have focused on involving teachers in the leadership paradigm (Bennet et al. 2003; Leithwood & Mascall). However, distributed leadership involves extending the boundaries of leadership beyond teaching to other communities within the school (Bennett et al.). This broader community includes not only parents, but also counselors and other school personnel. Research has shown that principals have the greatest influence on how counselors operate in schools. Therefore, as principal leadership has broadened beyond the traditional role of building manager to that of instructional leader whose goal is to focus the attention of the entire school on instruction and student learning, it is incumbent upon principals to consider how to utilize counselors in school reform efforts (Hulme).

In an age in which the systems perspective is valued, it has become increasingly evident that counselors are no longer primarily responsive to single, troubled individuals in a clinical setting, but, rather, to be agents who work collectively with all stakeholders in the education of children (Bemak, 2000; Cryer, 2002). Despite this broadened idea of school counseling, educational researchers have indicated that counselors have been omitted from initiatives to lead in educational reform, even to the extent of being viewed as peripheral to the main function of schooling and academic achievement (Stone & Clark, 2001; Amatea & Clark, 2005; Bemak, 2000).

Articulated increasingly in counseling literature is the need for counselors to play more active roles in school reform efforts (Frome & Dunham, 2002; House & Hayes, 2002; Stickel, 1999; ASCA, 2005). Research has indicated that most schools are engaged in some form of school reform activity (Stickel, 1999). Typical reform efforts have been aimed at improving instruction, raising student achievement, promoting school level planning and problem-solving, and increased accountability (Holcomb - McCoy, 2001; Stickel, 1999; Cooper, 2003). Although further study is needed, the limited research has suggested that counselors do have an interest in participating in school reform efforts more directly. In a study of urban school counselors' perceptions of school restructuring activities, Holcomb-McCoy found that counselors agreed they should be involved in typical restructuring activities such as understanding school climate, participating on school-based management teams and participating in school-level decision-making (2001)

After the release of *A Nation At Risk*, the federal government fortified its decision to lead educational reform by enacting comprehensive legislation in the form of *Goals 2000* and most recently, the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001.* NCLB, a reform of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and reauthorized in 2007, embodies four core principles of stronger accountability for results, expanded flexibility and local control, expanded options for parents and an emphasis on scientifically research-based teaching methods (U.S.ED, 2003). A target of this reform is to close the achievement gap between disadvantaged and minority students and their peers. Provisions of Title I of this Act, which is focused on disadvantaged students, have emphasis on ensuring that students learn in safe and drug free environments, that the number of the dropouts is decreased, and that the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their peers is eliminated. These are areas that are particularly germane to the functions of counselors.

Researchers have identified hurdles that limit the impact of reforms and ultimately, the academic success of disadvantaged students. Low expectations and denial of access to rigorous course content are but two of the major obstacles to the implementation of standards-based educational reform (House & Hayes, 2002; The Education Trust & Met Life Foundation National School Training Initiative, 2002). Moreover, it has been argued that the establishment of meaningful relationships with students is fundamental to reform success, but that many schools do not have such connections between students and staff (Hargreaves & Fink, 2000; Stickel, 1999). Some posited that counselors have skills and understandings that can address these concerns and help remove these barriers (House & Hayes; Education Trust, 2002). Although NCLB does not make specific reference to the role of counselors, the area of reducing barriers to improving academic achievement of all children is one of increasing importance for school counselors (Bryan, 2005). It has been argued that counselors' school-wide perspective and access to educational data places them in a prime position to facilitate change (Paisley & Hayes, 2003; House & Hayes). Furthermore, ASCA has recommended counselors act as leaders to identify issues that need to change in schools and develop change strategies for the benefit of all students academically (ASCA, 2005; Bemak, 2000).

There have been a limited number of national reform initiatives that promoted the direct involvement of counselors. Two of the only national education reform initiatives that explicitly promoted counselor involvement in school reform were the Collegeboard's *Equity 2000 Systemic Educational Reform Model* and the Southern Regional Education Board's *High Schools that Work (HSTW)* (The Collegeboard, 2000; Kaufman, Bradby, & Teitelbaum, 2000). Initiated in 1990 and eventually implemented in over 700 schools with nearly a half million students, *Equity 2000* was targeted at reducing the gap in college attendance between low income and minority students and their non-minority more economically advantaged peers. Evaluative research of the reform indicated that students were more successful when guidance counselors' roles were changed from gatekeeper to advocate (The Collegeboard). *HSTW*, conducted with 424 schools, emphasized counseling as one of six key practices used to promote student achievement. Findings from that initiative indicated that increased time spent talking with counselors and teachers was positively correlated with higher achievement scores (Kaufman et al.) Entities such as the National Commission on Secondary Vocational Education and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in High School have recognized the value of guidance counselors in reform and also advocated for the expansion of guidance services (Foster, 2003).

Even though research indicated that counselor participation in reform efforts can be beneficial for students, a problem is that counselors' daily activities are largely unknown and documentation of the positive impact of them on student success is limited

(House & Hayes, 2002;). A few empirical studies exist which have substantiated the positive impact of counselors' direct and indirect activities on students' personal, social, and academic development (Baggerty & Barkowski, 2004; Whiston & Sexton, 1998; Brigman & Campbell 2003; Edmondson, 1998; Webb, Brigman & Campbell, 2005; Gerler & Anderson, 1986). A small number of studies have indicated, however, that students are negatively impacted as a result of counselor inaction. For example, high school students who did not receive guidance underestimated the amount of education needed for jobs and future education (House & Hayes, 2002; Frome & Dunham, 2002).

Although it has been established that counselors utilize a variety of direct and indirect strategies, very few studies have documented the specific roles and activities of school counselors. Specifically, little is known about how counselors function in different work settings. In examining differences according to grade level, one study by Hardesty and Dillard of 369 counselors revealed that elementary counselors reported higher levels of coordination of programs and consultation with faculty, families and community agencies than their middle and high school counterparts (1994). High school and middle school counselors worked more with individuals (Hardesty & Dillard). Elementary counselors performed less administrative activities than middle and high school counselors, although all groups indicated a significant amount of paperwork (Hardesty & Dillard; Partin, 1993; Stickel, 1999).

Scarce research has been conducted regarding counselors' activities in schools characterized as high-poverty or high-achieving. Based on the limited findings, few differences were shown to exist between the activities completed by counselors in high and low achieving schools (Fitch & Marshall, 2004; Woodward, 1989). In both settings, the bulk of time for counselors was spent in counseling (individual and group) and other non-counseling related activities (Fitch & Marshall). However, counselors in high-achieving schools spent more time in program management, evaluation and research, as well as coordination, and there was a greater correlation between actual and perceived duties as compared to lower-performing schools (Fitch & Marshall; Woodward).

Despite the fact that counselors have largely been omitted from reform efforts, evidence has suggested that reform efforts have affected how counselors function in schools. In general, studies have indicated that counselors were more involved in teamwork with administration, students, teachers and parents (Stickel, 1999; Colbert et al., 2006). Additionally, counselors indicated larger caseloads, and performing more non-counseling duties (Sanders, 2006; Stickel).

Counselors and Children in Poverty

Upon examination of counselors' changing roles and expectations regarding their activities, there has been a renewed vigilance for counselors to reach students most at risk for school failure. A number of precipitating factors have been identified that put urban minority and poor students at risk, including homelessness, poverty, neighborhood crime and drugs, and sociocultural factors such as discrimination, and racial/language barriers (Bryan, 2005; House & Hayes, 2002). In the school setting, low expectations and a discouraging climate have been determined to be two detrimental factors to the performance of children in poverty (Cross & Burney, 2005).

The argument has been made that current reform efforts ignore changes in the family and home structure, as well as the profoundly unmet emotional and physical needs of children (Foster, 2003; Cooper, 1993; Hargreaves & Fink, 2000). According to

Adleman & Taylor (2002), between 12 and 22% of all children were described as suffering from a diagnosable mental, emotional, or behavioral disorder with relatively few receiving mental health services. Additionally, the Children's Defense Fund (CDF) reported that an estimated 3 million children in 2004 were reported as suspected victims of child abuse and neglect, with 900,000 children confirmed as victims (2005). The CDF also reported that 3 out of every 5 children living in poverty in 2004 fell into "extreme poverty," living at less than one-half of the poverty rate. Poverty, mental health deficiencies, abuse, and neglect were all factors indicated to weigh heavily on students and reinforce frustrations that increased the difficulty of learning (Adleman & Taylor, 2002).

To help address these mediating factors, implications from studies indicated that counselors have some understanding of the difficulties facing at-risk students (Bryan, 2005; Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007). Counselors can be successful in developing personal relationships with students, supporting strong partnerships with family and community, and providing students with opportunities for meaningful connections with schools and communities that can build educational resilience and foster academic achievement for students at risk for failure (Bryan; Cross & Burney, 2005; House & Hayes, 2005). Bryan asserted that urban counselors should facilitate two types of partnerships that foster academic achievement and resilience in poor and minority children – family-centered partnerships and extracurricular enrichment partnerships. Family–centered partnerships included family centers, parent education programs and family outreach. Examples of extracurricular enrichment partnership programs were tutoring, mentoring, and after-school enrichment.

With the advent of NCLB (2001), renewed legislative focus has been placed on reducing the achievement gap and assisting at-risk students. Counselor activities with students at risk for failure may be considered supplemental to federal and state actions. National efforts through Title I have been made to address the needs of students plagued by poverty to better ensure that they will meet challenging state academic standards (U.S.ED, 2006). Through Title I, funding and academic enrichment services are provided to schools with the highest percentages of children from low-income families.

Approximately 12.5 million students have been served through Title I nationally each year (U.S.ED, 2006). During 2005 – 06, in the state of Georgia, 733,694 students were served in schools receiving Title I assistance (GDOE, 2006). Schools are held accountable for ensuring that students receiving Title I assistance perform at levels that meet state requirements. Accountability in the form of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), legislated through the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, has forced all school personnel to scrutinize the achievement of both Title I and non- Title I students. Consequences for schools who do not meet the AYP in the same subject for two or more consecutive years include categorization as Needs Improvement schools, and the possibility of escalating consequences each successive year (GDOE, 2006). Title I public and public charter schools that have met or exceeded Georgia's adequate yearly progress goals for three or more years running, or that have made the greatest gains in closing their achievement gaps, and have not been on the Unsafe Schools Choice Option (USCO) list within the last two years, are called Title I Distinguished Schools (U.E. ED, 2006). Counselors, like all other personnel, are held accountable for the success or failure of these underprivileged students. Again, there is a dearth of empirical information regarding the work of counselors with low-income and minority students. To this regard, in the context of school reform, the activities of counselors in Title I schools warrant investigation.

Statement of Problem

The clarion call to improve student academic performance has been sounded. Counselors have been responding and some research indicated that their efforts have positively impacted student performance. On a national level, the role of counselors has shifted to one in which there is greater definition and accountability for student achievement. Counselors have been charged to move from the fringes into the core of educational reform. In particular, as vocalized in NCLB, there has been an expressed mandate for school personnel to work towards reducing the achievement gap between minority and at-risk students and those who are performing at acceptable standards. Moreover, emphasis has been given to new distributed leadership styles that embrace and utilize the expertise and skills of all school workers. It has been implied that counselors should play a role in this reform. Counselors bring a unique set of understandings and skills that can positively impact student achievement, through both direct and indirect initiatives. The new focus, however, is not only on what school counselors do, but rather how students are different as a result of what counselors have done.

Given the very different demographic climate of US schools, a trend towards distributed leadership, and the growing emphasis on counselor accountability, how best to utilize counselors in schools continues to be an area warranting investigation. Although counseling has been present in schools since the 1900s, there is still a lack of clarity about what counselors are doing and how their efforts impact students. Little empirical research exists which documents the actual activities of counselors working with at-risk student populations. Furthermore, there appears to be even less research regarding the counselor role in high-performing schools, particularly those with at-risk populations. Clearly, contemporary educational reform efforts seek to marry disadvantaged and minority students with high-performance. The role of the counselor in reaching this goal has been unclear.

A dilemma has emerged as to whether counselors are indeed leaders in schools and whether or not they utilize their leadership skills. Current distributed leadership frameworks encourage a broader view of leadership which involves all school personnel in developing a shared vision and fulfilling the mission of schools. Accordingly, a primary aim of the ASCA National Model and its delivery system is to integrate counselors into educational reform in a meaningful way and take advantage of counselor leadership skills. However, research indicating the implementation of the ASCA National Model in schools with high at-risk populations is limited, perhaps even non-existent. To address this gap, the researcher studied the extent to which counselors in Title I elementary schools are implementing the activities prescribed by the ASCA National Model and utilizing leadership skills in their respective settings. Essentially, the researcher sought to draw from this investigation information that reveals how counselors are integrated into school reform initiatives aimed at schools with highly economically disadvantaged populations.

Research Questions

Given the changing role of school counselors, the researcher of this study sought to discover the extent to which school counselors in elementary schools characterized as high-poverty implement the activities prescribed by the ASCA National Model. Additionally, the extent to which these counselors are utilizing leadership skills was investigated. The primary research question was: To what extent do counselors implement activities prescribed by the ASCA National Model and leadership within Title I elementary schools?

To guide the study, the secondary research questions were:

1. To what extent do counselors in Title I elementary schools engage in activities described as inappropriate by the ASCA National Model?
2. What activities recommended by the ASCA National Model receive the greatest emphasis by counselors in Title I elementary schools?
3. Are there differences among elementary counselors at Title I schools in the implementation of the ASCA National Model activities according to demographic factors (2008 AYP Status, student to counselor ratio, level of school engagement in whole school reform, grades served, mandated implementation of ASCA Model, number of counselors, school setting, total years of counseling experience, training on the National Model, and years of counseling experience in Title I schools)?
4. To what extent do elementary counselors in Title I schools exhibit leadership by performing activities requiring the use of collaborative and/or advocacy skills?

Significance of Study

There has been much discussion regarding how to improve schools and ultimately promote student achievement. Perhaps more than ever before there has been a push to hold all school personnel accountable for student achievement outcomes. Consequently, the researcher of this study sought to illuminate and bring under greater scrutiny the efforts made by counselors to function as leaders who improve student academic achievement.

As students struggle with a myriad of issues that impact their ability to learn, counselors can play a vital role in helping to address these issues so that students can better succeed in learning. Although there has been a concerted effort in many states by school districts towards aligning counselor responsibilities with National Standards, research has still indicated that some counselors spend a significant amount of time in activities that are not recommended by the ASCA standards, hindering the development of effective comprehensive, developmental guidance and counseling programs which have been found to be positively correlated with improved student achievement and facilitate counselor participation as school leaders. Additionally, school counselors continue to be omitted from the "reform loop" of efforts to bring about meaningful changes that stimulate student learning.

One powerful tenet of the NCLB (2001) legislation has been reduction of the gap between students from various minority backgrounds, including race, gender, socioeconomic status, and special needs, and the majority. However, little research exists that examines the activities performed by counselors in schools that have been successful in promoting the achievement of at-risk students.

School leadership policy and practice may be impacted by the findings of this study. Implications for aspiring counselors and counselor training may also result. Practicing counselors, as well as administrators, can also gain insight from the results of this study. Although actual counselor responsibilities vary among school settings, as a result of findings from this study, counselors may be able to better prioritize their efforts. Moreover, principals may gain further understanding of meaningful counselor roles and the activities that promote student learning. Continued research on personnel who work with at-risk populations can only serve to better inform professionals so that they can better meet the educational needs of their constituents.

The researcher has worked as a counselor in a Title I elementary school and is acquainted with both the joys and frustrations of elementary school counseling in a school where students deal with numerous issues that impede learning. Additionally, the researcher has worked a top achieving middle/high school in the state of Georgia. Although there are differences in responsibilities inherent because of differences in demographic constitution and school requirements, the researcher has reflected on what could be done as a counselor to most effectively promote the achievement of students in both settings. The researcher has a passion to see achievement similar to that witnessed in the top school in more schools with high at-risk populations. The researcher also has a belief in the worthiness of school counseling and its ability to impact students' lives. Thus, this study is personally significant to the researcher because its findings may help her to refine her practice for the ultimate benefit of disenfranchised students.

Methods

The researcher conducted a descriptive, quantitative study. A survey was used to gauge the frequency of performance of counseling activities and to identify the prevailing activities performed. The subjects were 94 counselors at Title I elementary schools in Georgia. A researcher - created survey based on The School Counselor Activity Rating Scale (SCARS) (Scarborough, 2005) was used to collect data. The survey listed 51 activities recommended by ASCA and 14 activities described as inappropriate by ASCA. The survey items were arranged according to the 4 dimensions of the ASCA National Model delivery system (guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services, and system support) and “other activities,” which included only the inappropriate activities. Ten demographic items were included which will allowed for the data to be disaggregated according to school location, counselor-student ratio, counselor experience (total and in Title I schools), school reform status, grades served, training on the ASCA National Model, AYP status, number of counselors working at site, and county requirement of the National Model implementation. The survey was available at the SurveyMonkey website. Informed consent letters inviting counselors to participate in the study were disseminated by mail and e-mail to school counselors at 450 identified Title I elementary schools in 180 school districts.

Descriptive data from questionnaire items was analyzed by measuring the frequency and central tendency of responses. Additionally, the *Chi-Square* test of independence was used to determine if there were significant differences between the activities of counselors based on demographic factors. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to facilitate data analysis.

Delimitations

1. This study only collected data from currently employed counselors in the state of Georgia. While the ASCA Model is a national framework, participation was not solicited from counselors in other states where comprehensive guidance program implementation is not mandated.

2. Frequency ratings of the performance of activities were examined only from counselor perspectives. Student, principal or parent perspectives were not examined.
3. All possible activities counselors perform were not examined in this study. The list of activities examined were only those included in the SCARS and identified according to the ASCA National Model as appropriate or inappropriate.
4. This study was limited to describing the activities performed by counselors. It did not assess the effect of these activities on student achievement.

Limitations

1. This study may have limited generalizability due to the voluntary nature of respondents, the specific focus on Title I schools and small sample size. The findings may have little applicability at non-Title I schools or Title I schools outside of Georgia. A small sample size may limit the extent to which results reflect the entire population of Title I elementary schools.
2. The results of this study may be limited by the counselors' interpretation of the scale used in the survey instrument. Participants' use of their own judgment regarding frequency indicators may impact findings.

Definition of Key Terms

The following definitions are provided to ensure uniformity and understanding of these terms throughout the study. The researcher developed all definitions not accompanied by a citation.

Advocacy: Actively supporting causes, ideas or policies that promote and or assist student academic, career and personal/social needs (ASCA, 2005).

Collaboration: A partnership where two or more individuals or organizations actively work together on a project or problem (ASCA, 2005).

Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Programs (CGCP): Terminology used in the state of Georgia to refer to a program based on a curriculum that is developmental and preventative in nature, has competencies in academic, career, and personal/social domains, and seeks to benefit all students. CGCPs are implemented by credentialed school counselors. CGCPs are known as *comprehensive school counseling programs* by ASCA.

Frequency: refers to the number of times an activity is performed within a school year

Frequently: happening often; common

Inappropriate activity: Any activity or duty not related to the development, implementation, or evaluation of the counseling program. An example of an inappropriate activity is teaching classes when teachers are absent (ASCA, 2005).

Leadership: capacity or ability to guide others; exemplified by performance of activities in which counselors collaborate with others to influence system-wide changes and implement school reform. Leadership is also shown by counselors advocating on behalf of students (ASCA, 2005).

Never: does not occur or is not ever performed

Non-Traditional Counseling Activities: Activities focused on promoting larger scale, systemic change such as understanding and improving school climate and parent education.

Occasionally: happening sometimes but not often:

Rarely: happening very infrequently; seldom

Routinely: happening very often; habitual

Traditional Counseling Activities: Activities focused on individual development such as individual counseling and individual career advisement.

Summary

Contemporary educational leaders have been challenged to move beyond functioning as mere managers into visionaries who facilitate meaningful school reform. A major target of reform is the closing of the achievement gap between students who are poor and their more advantaged peers. Because a significant number of children in the US live in poverty, efforts have been made on a national level in the form of Title I to provide some assistance to economically disadvantaged students. Research has indicated that poor children have to contend with various obstacles that can put them at greater risk for failure and hinder their performance in schools, and that most reform efforts have overlooked the impact of these obstacles to student learning. While reform initiatives have been evident in education, and schools have employed various reform strategies, very few educational reform efforts have explicitly involved counselors in the work of changing schools to promote student achievement. Principals, who have the most significant impact on how counselors function in schools, are encouraged to utilize a distributed leadership perspective to guide their inclusion of counselors in reform efforts. Traditionally, principals have not involved counselors in school reform for various reasons, including the lack of clarity regarding what counselors do in schools. Specifically, there is little known about what counselors do in schools with large numbers of children who are poor.

While the field of school counseling has been present in schools since the early 1900s, it has varied in widely in its purpose, aims, and associated activities. ASCA has taken steps to clarify the role and activities counselors should fulfill in schools through the publishing of the *ASCA National Model for School Counseling Programs*. A specific aim of this Model is to better integrate counselors into school reform efforts by having counselors utilize leadership skills to develop and implement comprehensive, developmental counseling programs that are focused on the achievement of all students. Moreover, the promotion of systemic change is a central focus for the Model. Few studies exist regarding the implementation of the Model, especially in specific populations, such as Title I schools

To address the gaps in the literature regarding the involvement of counselors in school reform efforts, the activities of counselors in schools with significant numbers of poor children, and implementation of the ASCA National Model in schools with high levels of poverty, the researcher conducted a study focused on counselor implementation of the ASCA National Model in Title I elementary schools in Georgia. The researcher conducted a quantitative, descriptive study with the aim of providing insight into the activities of elementary counselors and their involvement in school reform through implementation of the ASCA National Model and utilization of leadership skills.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

In comparison to teaching, school counseling is a young profession. Its origins date back to the dawning of the 20th century. The scope and focus of counseling has changed over time from vocational and educational decision making to personal growth, to responsive services for special populations, to developmental programs for all students. (Wessman, 2003) In recent decades, counselor attention has also turned to issues of school violence, bullying, grief, divorce and teen suicide, while continuing to address questions of how students can be accepted into college, prevention of drug and alcohol use, and improving student learning (Johnson & Johnson, 2003; Gysbers, 2004). Role ambiguity in counseling, however, has been present since the early days of guidance (Burnham, Jones & Jackson, 2000; Foster 2003). Since 1958, both professional counselors and organizations have addressed the role and function of counselors in literature; however, little exists in the literature regarding interventions used by counselors on a day-to-day basis (Foster).

Present-day discussions regarding school reform have challenged traditional ideas about leadership and encouraged more active involvement of members in the school community as leaders. Distributed leadership principles have been espoused as beneficial in creating learning communities where the input and expertise of school personnel is valued. As leadership efforts continue to focus on school improvement and helping students, a growing concern is how counselors fit into the picture of school reform. More specifically, counselors’ attempts aimed at reducing the achievement gap between minority and poor students and their non-minority, more economically advantaged peers has become an area of interest.

Historical Overview of Counseling

As the world witnessed the birth of new technologies during the Industrial Revolution, a sibling was born in the world of education – school counseling. School counseling had its origins in the late 1800s (Herr, 2001; Gysbers, 2001). Since its inception, the field of school counseling has responded to economic, political and social demands (Herr; Gysbers; Burnham, Jones & Jackson, 2000).

In the 1800s and early 1900s, the development of guidance activities in schools was accelerated by the demands of the industrial revolution and the need to handle the large influx of immigrants who had come to US seeking better economic opportunities (Herr, 2002; Foster, 2003). Additionally, some early pioneers in counseling had concerns about preserving human dignity, free and informed choice, and the need to influence the content and practice of schools to address the changing conditions of the US (Gysbers, 2001). The first recorded guidance program was established by a high school principal, Jesse B. Davis, in Detroit (Coy, 1999. Wessman, 2002). The program integrated guidance into English classes (Coy; Wessman). During the 1900s, the term "vocational guidance" was used to describe the guidance activities which were then performed by classroom teachers (Gysbers). These teachers were appointed as "vocational counselors" who received no formal training or financial compensation, but were expected to perform guidance duties in addition to their teaching responsibilities (Coy; Gysbers). The activities, although often left undone due to the copious burdens of teachers, focused on matching traits with vocations (Wessman; Coy). Later in 1908, Frank Parsons, commonly known as the “Father of Guidance,” began the Vocational Bureau in Boston to help youngsters leaving the public schools with career choices. (Coy; Wessman).

Although the emphasis was heavily vocational, two different perspectives guided the activities of the counselors, tracing back to the philosophical debate between founding fathers Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson (Foster, 2003; Gysbers, 2001). One perspective, aligned with the ideas of Franklin, saw the purpose of guidance as a way to sort individuals and prepare them for a particular vocation. The other perspective, based on democratic principles as espoused by Jefferson, emphasized the need to not only assist students in making vocational choices, but also to bring about social changes in industry (Gysbers; Foster). Additionally, the perspectives in counseling were influenced by the ideology of the Progressive Movement (Gysbers; Coy, 1999). The Progressive Movement, promoted by John Dewey, emphasized the importance of educating the whole child.

The 1920s witnessed a shift from an emphasis on vocation to more of a focus on efforts to assist the intellectual growth of individuals (Gysbers, 2001; Coy, 1999). The clinical model of guidance began to emerge. This change was influenced by the growth in mental hygiene and measurement movements, developmental studies of children, the introduction of cumulative records and progressive education (Gysbers). Concerns about the proper role for counselors to play in schools began to emerge. Literature cites leaders, such as Fitch, who were worried that the counselors may come to be regarded as a “handy man on whom may be unloaded any sort of task that no one else has time to do” (Fitch as cited in Gysbers, 2001, ¶29). This issue still resonates in contemporary counseling literature (ASCA, 2005; House & Hayes, 2002; Partin, 1993; Gysbers).

Through the 1930s and 1940s, personal counseling began to dominate theory and practice (Gysbers, 2001). Moreover, outcome expectations for counseling programs were beginning to be delineated and were broadened to include addressing problems of adjustment to health, religion, recreation, family and friends, as well as school and work (Davis, 2006; Gysbers). Pupil Personnel Services, which continued to flourish through the 1960s, began to develop in school systems and included guidance as one of its services (Wessman, 2002; Gysbers). It was also during these two decades that the influence of federal legislation on the development of school guidance and counseling programs was evident with the passage of the Act to Further Development of Vocational Education (Gysbers). This act was followed by the Vocational Education Act of 1946. Both acts provided funds for federal and state offices to provide supervision and support to guidance programs (Gysbers).

In 1957, Russia launched Sputnik, the first spacecraft to orbit the Earth. This event caused a significant shift in the emphasis of guidance and counseling programs. Federal legislation by the US Government in response to the launching and its efforts to create a populace that could compete with, indeed supersede, Russia significantly influenced the course of guidance and counseling program development. In 1958, Congress passed the National Defense Education Act. With the enactment of this legislation, college-bound students became a priority in schools and developing students who were rigorously prepared in math and science was of utmost importance (Gysbers, 2001; Coy, 1999; Wessman, 2002). Accordingly, the training of counselors took on greater significance and certification standards were first implemented in Ohio in 1955 (Coy, 1999). A service delivery model of guidance, focused on personal growth and responsibility, prevailed in guidance programs during the 1950s and extended until the 1970s (Foster, 2003).

As the 1960s began, guidance was still an unrefined program (Gysbers, 2001). However, as the decade progressed, guidance gained greater definition in schools (Davis, 2006). In 1966, the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) categorized the role and functions of counselors into three areas: counseling, consultation, and coordination (Burnham, Jones & Jackson, 2000). Additionally, in response to federal legislation in the form of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, guidance programs continued to develop around the country (Wessman, 2002). Counselors were afforded the opportunity to gain and implement specialized training (Wessman). According to Davis this decade is considered the "Golden Era" for high school guidance and counseling, as programs proliferated and subsequently emerged in elementary schools. The foundation for a developmental model for guidance was also laid during the 1960s, which emphasized counseling as an integral part of schools, rather than a set of ancillary services delivered by a person in a position (Wessman). Developmental models tied to the growth and development of students evolved. Accordingly, in 1969, the Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program was introduced at a career guidance, counseling and placement conference held at the University of Missouri-Columbia (Wessman).

Concerns about the services model continued to grow during the 1970s and 1980s and efforts were made to better integrate counseling into the overall educational process. Many states eliminated the teacher certification requirement for school counselors, facilitating the development of counseling as an independent discipline (Davis, 2006).

The American School Counseling Association (ASCA) began to issue role and position statements to facilitate the transition of counseling from a position and ancillary service (Wessman, 2002). Three structures developed in response to concerns about the service model: (1) the Developmental Guidance and Counseling Model, (2) Competency-based guidance, and (3) Comprehensive school counseling programs (Gysbers, 2001).

The Developmental Guidance and Counseling Model, introduced by Robert Myrick was composed of six interventions divided into direct and indirect services provided to students according to their appropriate developmental levels (Burnham et al., 2000; Holcomb-Mccoy & Mitchell, 2005). The six interventions included: (1) individual counseling, (2) small group counseling, (3) classroom guidance/large group guidance, (4) consultation, (5) coordination, and (6) peer facilitation/training (Burnham et al., Holcomb Mccoy & Mitchell). Counselors were advised to spend 5 – 15% of their weekly time in individual counseling, 10-25% of their time in small group counseling, 7 - 8% of their time in classroom guidance, and 7% of their time in consultation. There were not specific guidelines given for coordination or peer facilitation, however, it was recommended that counselors spend 1 – 5 hours in peer facilitation (Burnham et al., Holcomb- Mccoy & Mitchell). According to Myrick's guidelines, developmental programs should be: (1) geared toward all students, (2) have an organized and planned curriculum, (3) sequential and flexible, (4) integrated with the total educational process, (5) inclusive of all school personnel, (6) focused on helping students learn more effectively and efficiently, and (7) guided by counselors who provide specialized services and interventions (Burnham et al.). One final element of Myrick's developmental guidance program was an emphasis on prevention rather than remediation and counselors shifting from a crisis-based orientation to a planned orientation (Holcomb-McCoy & Mitchell).

Competency-based guidance, also known as results-based guidance, asserts that all students should develop certain skills or competencies (Burnham et al., 2000). Different from a services perspective, competency-based guidance focused on students' need for a comprehensive, developmental guidance program. Introduced in the 1990s by Sharon Johnson and Clarence Johnson, the results-based guidance program allowed counselors the freedom to determine time allocations and processes by which the competencies are acquired (Johnson & Johnson, 2003). The thirteen elements of the results-based program are: (1) mission, (2) philosophy, (3) conceptual model of guidance, (4) goals, (5) competencies, (6) management system, (7) results agreements, (8) needs assessment, (9) results plans, (10) monitoring system, (11) advisory council, (12) master calendar, and (13) glossary (Johnson & Johnson, 2003). Programs were to vary according to the needs of the individual school community, so that there is no "right" way or a specific student support program that will fit every community. The competency-based guidance paradigm seeks not to answer the question of what services counselors provide, but rather, how students are different as a result of the guidance program (Johnson & Johnson, 2003). For Georgia school counselors, the Quality Core Curriculum objectives delineate competencies students should exhibit as a result of participation in a results-based program based on the aforementioned thirteen elements.

The Comprehensive Career Development Program, introduced by Norman Gysbers and E. J. Moore, and later refined by Gysbers and Patricia Henderson, is composed of four major components: (1) guidance curriculum, (2) individual planning,

(3) responsive services, and (4) system support (Burnham et al., 2000; Gysbers, 2003). Ideally, counselors are to spend 100% of their time in implementing the four programmatic components, using 80% of their time in direct services and 20% of their time in providing indirect services. (Burnham et al.; ASCA, 2005). More specifically, elementary school counselors were recommended to allot their time according the following guidelines: 35-40% guidance curriculum, 5-10% individual planning, 30 – 40% responsive services and 10 – 15% system support (Gysbers, Stanley, Kosteck-Bunch, Magnuson, & Starr, 2008). Research on implementation of the comprehensive guidance and counseling plans revealed that they have been associated with indicators of student safety and success at school, as well as higher standardized test scores (Lapan, Gysbers, & Petroski, 2001; Sink & Stroh, 2003).

Major elements of all three of the aforementioned models have been incorporated into the *ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs (National Model)*, which was published in 2003 by ASCA and provided a basic foundational structure for all contemporary school counseling programs (ASCA, 2005). The *National Model* espouses the development of programs that utilize a management system that includes agreements, advisory councils, use of data, action plans and calendars, as prescribed by Johnson and Johnson and Gysbers. Additionally, as seen in the results-based program model and the comprehensive guidance model, the ASCA National Model promotes programs built on a foundation of beliefs, mission statements and content standards. Accountability, in the form of program audits and results reports is related to the competency- based program model. The preventative focus of the ASCA National Model was found in the developmental guidance program proposed by Myrick.

The development of comprehensive programs which serve all students and include a curriculum specific to students' developmental needs is also a premise of the ASCA National Model that is tied to all three of the aforementioned models.

The 1980s and 1990s were marked by sweeping school reform efforts. In like fashion, the school counseling profession became dedicated to refreshing and restructuring guidance programs (Davis, 2006). Since the 1960s, guidance counselors have been increasingly called to respond to national needs and concerns. Social problems including substance abuse, violence in schools, mental health issues, and changing family structures have been presented to schools and counselors to be addressed. Economically, as industry became increasingly more globalized and the labor force changed, schools were expected to respond accordingly (Gysbers, 2001). To better address these issues, the focus of guidance programs shifted to organizational models which emphasized competency-based guidance and counselors' roles focused on being comprehensive developmental guidance specialists (Foster, 2003). The momentum moving programs from a service-based model continued in the direction of results-based guidance models, where program outcomes fell under greater scrutiny (Herr, 2001).

Several pieces of federal legislation also continued to shape the evolution of guidance and counseling in schools. In 1984, the Carl Perkins Vocation Act authorized federal funds for initiatives to improve, expand and extend career guidance and counseling programs (Foster, 2003). These programs were to better address career development and employment needs of students. This act was amended in 1990 and 1998, eventually narrowing the focus of counselor action to providing information rather than matching students to vocations.

In 1988, the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC), a federal initiative, was also developed and has greatly influenced planning of career guidance programs and counselor training (Herr, 2001). The School to Work Opportunities Act (1994) continued to reiterate the importance of career guidance and counseling by encouraging models of collaboration between schools and employers (Herr).

Two initiatives initiated in the 1990s truly revolutionized guidance and counseling programs. Sponsored by a grant from the DeWitt Wallace Reader's Digest Foundation and through collaboration with the Education Trust, the Transforming School Counseling Initiative (TSCI), which began in 1996, researched school counselors' roles and issued a mandate for transformation (The Education Trust & Met Life National School Counselor Training Initiative, 2002; Paisley & Hayes, 2003). The second initiative, the National Standards for School Counselors (National Standards), were released by the American School Counselor Association in 1997 (ASCA, 2005). These standards delineated a three-component, comprehensive paradigm for providing services to students in the areas of academic, career, and personal/social development from grades pre-k through 12 (Niebuhr, Niebuhr & Cleveland, 1999; Monteiro-Leitner et al., 2006; ASCA). These standards included a change in taxonomy from guidance counselor to school counselor in an effort to clarify the role of counselors in schools (Bemak, 2000). Elements of these two initiatives formed the foundation for the *ASCA National Model* (ASCA).

The aforementioned initiatives also impacted the training process for counselors and the program format in schools, ushering guidance and counseling into yet another era of development. In 2001, revised standards for school counselor preparation were released by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) to train counselors according to the new standards. (Paisley & Hayes, 2003). Research has indicated that nearly half of the states have shifted from a conventional service model to a more systematic, programmatic approach in which guidance and counseling programs are becoming more integrated into educational processes (Herr, 2001). Additionally, in accordance with the new standards, counselor accountability has become increasingly important in school programs (ASCA, 2005; Gysbers, 2001).

School Reform

In order to be relevant in contemporary times, the field of school counseling must be examined in the larger context of school reform. Over past decades, there have been efforts made to change schools and improve student achievement, but most have not included counselors. Examination of trends in school reform indicated that most plans have focused heavily on components such as teacher improvement and greater accountability through standardized testing. However, contemporary leadership recommendations have challenged principals to utilize efforts to include all personnel in their school reform efforts.

The impact of reform efforts on the field of school counseling have been studied to a small degree, as well as the factors that inhibit the active inclusion of counselors in restructuring efforts, such as counselor and administrator reluctance. The role that counselors have and can play in restructuring initiatives to help remove obstacles that hinder their success have also been studied. Research reveals that a few initiatives have explicitly included counselors and that they have yielded good results for students (The Collegeboard, 2000; Kaufman, Bradby, & Teitelbaum, 2000).

Trends in School Reform

Efforts at school reform are not new (Herr, 2002; Foster, 2003). It has been argued that since the beginnings of the Republic, the US has been undergoing a process of educational reform (Herr). Many reform efforts, however, have evolved in response to perceived national or international political, economic, or social events (Gysbers, 2001; Herr; Foster). According to Foster, one hundred years ago, reform efforts were directed towards the educational requirements that emerged as the country transitioned from an agricultural to an industrial economy. A long-standing debate about the purposes of education existed among various groups including politicians, educators, religious leaders, and industrialists (Herr). History indicated that founding fathers Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin posited differing views regarding the fundamental aim of formal education. These views have impacted, to some extent, the school reform efforts that have been utilized over time.

Thomas Jefferson proposed that education's aim should be to develop literacy and an informed citizenship in order to promote democratic ideals (Herr, 2002). Curricular emphasis, accordingly, should be on the classical academics and liberal arts. Franklin, in contrast, believed that the primary importance of education should be the promotion of economic development. Students should acquire knowledge that is both ornamental and practical. Along these lines, vocational training should be emphasized. At different times in educational history, these perspectives have been highlighted in educational reform, and have been reflected in the ensuing congressional legislation (Herr).

More contemporary school reform efforts have emerged in response to *A Nation at Risk: The Educational Imperative* released in 1983 by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (U.S. ED, 1983; Carey, 2007). This report exposed deficiencies and called for reform in the areas of content, standards and expectations, time, teaching, and leadership, and fiscal support of the US educational system (U.S. ED). Economic demands for a more knowledgeable workforce and the resounding call for greater school accountability towards the goal of educating all students to higher academic standards has fueled educational reforms (House & Sears, 2002). These issues were illuminated by the findings of *A Nation at Risk* and school systems responded with various reform attempts.

Cooper (1993) asserted that there have been two major waves of school reform in recent decades. The first wave demanded more rigor, stronger curriculum content, standardization and centralization of goal setting, authority at the state level and greater accountability for results in secondary schools. The second wave urged for a decentralization of authority back to the local level and more teacher control over their jobs (Cooper). Teacher empowerment and opportunities for more teamwork among teachers were encouraged (Cooper).

More recent research revealed that four major approaches to school reform have been widely used: (a) decentralizing authority over schooling through school-based management, (b) holding schools more accountable through the use of mechanisms that publicly report on varied aspects of school and student performance, (c) altering the content and process of classroom instruction through major revision of curriculum and teaching methods, and (d) strengthening the links between schools and the larger community through formal alliances with parents, social service and health agencies, business and other institutions (Holcomb-McCoy, 2001; Stickel 1999, Herr, 2002; House & Sears, 2002; House, Martin & Ward, 2002). In most approaches, however, the role of teachers has been of foremost importance. For example, the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983), the Carnegie Forum (1986), and the Education Commission of the States (1986) all argued that to improve education, the answer lay in professionalization of teaching (Cooper, 1993). These parties assumed changing teachers' professional lives would change schools.

A noteworthy reform model was initiated in the state of Texas during the 1980s, which has significantly impacted contemporary efforts. In 1983, the Perot Commission began a blueprint for educational reform in Texas that was later modeled by other states in the 1990s (Carey, 2007). Largely based on management principles, this reform approach included more equitable funding for schools, increased teachers salaries, competency testing for teachers, reduced class sizes, exit testing of high school students, merit pay and a career ladder for teachers, elimination of social promotions, and creation of the no pass-no play rule (Parr, 1993). Texas was among the first states to test annually in nearly every grade and to report student achievement by ethnic group and socioeconomic status. Use of measurable outcomes, as well as awards and sanctions contingent on performance have been used in school reform efforts across the nation (Carey; Parr). Elements of this reform model were fundamental to recent federal efforts toward school reform.

The federal government strengthened its resolve to lead educational reform after the release of *A Nation At Risk* by enacting sweeping legislation in the form of *Goals 2000* and most recently, the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001*. Both of these initiatives have increased pressure on schools to improve student outcomes. NCLB was passed by Congress in 2001 and signed into law by President Bush in 2002.

NCLB, a reform of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, reauthorized in 2007, embodies four principles: (1) stronger accountability for results, (2) expanded flexibility and local control, (3) expanded options for parents, and (4) an emphasis on scientifically research-based teaching methods (U.S. ED, 2003). One of the primary targets of these reforms is the narrowing and elimination of the achievement gap between poor students and students of color and their more advantaged peers (Stickel, 1999; U.S. ED, 2002). During the 1970s and 1980s, there was some progress in reducing the gap; however, by the 1990s. the gap began to widen again (Stickel). Provisions of Title I of this Act, which is focused on disadvantaged students, had emphasis on ensuring that students learned in safe and drug free environments, that the number of the dropouts was decreased, and that the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their peers was eliminated. Specifically, 100% of students are expected to be proficient in reading and math by the year 2014 (U.S. ED, 2002). The Education Trust, 2004). This objective is to be reached by the nation's schools achieving annual Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goals. These goals have been measured by performance on state standardized tests. In the state of Georgia, the Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) has been the assessment for elementary and middle schools (GDOE, 2006).

It has been argued that school reform proposals have largely focused only on the structure and content and schools, while failing to address the changing circumstances that affect the development of children and youth (Herr, 2002; Hargreaves & Fink, 2000). Such reforms have minimized the physical and emotional needs of students, as well as the contexts in which schools function (Foster, 2003, House & Sears, 2002). Focus on higher academic standards and creating a more knowledgeable workforce have fueled this narrow view of school reform (House & Sears).

In contrast to this limited view, Hargreaves and Fink (2000) asserted that there are three dimensions of reform which must be addressed in order for reforms to be meaningful – depth, length and breadth. Depth referred to social and emotional understanding. Length was defined as the ability to sustain change over time. Extension of the reform model was called breadth. Hargreaves & Fitch argued that depth, length and breadth are found in programs where teachers have connections with students beyond mere academic content. Teachers must be able to create emotional bonds with students, built on the foundation of empathy, tolerance and civic duty (Hargreaves & Fink, 2000). This emotional understanding, it was argued, was fundamental to operationalizing the standards agenda. Furthermore, it has been suggested that counselors have skills and understandings that can be vital in facilitating these relationships (Stickel, 1999).

Principals, Distributed Leadership and School Reform

Traditionally, the burden of school leadership and the initiation of school reform has been seen as a function of one "great man" or "super hero" found in the person of the principal (Spillane, 2005; Hulme, 2006). Since the Effective Schools Research in 1970s and the push of the school reform movement, the principal's role has changed from that of a building manager who kept order, managed relationships and protected teachers from outside interference, to that of instructional leader whose goal is to focus the attention of the entire school on instruction and student learning (Hulme). As principals work to meet the challenges of improving schools, new ways of thinking about leadership have been considered to promote effective school reform.

Huffman (2001) argued that successful school reform hinges upon second order changes that alter components of organizational structure, goals and roles. Furthermore, according to Huffman, school reform efforts have not been successful in providing the leadership, understanding and motivation needed to empower staff to create a collective vision based on shared values that support progress for schools (2001). Sergiovanni asserted that the effective school leader builds substitutes for "follow me" leadership and enables people to respond from within towards the achievement of agreed upon goals (1992). Four substitutes for leadership recommended by Sergiovanni were (1) responsiveness to the norms of the school as a learning community, (2) commitment to the professional ideal, (3) responsiveness to the work itself, and (4) collegiality/professional virtue. It has been argued that utilizing a distributed leadership perspective is one model that utilizes these substitutes for leadership and empowers all school personnel to function meaningfully as participants in school reform (Hulme, 2006).

Distributed leadership has also been known as "shared leadership", "democratic leadership", or "team leadership (Spillane, 2005). According to this perspective, leadership practice is viewed as a "product of the interactions of school leaders, followers, and their situation" (Spillane, p. 1). Hulme described a key goal of distributed leadership as matching expertise with leadership work that makes a difference to student achievement and the organization (2006). It moved beyond simply handing off responsibilities to building a culture where individuals contribute their expertise, build their knowledge and skills, and strive collectively toward the achievement of shared school improvement goals that are in line with the mission of education (Hulme, 2006; Bennett et al., 2003). Research indicated that the principals in schools where leadership was practiced from a distributed leadership perspective still maintained the highest level of influence and functioned as leaders who build effective organizations (Hulme, 2006; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008). They accomplished this by performing activities such as setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organization to strengthen culture, modifying organizational structures and building collaborative processes that facilitate distributed leadership (Hulme, 2006).

While there has been little empirical research regarding the impact of distributed leadership on achievement, many educational leadership entities have expressed support for practices built on a distributed leadership framework (Hulme, 2006; Bennett et al., 2003; NAESP 2008, Hulme, 2006; GLISI,200; ASCA, 2005). The Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI) considered the "relationship leader" and "learning and performance development leader" roles as fundamental to leading the work of school improvement (GLISI, 2003). These roles called for the analysis of human performance and the assistance of individuals to make full use of their strengths toward personal and organizational goals. Moreover, leaders were to create a collaborative teaching and learning organization which develops leaders at all levels. The "relationship leader" role required leaders to be able to communicate goals and priorities focused on student learning, which is fundamental, according to distributed leadership models (GLISI, 2003).

Additionally, the Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement identified the development of people, along with setting direction and redesigning the organization, as one of three sets of key practices which fostered successful leadership towards the improvement of schools (2005). The National Association for Elementary School Principals (NAESP) asserted that effective principals were transformational leaders who led learning communities and created conditions and structures for learning that enabled continuous improvement of performance not only for children, but for adults in the school community as well (2008). In its publication "*Standards for What Principals Should Know and be Able to Do to Lead Learning Communities*," the NAESP indicated in Standard One that principals should lead student and adult learning that required them to capitalize on the leadership skills of others (NAESP). Each of the aforementioned recommendations for leadership were in line with the distributed leadership paradigm.

The literature has indicated that there may be several benefits to utilizing a distributed leadership perspective: (1) capitalization on the diverse strengths of members of the school community, (2) reduced chance of error in decision-making due to the availability of more information that that of one sole leader, (3) greater commitment to organizational goals and strategies, (4) leadership development experience for school community members, (5) a reduced workload for formal leaders, (6) improved experience of workers due to greater self-determination, (7) the emergence of new solutions that were not apparent from individuals working alone, and (8) reinforcement of leadership influence due to overlapping actions by community members (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Huffman, 2001; Trail, 2000; Sergiovanni, 1999). Leithwood & Mascall also found that while principals retained the highest level of influence, in higher achieving schools, leadership influence was given to all school members to a greater degree than lower performing schools. It has also been argued that school reform has greater potential for long-term sustainability when there is a collective responsibility for leadership (Trail, 2000; Huffman, 2001). Developing a community of leaders, including teachers, administrators, parents, and staff has been recommended because it builds a collective responsibility for leadership as participants both envision and implement reforms (Trail, 2000; Sergiovanni, 1992, Leithwood & Mascall, 2008). Accordingly, staff can prevent the collapse of reform efforts, even when the formal leadership changes (Trail, 2000). Spillane et al recommended that improving leadership by focusing exclusively or primarily on building the knowledge of individual, formal leaders may not be most meaningful. Rather, expertise should be distributed, making the school the most important unit for thinking about the development of leadership expertise instead of the individual leader (Spillane).

Most models of distributed leadership have focused on involving teachers in the paradigm (Bennet et al. 2003; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008). However, in a literature review on the topic of distributed leadership, Bennet et al found that distributed leadership involves “extending the boundaries of leadership, not just within the teaching community but to other communities within the school, creating a team culture throughout the school” (2003, p.6.). In their discussion of their research on distributed leadership and schools that operated from that framework, Spillane, Halverson and Diamond included a specific reference to the participation of counselors in setting priorities based on data analysis and their role as leaders (2001). There is a lack of literature which refers to the participation of school community members other than teachers, including counselors, in leadership activities. However, given the literature regarding the distributed leadership paradigm, it has become apparent that counselors may be able to be included in school reform efforts through principals' utilization of a distributed leadership conceptual framework. .

Counselor Involvement in School Reform

School counselors have not typically appeared in reports such as *A Nation at Risk* and other documents as proposed instruments of school reform (Herr, 2002). Counselors and counselor educators have been largely absent from reform programs (Paisley & Hayes, 2003; Herr). One commonly cited reason for this omission is the belief that counselors are ancillary to the mission of schools (Stickel, 1999; Paisley & Hayes; Stone & Clark, 2001; Amatea & Clark, 2005; Bemak, 2000; Herr; Musheno & Talbert, 2002). This perspective reduces the possibility that counselors will be invited to be partakers in efforts to improve the operation of schools and better address student needs. The belief has been expressed, however, that the establishment of school counseling as an integral part of the academic mission of schools will result in stronger and respected acceptance of the contributions of school counseling programs to student achievement and success in school (Dahir, 2004; ASCA, 2005)

Beyond prevailing narrow ideas about counselors as an inhibitor of counselor action, principals have also failed to involve counselors in school reform efforts. One suggested reason principals have not engaged counselors more as leaders and in collaborative efforts is a lack of knowledge about the role of the school counselor (Ponec & Brock, 2000;Shoffner & Williamson, 2000; Kirchner & Setchfield; 2005). Others have suggested that principals have not traditionally seen counselors as partners in educational leadership (Stone & Clark, 2001; Niebuhr et al., 1999; Bemak, 2000).

A lack of unity among the different entities comprising district offices has also led to the marginalization of counselors' efforts to facilitate change in schools (Adleman & Taylor, 2002). Adleman and Taylor cited the fact that most organizational divisions lacked coordination in dealing with problems. Therefore, the positive impact of educational support activities, such as counseling, has been curtailed as most of the programs have been seen as supplementary and operated on an ad-hoc basis.

Not only have counselors been omitted from reform efforts because they were not viewed as intricately tied into the education process, the reluctance of principals to include them, and the lack of unity at a district level between teaching and support entities, but there may be reasons that counselors have shied away from involving themselves in reform. House and Sears (2002) cited five reasons that counselors have not involved themselves in educational reform activities: (1) inadequate pre-service training, (2) administrators failure to utilize counselors' skills, (3) pliable and overly accommodating counselor behavior, (4) limited professional development opportunities, and (5) overt and covert pressures from school, community and parent special-interest groups. They also asserted that counselors lacked a "strong personal/professional compass" to guide their activities (House & Sears, p.55). Moreover, it was argued that many counselors do not have their own vision or mission, defined programs or identified roles. (House & Sears; House et al, 2002). In discussing reasons why counselors may be reluctant to implement leadership roles, Amatea and Olatunji suggested that in addition to the aforementioned, counselors may lack time or energy for new responsibilities (2007).

In contrast, limited research revealed that although counselors have been generally omitted from school reform initiatives, there was some indication that they are not disinterested in participating. In a study of urban school counselors, Holcomb-McCoy found that respondents agreed that counselors should indeed be actively involved in school restructuring efforts (2001). Specifically, the study found that counselors agreed that their understanding of the nature of school climate and its impact on teaching and learning would be valuable in restructuring activities. Although there were discrepancies about the other specific means of involvement, the counselors agreed that they should be able to participate on school-based management teams and in school-level decision-making (Holcomb-McCoy, 2001). Entities such as the Education Trust and ASCA also asserted that counselors should be involved in educational reform as a part of the "achievement team" (Eliers, 2002; ASCA, 2005; The Education Trust & Met Life National School Counselor Training Initiative, 2002).

Although extremely limited, research has revealed that there have been a few reform plans expressly including counselors. These efforts, however, have targeted high schools. As early as the 1970s, the importance of counselors affecting social change in their immediate school communities was addressed in literature (Holcomb-McCoy, 2001). The National Commission on Secondary Vocational Education in America published *The Unfinished Agenda in 1985*, which gave attention to the importance of counselors and career guidance in school reform initiatives (Foster, 2003). The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in High School's publication, *A Report on Secondary Education in America,* urged the expansion of guidance services (Foster, 2003). Further, this report contended that counselors should have a caseload not exceeding one hundred students and that districts should provide a referral service to community agencies for students needing more substantial professional assistance (Foster, 2003).

One noteworthy school reform effort that reinforced the importance of counselor involvement was the Southern Regional Education Board's *High Schools that Work* (HSTW) (Kaufman, Bradby, & Teitelbaum, 2000). Conducted between 1996 and 1998, this study of 424 schools examined guidance counseling as one of six key practices to determine its impact on the graduation rate and academic success of high school students. Results indicated that increases in the amount of time that students spent talking to their guidance counselors and teachers about their school program were directly associated with increases in the schools' mean assessment scores (Kaufman, Bradby, & Teitelbaum, 2000).

Another significant national school reform effort that explicitly included counselors was the Collegeboard's Equity 2000 Systemic Educational Reform Model (The Collegeboard, 2000). Initiated in 1990 and eventually implemented in over 700 schools with nearly a half million students, this reform was targeted at reducing the gap in college attendance between low income and minority students and their non-minority, more economically advantaged peers. This restructuring initiative emphasized the importance of counselors' involvement with school- community partnerships, analysis of student profiles and increased family and parent involvement. Counselors were also provided training to increase their expectations for minority and economically disadvantaged students (The Collegeboard; Holcomb-McCoy, 2002). Evaluative research of the reform effort indicated that students were more successful when guidance counselors' roles were changed from gatekeeper to advocate (The Collegeboard).

Impact of Reform on Counselors' Activities

Even though counselors have been absent from reform initiatives, their activities have, to varying degrees, been affected by them. A diminutive number of empirical studies have been conducted regarding the effect of reforms on school counselor's activities. Nonetheless, one significant impact of reform on counselor's activities has been the call for greater accountability regarding what is done and the effectiveness of such efforts (Paisley & Hayes, 2003; Stickel, 1999; Foster, 2003). As a result, the call for outcome research has resonated louder than in times past (Foster, 2003).

A study by Holcomb-McCoy (2001) indicated changes in the responsibilities of 269 counselors in five northeastern states that occurred as a result of the implementation of school restructuring activities. Counselors strongly agreed about changes in several areas: (1) increased involvement in teamwork with administration, students, teachers and parents, (2) more paperwork; (3) having larger caseloads; (4) performing more non-counseling duties; and (5) having more evening obligations (Holcomb-McCoy, 2001). Additionally, regarding the five-year projections, counselors strongly agreed that they would be making greater use of technology and would be working collaboratively as part of teams. Conversely, counselors strongly disagreed with statements saying that more time for group work resulted from restructuring, that school reform perpetuated the status quo, and that counselors would be seen as more valuable, have decreased caseloads, or work more independently on a consultative basis (Holcomb-McCoy, 2001).

In contrast, a study of the passage of a Senate bill mandating the use of developmental guidance and counseling programs and the impact the bill had on the job responsibilities of 450 counselors in Texas was examined (Davis, 2006). Results indicated that although the majority of the counselors were aware of the passage of the bill, only a little more than one-half followed a developmental guidance and counseling program in their daily job. Moreover, most counselors indicated that their job responsibilities did not change as a result of the bill. Counselors with more years of experience or on campuses with lower enrollment were more likely to implement developmental programs, regardless of grade level. Thus, school reform efforts have varied in their impact on counselors' roles.

Counselors' Roles in Schools

The way a counselor functions in a given school is shaped by numerous factors. One factor has been the demographic constitution of the school, including the grade level, socio-economic status of the students, and the success of the school as measured by academic achievement. Principal and teacher expectations, national standards, state guidelines, and local requirements have been other important influences on the roles counselors fulfill in schools. Principals, however, have the greatest influence on the shaping of these roles (Zalaquett, 2005; Amatea & Clark, 2005; Kirchner & Setchfield, 2005; Ponec & Brock, 2000).

For many years, there has been confusion regarding the appropriate role for counselors to play in schools. Role conflict has existed as to whether counselors should focus on mental health for students or educational goals (Foster, Young & Hermann, 2005; McGannon, Carey & Dimmit, 2005). Another area of conflict has been whether counselors should emphasize educational issues or personal/social development (Foster et al., 2005). Discussions in contemporary literature also implied the question of whether or not counselors are leaders (ASCA, 2005; Lieberman, 2004).

Various influences on what counselors do in schools, including principals' expectations, national standards and local guidelines have been noted (The Wallace Foundation, (2006); Lieberman, (2004). However, it has been argued that the needs of at-risk students are reshaping and altering the work of school counselors, particularly in efforts to address areas that have been missed by previous school reform efforts (Adleman & Taylor, 2002; Foster, 2003; Gysbers, 2004; Eliers, 2002).

Efforts have been made for counselors to implement comprehensive plans based on the *ASCA National Model.* A few studies have addressed the use of the comprehensive, developmental programs that were aligned with the ASCA National Standards and utilized the *ASCA National Model*. Studies regarding the level of implementation of the ASCA National Model indicated that counselors were using more collaborative practice, focusing on advocacy and prevention, and implementing a more programmatic approach– a contrast from earlier generations (Walsh, Barrett & DePaul, 2007; Foster et al., 2005; Foster 2003; Sanders, 2006). Although counselors seemed to be implementing the ASCA Model and emphasizing academic development, activities devoted to career development and personal/social development were occasionally and rarely performed, respectively (Foster et al.; Foster).

In their programs, counselors were found to utilize a variety of direct and indirect strategies to promote student development. Direct strategies included behavioral contracts, special-topic small groups, time management training, classroom guidance aimed at test-taking skills, and the establishment of educational and career goals (Brown, 1999; Brigman & Campbell, 2003; Morrison, Douzenis, Bergin, & Sanders, 2001; Dahir, 2004). Indirect strategies were activities such as improving school climate, involving parents, collaboration with teachers, and careful implementation of a comprehensive school counseling plan (Brown; Sink & Stroh, 2003; Colbert et al., 2006; Dahir; Hernandez & Seem, 2004). Dahir suggested that counseling programs be aligned with the targets of school reform, use evidence-based best practices, and report outcome-based data as a way of ensuring accountability as it relates to impacting student performance.

Elementary versus High School

A few studies have examined the functions of counselors at different grade levels. Hardesty and Dillard (1994) and Partin (1993) found that counselors at both levels spent a significant amount of time on counseling and consultation. Elementary counselors reported higher levels of coordination and consultation, especially with faculty, community agencies and families (Hardesty & Dillard, 1994). Elementary counselors typically performed fewer administrative activities, such as scheduling and paperwork, although both indicated significant amounts of the latter (Hardesty & Dillard; Partin, 1993). Elementary counselors were more likely to work systematically with families, teachers and community agencies, where as high school counselors worked more with individuals (Hardesty & Dillard; Partin). Elementary counselors indicated that performing teaching duties was a greater time robber, when compared to their middle and high school counterparts. Both studies, however, found that the roles of counselors encompassed many non-counseling duties (Hardesty & Dillard; Partin).

High - Achieving versus Low-Achieving Schools

There has been scarce research regarding counselors' activities in high-achieving schools. However, the limited research indicated that there were few differences in the activities done by counselors in high and low achieving schools (Fitch & Marshall, 2004; Woodward, 1989). The bulk of time for counselors in both settings was spent in counseling (individual and group) and other non-counseling related activities (Fitch & Marshall). However, counselors in high achieving schools spent more time in program management, evaluation and research, as well as coordination, which impacted the interconnected systems of the school (Fitch & Marshall). Woodward also discovered that there was a greater correlation between the actual and perceived duties by counselors in recognized quality schools. Further, counselors in high achieving schools spent more time relating to professional standards (Fitch & Marshall).

Principals and Counselors' Roles

Although counselors have been guided by their training, as well as national, state and local standards, principals' expectations have been noted as the most significant determinants of how a counselor functions in a given school (Zalaquett, 2005; Amatea & Clark, 2005; Kirchner & Setchfield, 2005; Ponec & Brock, 2000). Research revealed that an open, supportive principal-counselor relationship forms the foundation of successful school guidance and counseling programs (Ponec & Brock, 2000; Fitch, Newby, Ballestero & Marshall, 2001; Zalaquett, 2005). Given the myriad of problems facing schools, a collaborative approach in which counselors and principals work together towards addressing concerns that impact learning has been effective (Williamson, Broughton, & Hobson, 2003; Stone & Clark, 2001; Hernandez & Seem, 2004). Much of the strength in utilizing a collaborative approach to addressing problems lies in the fact that principals and counselors have different preparation and philosophical orientations which lead to differing approaches and strategies (Williamson et al., 2003; Niebuhr et al., 1999; Shoffner & Williamson, 2000; Ponec & Brock, 2000.) One study found that principals viewed the school as an organizational whole, whereas counselors viewed their role as student-centered (Ponec & Brock). For these collaborative relationships to work, however, mutual trust and communication are imperative. School counseling professionals have encouraged counselors to advocate for greater self-determination of counseling roles and greater collaboration with administrators (Studer & Allton, 1996)

Although it has been commonly accepted by counselors that there should be an increase in the collaboration between counselors and principals, research indicated that there was still a great deal of variance among schools about how counselors actually function in schools (Studer & Allton, 1996; Monteiro-Leitner et al., 2006; Ponec & Brock, 2000). There have been numerous studies regarding perceptions of the counselor role by principals and counselors. Many findings indicated that although counselors and principals tended to agree on what were appropriate activities for counselors, more often than not, counselors were assigned duties that are deemed inappropriate (Fitch et al., 2001; Kirchner & Setchfield, 2005; Zalaquett, 2005). Several studies indicated that the priorities of counselors and principals conflicted such that not only were counselors involved heavily in non-counseling related duties, but that actual time spent on recommended duties differed significantly from the amounts predicted by administrators (Williamson et al., 2003; Zalaquett; Kirchner & Setchfield; Monteiro-Leitner et al.,).

Principals also differed significantly in the level of collaborative involvement they had with their counselors as well as the extent to which they involved counselors in leadership roles. Building on work by Sergiovanni, Lieberman argued that experts and supporting studies point out the importance of principals developing leadership density in their schools (2004; Sergiovanni, 1984). Leadership density is the overall leadership available from different staff members who possess diverse expertise and perspectives in their own areas that is beneficial to the school's missions and goals (Sergiovanni, Lieberman). It has been said that principals are critical players in establishing a climate that fosters the existence and quality of leadership density within a school (Sergiovanni; The Wallace Foundation, 2006; Lieberman). Building on ideas by Sergiovanni and the five "forces of leadership," Lieberman posited that utilizing the human force of leadership in counselors is contingent upon a definition of their role and contributions to the efforts of the educational endeavor (2004). Along these lines, Amatea & Clark found that four major types of counselor role conceptions existed among principals: (1) innovative school leader, (2) collaborative case consultant, (3) responsive direct service provider, and (4) administrative team player (2005). They also found that the majority of administrators preferred their counselors to operate in a more traditional role and as collaborative case consultants (Amatea & Clark). Other studies supported this finding, indicating that although principals tended to have some understanding of appropriate counselor roles, they continued to heavily utilize counselors as administrative team players who had many duties such as testing, bus duty, record keeping, and special education service provision (Monteiro-Leitner et al, 2006;Kirchner & Setchfield, 2005; Zalaquett, 2005).

Teachers and Counselors' Roles

Teachers have also impacted how counselors function in schools. Amatea and Clark found that teachers preferred counselors to function as responsive direct service providers to parents and students (2005). A study by Beesley (2004) indicated that a majority of the teachers (67%) surveyed were somewhat to extremely satisfied with the counseling services provided in their schools. Elementary teachers reported greater satisfaction than middle and high school levels. Areas teachers found counselors to be most adequate in were classroom guidance, group counseling, individual counseling, consultation, and special education coordination, crisis counseling, scheduling/enrollment and testing/appraisal (Beesley, 2004). Areas cited for improvement were career counseling, academic planning, community referrals and public relations.

Although teachers may be satisfied with counseling services, a study by Musheno and Talbert indicated that teachers did not see counselors as relevant to schools' missions (2002). Musheno and Talbert made several recommendations for counselors to play a more relevant role in schools. Among them, they suggested that counselors more actively team and consult with teachers to improve student achievement and provide in-service for teachers on children's developmental needs (Musheno & Talbert).

National Standards and Counselors' Roles

Several national entities have influenced the daily roles fulfilled by counselors. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) has heavily guided and influenced the training of counselors. They asserted that counselors need " knowledge and skills in understanding community, environmental and institutional opportunities that enhance as well as create barriers that impede student academic, career and personal/social success” (House & Hayes, 2002, ¶ 17). Proactive leadership and use of skills such as consensus building and the ability to work collaboratively with a broad range of professionals have been considered vital activities counselors should perform (House & Hayes, 2002).

Another initiative that influenced the functioning of counselors from a national level was the Met Life National School Counselor Initiative. Primarily focused on academic achievement, this project included focus on social, emotional and personal development. In the early 1990s, the DeWitt Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, Met Life and the Education Trust partnered to develop a national agenda to improve school counseling. From research conducted through this collaboration, a new vision for counselors away from mental health toward academic student achievement was articulated in the Transforming School Counselor Initiative (TSCI). Additionally, the focus of counseling efforts should shift from individual to whole school and system concerns. The new role of the counselor should be to bring about educational equity, reduce barriers to academic success, and to close the achievement gap between poor and minority youth and their peers (Perusse, Goodonough, Donegan & Jones, 2004; The Education Trust, 2007). The TSCI movement was started at six universities (California State University at Northridge, Indiana State University, Ohio State University, State University of West Georgia, University of Georgia, and University of North Florida) who received implementation grants in efforts to impact the training of counselors and subsequently, their work in schools. Five domains have continued to be espoused for counselor development: (1) leadership, (2) advocacy, (3) teaming and collaboration, (4) counseling and coordination, and (5) assessment and use of data. These tenets were later fundamental in the development of the ASCA *National Model* (ASCA, 2005).

ASCA has been another entity whose standards strongly impacted the roles counselors fulfill in schools. Created in 1952, ASCA is the flagship organization for school counselors. In 1981 and 1990, ASCA released counselor role statements; however, counselor day-to-day functions were not unified by these statements (Lieberman, 2004). As stated previously, in 1997, ASCA released the National Standards for School Counselors (ASCA, 2005). The standards were both comprehensive and developmental, focused on addressing academic, career and personal/social competencies for students in grades pre-kindergarten through 12. (Perusse et al., 2004; Niebuhr et al., 1999; Monteiro-Leitner et al., 2006; ASCA, 2005). Three standards have been developed per domain (see Table 1). The National Standards resulted in large part from work by Drs. C. Dahir and C. Campbell who reviewed the school counseling literature, studied existing program standards in states and individual school districts, and solicited counselor feedback from 2000 practitioners in a survey sponsored by the American College Testing organization (Mariani, 1998).

The National Standards and the Transforming School Counseling Initiative elements provide the foundation for *The National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs* published by ASCA in 2003. In addition to the National Standards and work of the TSCI, ASCA conducted a review of the empirical studies of the practices of counselors. Effective practices were shared in its publication *Effectiveness of School Counseling* (2002 – 2003), and utilized to develop the National Model (ASCA, 2005). According to the *National Model,* school counseling programs (1) are focused on

Table 1

ASCA National Standards

Domain	Standard	
Academic Development	Standard A	Students will acquire the attitudes, knowledge and skills that contribute to effective learning in school and across the life span.
	Standard B	Students will complete school with the academic preparation essential to choose from a wide range of substantial post-secondary options, including college.
	Standard C	Students will understand the relationship of academics to the world of work and to life at home in the community.
Career Development	Standard A	Students will acquire the skills to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self and to make informed career decisions.
	Standard B	Students will employ strategies to achieve future career goals with success and satisfaction.
	Standard C	Students will understand the relationship between personal qualities, education, training and the world of work.
Personal/ Social Development	Standard A	Students will acquire the knowledge, attitudes and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others.
	Standard B	Students will make decisions, set goals and take necessary action to achieve goals.
	Standard C	Students will understand safety and survival skills.

Adapted from: American School Counseling Association (2005). *The ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs,* (2nd. ed). pp. 102 – 107. Alexandria, VA: The Author improving academic achievement and eliminating the achievement gap; (2) operate from a mission that is connected with the school district's mission and state and national educational reform agendas; (3) operate from a formal set of student learning objectives that are connected to the ASCA National Standards, aligned with state curriculum frameworks, aligned with district standards, and based on measurable student learning outcomes; and (4) are data-driven and accountable for student outcomes (ASCA, 2005; McGannon et al., 2005).

The ASCA National Model provided a structure for counseling programs to better ensure that they are comprehensive in design and delivered to all students through a four-component system: (1) developmental guidance curriculum, (2) individual student planning, (3) responsive services and (4) systems support (See Table 2). ASCA maintained that the framework not only fulfilled the complete potential of the National Standards documents, but also directly addressed current education reform efforts (ASCA, 2005). It was based on the fundamental premise that in order for counselors to become key players in educational reform, they must develop and operate school-specific comprehensive, developmental counseling programs that address the academic, personal/social and career domains outlined by the National Standards. These programs are built on the foundational counselor skills and attitudes of leadership, advocacy and collaboration. ASCA defined leadership as the "capacity or ability to guide others" (p. 151, 2005). Advocacy was defined as "actively supporting causes, ideas or policies that promote and assist student academic, career and personal/social needs" (p.150, 2005). Collaboration was defined as "a partnership where two or more individuals or organizations actively work together on a project or problem" (p. 150, 2005). Services

Table 2

ASCA National Model Delivery System

Delivery System Domains and Associated Activities	
School Guidance Curriculum	*Responsive Services*
Classroom Instruction	Consultation
Interdisciplinary Curriculum	Individual and Small-Group Counseling
Group Activities	Crisis Counseling/Response
Parent Workshops and Instruction	Referrals
	Peer Facilitation
Individual Student Planning	*System Support*
Individual or Small-Group Appraisal	Professional Development
Individual or Small-Group Advisement	Consultation, Collaboration and Teaming
	Program Management and Operation

Adapted from: American School Counseling Association (2005). *The ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs, (2nd ed.),* p. 39. Alexandria, VA: The Author

are provided to students and other stakeholders through the four aforementioned prescribed delivery methods. Additionally, counselors were charged to utilize data, provide results reports, audit their programs and utilize a system for proper management of their programs (ASCA).

It has been posited that implementation of program guided by the National Model requires effective counselor leadership (ASCA, 2005). Effective counselor leadership, according to ASCA, is evident when there is a strong commitment to organize a program around student competencies and when the counselors' time is devoted to the design, implementation and accounting for a comprehensive school counseling program (Dollarhide, 2003; ASCA). The ASCA National Model strongly asserted that counselors exercise leadership in their schools by engaging in activities that promote system-wide change to ensure student success (ASCA). School counselors, according to the ASCA Model, should ensure equity and access to rigorous education of every student. This goal is achieved by utilizing leadership skills such as collaboration with other professionals in the school and active advocacy on the behalf of students (ASCA). Moreover, development of attitudes toward rules, problem-solving, deadline awareness, and interpersonal relationships have been noted as important task-approach skills that support counselor leadership functioning (Dollarhide). For counselors, leadership builds on the skills of counseling, consulting, research, teaching, advocacy and collaboration (Dollarhide, 2003; ASCA 2005).

In developing programs according to the ASCA National model, according to Dollarhide (2003), counselors have been charged with implementing structural, human resource, political and symbolic leadership activities. Structural activities required the establishment of a foundation for the counseling program (Dollarhide). Human resource leadership involved a belief in people that leads to their empowerment (Dollarhide). Political leadership required the use of collaboration and advocacy skills that not only promote student interests, but also the counseling program as a whole (Dollarhide). In this leadership context, school counselors would lead through activities involving the assessment of the distribution of power within the building and district, the building of linkages with important stakeholders such as parents and school board members, and the use of persuasion and negotiation (Dollarhide). This is an untraditional focus for counselors (Dollarhide, ASCA). Another non-traditional context for counselor leadership is symbolic leadership which is practiced when counselors establish and articulate a vision for their programs (Dollarhide, ASCA). In this leadership context, school counselors lead by articulating a vision of healthy, resilient students and by maintaining faith in that vision. (Dollarhide).

The professional standards for counselors, according to the National Model, required counselors to both understand reform issues and work to close the achievement gap. ASCA posited that by developing and implementing counseling programs based on the ASCA Model framework, counselors become "catalysts for educational change" who "assume or accept a leadership role in educational reform" (ASCA, 2005). By activating the National Model, heavily based in collaboration and accountability, it has been argued that counselors' activities will lead to systemic change and facilitate student success. Although encouraged, implementation of the ASCA nationally is not mandated in all states (Sanders, 2006)

Several studies have examined the impact of implementing ASCA standards into guidance program development. In sharp contrast to earlier decades, Walsh et al. (2007) found that newly hired urban school counselors were able to practice in a way that is aligned with the new directions in the field of school counseling as well as the guidelines of the ASCA National Model delivery system. Their study confirmed positive outcomes for individual students and school culture over a two-year period, which subsequently led principals to staunchly advocate for the presence of counselors. Foster et al. found in their study of National Board Certified Counselors (NBCC) that counselors ranked as most important and paid the most attention to the academic development component (2005). Although deemed important, career development activities were occasionally performed. Based on their findings, counselors were making efforts to align their role with guidelines that are defined by the National Standards for School Programs developed by ASCA.

State of Georgia Guidelines for Counselors

Georgia State Law § 2-2-182 and State Board of Education rule 160-4-8-.05 GUIDANCE COUNSELORS mandated counseling services for students in grades K – 12 (GDOE, 2005) (See Appendix A). Counselors and school guidance and counseling programs were grouped with psychologists, social workers, school nurses and similar entities that are direct student support providers under the GDOE department of Student Support Services (GDOE, 2005). The State Board of Education rule specified that local boards of education ensure that counselors are able to provide services in the following areas (i) Program design, planning, and leadership, (ii) Counseling, (iii) Guidance and collaboration, and (iv) Consultation and coordination (GDOE, 2005) (See Appendix A). Five essential and necessary functions for elementary counselors have been delineated by the State Board of Education: (1) establish and promote school guidance and counseling program, (2) implement and facilitate delivery of counseling services, (3) implement and facilitate delivery of guidance services, (4) consult with school or system staff, parents, and community, and (5) participate in professional development activities (GDOE, 2003). Appendix B delineates the activities associated with these functions.

Advising students and/or parents was identified as a fundamental job responsibility for counselors. Counselors were to be accessible for students and their parents during the entire school day (GDOE, 2000). House Bill 1187 required that school counselors provide counseling services to students or parents for five of six segments of each school day (GDOE, 2005). Local boards have the responsibility to insure that each counselor is engaged in other functions no more than one segment of the day (GDOE, 2005). Specific suggestions for allocations of time were recommended, varying by grade level. For elementary schools, it was suggested that counselors allocate their time according to the framework listed in Table 3. Counselors have been encouraged to maintain an activity log to meet the mandates of HB 1187. Additionally, evaluation of the Guidance and Counseling program should be conducted if too much time is being spent on non-program activities to assess what areas are negatively affected and not reaching all students (GDOE, 2000).

.Local boards have been required to develop a Student Services Plan that prescribes and identifies programs and services that includes both school climate improvement and management processes (Sanders, 2006). In accordance with ASCA standards, the State of Georgia BOE also delineated appropriate and inappropriate uses of counselors. (See Appendices A and C). Counselors in Georgia were to adhere to national, state, and local statutes, policies, and regulations and the ethical standards of ASCA (GDOE, 2003).

ASCA recommended that the optimal student-counselor ratio is 250:1 (ASCA, 2005). Statics from the USDOE and the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) reported by the American Counseling Association (ACA) indicated that

Table 3

Recommended Time Allocations - Elementary School Counselors

Recommended Time Allocations – Elementary School Counselors	
Component	Percentage of Time
Guidance Curriculum	50
Counseling	10
System Support	10
Responsive Services	25
Non-Program	5

Georgia Department of Education. (2009). Counselor's Information -- Elementary School Counselor. Retrieved July 17, 2009 from http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/tss_learning.aspx?PageReq=TSSLearningGuidance .

the state of Georgia had a ratio nearly twice the recommended ratio at 446:1 (ACA, 2009). The ratio in elementary schools was even higher at 763:1 (ACA, 2009).

The Georgia Department of Education (2000), also clearly differentiated among the roles of guidance, counseling and school guidance (see Appendix D). Guidance was 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" (GDOE, 2000, p. 1). Counseling was 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" (GDOE, 2000, p. 1). School counseling and guidance was 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"

(GDOE, 2000, p. 1). The state of Georgia is one of 30 states that has implemented a comprehensive guidance curriculum statewide (ASCA, 2005).

To a minimal degree, the development of guidance and counseling programs in the state of Georgia have also been influenced by the TSCI. A major assumption of the Education Trust's TSCI was that state policies, which guide the role of school counselors, need to align with the standards-based objectives emphasizing higher academic achievement for all students (Eliers, 2002). Accordingly, the TSCIs efforts in the state of Georgia have focused on promoting movement toward a more comprehensive and developmental program that measures program effectiveness and ties intricately with current educational reform initiatives (Eliers). Counselors in Georgia have been charged to implement a comprehensive and developmental guidance and counseling curriculum to assist all students in their schools. The GDOE's Office on School Guidance and Counseling has given emphasis to the role of counselors in educational reform by stating that "Guidance counselors will assume more of a responsibility for student growth and thus become more accountable in the process. The activities that guidance counselors conduct should have a link to defined student standards" (GDOE, 2000 as cited in Eliers, 2002, p.7). Evaluation of the TSCI implementation in Georgia indicted that institutionalization of its efforts have been minimal, however, because there has not been a strong partnership between the University of Georgia and the State University of West Georgia and the State Board of Education (Eliers, 2002).

Since 1986 and the adoption of the Quality Basic Education Act, the Georgia State Board of Education has developed and issued a statewide guidance curriculum and accompanying standards that all students must master in order to graduate. The curriculum, formerly known as the Quality Core Curriculum (QCC), delineated guidance objectives for students in grades k – 12 in the areas of self-knowledge, educational and occupational exploration, and career planning (GDOE, 2003) Twelve learner competencies have been identified that are to be addressed at each grade level. Beginning in 2005, the QCC was replaced with the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) in many areas (GDOE, 2008). Although Performance Standards have been implemented in the subject areas of English/Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies, there were no plans to revise guidance and counseling standards (GDOE, 2008). Counselors, therefore, are still guided by the QCC objectives, last revised in 1999. The curriculum was focused on improving the achievement of all students and is results driven, so that counselors assume greater responsibility and are more accountable (Eliers, 2002). A listing of the objectives for elementary students is found in Appendix E. The objectives resonated to some extent with the National Standards and the ASCA Model, as they are divided into the areas of self-knowledge, educational and occupational exploration and career planning, similar to National Standards' academic, personal/social and career domains (GDOE, 2003). Although recommended, full implementation of National Standards and the ASCA National Model, emphasizing skills such as leadership and advocacy, has not been mandated in Georgia (Sanders, 2006).

Title I Students and Counselors

Counselors working in schools with high percentages of students living in poverty face special challenges. There exist obstacles that prevent these students from maximizing their full potential. The federal government, through Title I, has made some efforts to address the obstacles that hinder student success that are related to socioeconomic status. Some high-poverty schools across the United States have overcome many of the difficulties associated with low-income, thereby enabling students to succeed academically. School counselors also have skills and utilize strategies to help reduce and eliminate these obstacles and better ensure the success of students living in high poverty.

Children in Poverty

Research has suggested that current reform efforts have not recognized deteriorating situations in homes which impact the physical, emotional, academic, and social needs of children. (Foster, 2003; Cooper, 1993; Hargreaves & Fink, 2000). According to Adleman & Taylor (2002), between 12 and 22% of all children have been described as suffering from a diagnosable mental, emotional, or behavioral disorder with relatively few receiving mental health services. Additionally, the Children's Defense Fund (CDF) reported that an estimated 3 million children were reported as suspected victims of child abuse and neglect, with 900,000 children confirmed as victims (2005). These problems, and others, become even more challenging for students who are poor. National data indicated that increasing numbers of children are living in poverty. According to the CDF, in 2004 one out of every six American children was born into poverty (Children's Defense Fund, 2005). The CDF also reported that 3 out of every 5 children living in poverty in 2004 fell into "extreme poverty," living at less than one-half of the poverty rate. In Georgia, 354,633 children under the age of eighteen were living below the poverty level (Ferris, 2006). Further, fifteen percent of students living in rural areas in Georgia were in poverty, compared to a national average of 13 percent (Sampson, 2005). Students' problems are exacerbated as they internalize the frustrations of confronting these economic barriers to development, difficulty with learning, and the shame of performing poorly at school (Adleman & Taylor).

A number of precipitating factors that put urban minority and poor students at risk have been found, including homelessness, poverty, neighborhood crime and drugs, and sociocultural factors such as discrimination and racial/language barriers (Bryan, 2005; House & Hayes, 2002). Children living in poverty were significantly more likely than children from middle-class backgrounds to report increased levels of anxiety and depression, a greater incidence of behavioral difficulties and a lower level of positive engagement in school (Amatea and Olatunji 2007; Baggerly & Borkowski, 2004). Studies also substantiated the fact that students in poverty have a greater incidence of school failure, developmental difficulties and delays, lower standardized test scores and graduation rates (Amatea and Olatunji, 2007). Additionally, poor students have had higher rates of school tardiness, absenteeism, and school dropout than their middle class peers (Amatea and Olatunji, 2007). Data collected on student achievement in America has shown that, in a majority of schools, poor and minority students did not perform as well on any existing measures of academic proficiency as do middle and upper-class White students (House et al., 2002). It has been argued that poor students and students of color often have a greater need than their more advantaged peers for caring and committed adult advocates in schools because they often lack family and community members to fulfill these roles (House & Hayes, 2002; Amatea and Olatunji, Payne, 2001). Further, supportive parents and adult family members often lack the understanding of middle class values that dominate the educational system (Payne, 2001)

It has been argued that restructuring of traditional schools cannot be successful without fundamental changes in the culture of schools (Herr, 2002). A discouraging school culture limits the impact of school reform. According to the Education Trust, eliminating obstacles to implementing standards-based educational systems is directly tied to the work of counselors (House & Hayes, 2001; The Education Trust and Met Life Foundation National School Counselor Training Initiative, 2002). These obstacles included low expectations, specifically the belief that socioeconomic status and color determine a student's ability to learn and sorting and selecting processes that act to filter out "less competent" students by denying them access to rigorous course content prerequisite to advancing through the curriculum (House & Hayes; The Education Trust and Met Life Foundation National School Counselor Training Initiative).

Three themes were identified by Cross & Burney (2005) that impede high-achieving poor rural students' ability to succeed: (a) thoughts that rigorous courses are too much work or take too much time; (b) school climate issues and rules that discourage participation in advanced options; and (c) issues relating to generational poverty. Further, Sampson stated that children in rural counties may also suffer because of long bus rides, greater parental unemployment, fewer opportunities to be classified as gifted, detachment from school, limited staff, and a sparse tax base to support schools (2005). Research also revealed that the quality of teaching and the quality of working conditions in high-poverty schools were significantly worse than in low-poverty schools (Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007). Children in high poverty schools were subsequently assigned to less experienced teachers, teachers with less education and skill than those in schools with a wealthier population (Amatea & West-Olatunji). Lack of material resources for students with the greatest need has also been found to be a cause for lowered student performance (House et al., 2002; Sampson).

Title I

Title I is a program which provides financial assistance to local education agencies and schools with high numbers or high percentages of poor children to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards (U.S. ED, 2006). Additional academic support and learning opportunities to help low-achieving children and students at risk for failure master challenging curricula and meet state standards in core academic subjects have been provided with the federal funding support. Four statutory formulas based primarily on census poverty estimates and the cost of education in each state have been used to allocate funds (U.S. ED, 2006). Approximately 12.5 million students in more than 50,000 schools have been served through Title I nationally (National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES], 2006). During 2005-06, in the state of Georgia, 733,694 students were served in schools receiving Title I assistance (NCES, 2006).

Schools have been held accountable for ensuring that students receiving Title I assistance perform at levels that meet state requirements. Accountability in the form of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), legislated through the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, has forced all school personnel to scrutinize the achievement of both Title I and non-Title I students. Sanctions for Title I schools who do not meet the AYP in the same subject for two or more consecutive years include categorization as Needs Improvement schools, and the possibility of escalating consequences each successive year (GDOE, 2006). Rewards are given to Title I schools who make adequate progress. Title I public and public charter schools that have met or exceeded Georgia's adequate yearly progress goals for three or more years running, or that have made the greatest gains in closing their achievement gaps, and have not been on the Unsafe Schools Choice Option (USCO) list within the last two years, are called Title I Distinguished Schools (U.S. ED, 2006). During the 2006 – 07 school year, 83.02% of Title I schools in the state of Georgia achieved AYP. Two hundred eight Title I schools did not meet AYP, of which thirty-seven were elementary schools. Approximately 735 Title I elementary schools were classified as Distinguished Schools in 2006 (GDOE, 2006).

Counselors and Children in Poverty

Little literature has been found in the field of counseling addressing the issues of working in schools with low-income student populations and their families. Amatea and West -Olatunji reported that a review of articles published in the Journal of Counseling and Development between 1997 and 2007 revealed only nine articles emphasizing issues of social class or poverty (2007). A similar review of articles published between 1997 and 2005 in *Professional School Counseling* yielded similar results (Amatea & West-Olatunji).

While little research attention has been given to counselors and economically poor students, there have been identified keys to school improvement for schools that have high poverty. In 2004, five studies of school turnarounds were published: *Hope of Urban Education: A Study of Nine High-Performing High Poverty Urban Elementary Schools in Texas* (The Charles A. Dana Center, The University of Texas at Austin, 1999); *Dispelling the Myth: High-poverty schools exceeding expectations* (Education Trust, 1999); *Wisconsin's High-Performance/High-Poverty Schools* (North Central Regional

Laboratory, 2000); *Driven to Succeed: High-Performing, High-Poverty, Turnaround Middle Schools* (University of Texas, 2002); and *Closing the Achievement Gap: Lessons for Illinois' Golden Spike High-Poverty, High-Performing Schools* (Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 2004). From these studies the following elements were identified that lead to improvement: learning assistance for students; collaboration among teachers; data-driven decision making; leadership; organizational structure; staff development for teachers; alignment of tests and curriculum and content with instruction; regular assessment; parent involvement; high expectations of all students; and scheduling adjustments (Duke, 2006).

The Education Trust in its study of 4,577 high performing schools that serve high-minority or high-poverty students or both also found that crucial components common in these schools are high expectations and standards for all students, access for all students to a rigorous curriculum, and extra support for students who need it (2002; Bryan, 2005). Bryan (2005) found in his studies of urban schools that establishing protective factors in school environments for students can foster the educational resilience of children at-risk. Educational resilience referred to the ability of students to succeed academically despite factors that make it difficult for them to succeed (Bryan, 2005, p.) Caring and supportive adult relationships, opportunities for meaningful participation in their schools and communities, as well as high parent and teacher expectations regarding academic performance and future success were all such protective factors that can empower students at-risk for failure. Counselors have training that can be useful in addressing these concerns.

Suggestions have also been made for counselors to positively intervene in the lives of students who are living under the burden of poverty and to better tie counselors into the overall missions of schools. Suggestions most commonly described in literature included (a) teaming and consulting with teachers, (b) providing in-service for teachers on children's developmental needs, (c) creating mentoring and peer counseling programs to provide support for all students, (d) assessing barriers to student learning;,(e) collecting and interpreting student data for use in helping educators engage in needed reforms, (f) advocating for rigorous academic preparation and experiences that will broaden all students' educational and career options, (g) teaching students to help themselves, (h) teaching families and children how to manage the bureaucracy of the school system, (i) developing family-centered partnerships, (j)developing and implementing extracurricular enrichment partnerships, (k) implementing a developmental and comprehensive counseling program, (l) helping teachers become aware of the dynamics of class privilege and sociopolitical power, (m) facilitating problem-solving among low-income parents and staff, and (h) linking with agencies in the community to provide the widest range of resources for students and their families (Musheno & Talbert, 2002; House & Hayes, 2002; Bemak, 2002; Bryan, 2005; Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007). In a more general sense, Adleman and Taylor (2002) suggested three major themes for change regarding how counselors can work more effectively: (a) move from fragmentation to cohesive intervention; (b) move from narrowly focused problem-specific and specialist-oriented services to comprehensive general programmatic approaches and (c) move toward research-based interventions with higher standards and ongoing accountability emphasized. The degree to which the aforementioned strategies have been used in schools has not been documented.

Summary

Changes have occurred in education regarding the expectations of how principals should function as leaders in their schools and their empowerment of others as leaders in the school community. Contemporary leadership approaches emphasize the utilization of a distributed leadership blueprint to empower all school personnel to participate in school improvement efforts. Most discussions about distributed leadership have involved the empowerment of teachers; however, principals have been encouraged to broaden their view to include other members of the school community, including counselors.

Political, social, and economic changes and issues that have risen over the past 100 years have shaped the history and development of school counseling and the roles counselors fulfill in schools. The federal government, principals, teachers and even counselors themselves, has espoused varying ideas of the appropriate roles for counselors. Historically, counselors have managed a plethora of responsibilities. However, in recent decades, significant strides have been made to refine and better define the specific roles of counselors. Emphasis has been placed on examining the results of school counseling interventions, as well as integration of the school guidance program into the overall educational vision and mission of schools.

Although school reform is not new, most efforts have by and large neglected to incorporate counselors. Contemporary reforms have evolved in response to the release of *A Nation at Risk,* and are regulated at the federal level by the mandates of *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. A primary aim of this legislation is to reduce the gap in achievement that lies between poor students and students of color and their non-minority, more privileged peers. However, research has suggested that counselors may be able to function as leaders and important contributors to strategies addressing this concern. In particular, counselors can be instrumental in the elimination of barriers that hinder student success.

The roles that counselors fulfill have been influenced by various factors including national, state, local guidelines and the expectations of stakeholders, most significantly, principals. Counselors at all grade levels have used a variety of strategies to support student development. Differences have been noted between how elementary school counselors and those at the middle and high school levels use their time. Elementary school counselors typically performed fewer administrative activities and more consultation and coordination activities than their counterparts. The limited empirical evidence indicated that there was little difference in the roles counselors fulfill in high-achieving and low-achieving schools. There is a void of information regarding the work of counselors with low-income students, although significant numbers of this particular subgroup struggle to achieve. These students are served through the federal government's Title I program.

At the national level, the ASCA National Model has set a new standard for the operations of counselors in schools as leaders and advocates. Studies have shown that counselors do have the ability to implement the ASCA standards with positive results for students and schools. This model emphasizes the development and implementation of comprehensive, developmental school counseling programs in the nation's schools. However, in many states, implementation of the *National Model* is not mandatory. In

Georgia, although implementation of the ASCA *National Model* is recommended, counselors are guided by the Quality Core Curriculum (QCC) objectives that were adopted in 1986. However, given the number of students who live in poverty, it is imperative to determine which of the roles counselors fulfill will be most meaningful in helping these students to achieve. As counselors in Georgia are guided indirectly by the ASCA *National Model* and directly by the mandates of the QCC, practitioners as well as administrators and other stakeholders are seeking information about the specific roles and interventions used which are most effective in promoting the achievement of students who live in poverty, and can, therefore, be instrumental in school reform efforts.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher detailed the methods and procedures used to conduct the research study. The methods section includes the research questions, research design, the selection of sites/population, the participants, the instrumentation, and procedures for collecting and analyzing the data.

Research Questions

Given the changing role of school counselors and current trends in school reform, the researcher sought to discover the extent to which school counselors in elementary schools characterized as high-poverty implemented the activities prescribed by the ASCA National Model. Furthermore, the extent to which these counselors were utilizing leadership skills was investigated. The primary research question was: To what extent do counselors implement activities prescribed by the ASCA National Model and leadership within Title I elementary schools?

To guide the study, the secondary research questions were:

1. To what extent do counselors in Title I elementary schools engage in activities described as inappropriate by the ASCA National Model?
2. What activities recommended by the ASCA National Model receive the greatest emphasis by counselors in Title I elementary schools?
3. Are there differences among elementary counselors at Title I schools in the implementation of the ASCA National Model activities according to demographic factors (2008 AYP Status, student to counselor ratio, level of school engagement

in whole school reform, grades served, mandated implementation of ASCA Model, number of counselors, school setting, total years of counseling experience, training on the National Model, and years of counseling experience in Title I schools)?

4. To what extent do elementary counselors in Title I schools exhibit leadership by performing activities requiring the use of collaborative and/or advocacy skills?

Research Design

The study conducted was a descriptive, quantitative study. It was descriptive in that it sought to uncover the types of activities counselors perform in their respective work locations and thereby describe the work characteristics of elementary school counselors (Nardi, 2003). Quantitative research methods are deductive in nature and designed with the intention of making some generalizations about social phenomena (Glesne,2006; Nardi, 2003; Smith, 2003). Often, experimental or quasi-experimental methods are used; however, a common instrument for data collection is the self-administered questionnaire (Nardi, 2003). Data are reduced to numerical indices, which can be analyzed statistically to make generalizations from the study group to the larger population. The data gathered in this study was used identify the prevailing activities performed and use of leadership skills by counselors working in Title I elementary schools and allow for the globalization of the findings to counselors in that setting.

Selection of Sites and Population

The population of a study is the total collection of units or elements a researcher desires to analyze (Nardi, 2003). The population for this study was Title I elementary schools in Georgia. There are 181 school systems (1 special state system, 159 county, and 21 city school systems) in the state of Georgia (Ask DOE, personal communication, January 9, 2008). Additionally, there are six state charter schools in existence that operate independently (Ask DOE, personal communication, January 9, 2008). For the purposes of this study, the one special state system comprised of the school for the deaf and blind, as well as the charter schools were omitted. Therefore, the representative sample came from the 180 remaining school systems. According to the Georgia Department of Education annual AYP Title I report, there are currently approximately 943 Title I Elementary schools in the state of Georgia (GDOE, 2007). Schools listed as primary were also included in this count since they typically house students in grades PK through 2. Further, these schools are categorized as Distinguished, Needs Improvement, Commended, and Adequate, based on their performance on standardized tests and AYP status.

Title I schools were selected for several reasons. First, nearly 355,000 children under the age of eighteen live in poverty in the state of Georgia (Ferriss, 2006). Moreover, students in poverty have reported higher rates of school tardiness, absenteeism and dropout than their middle class peers (Amatea &Olatunji, 2007). Poor and minority students also have not performed as well on measures of academic proficiency as have middle and upper-class White students (House et al., 2002). The current focus in educational reform is to close the achievement gap and ensure that all students will graduate from high school (U.S. ED, 2002; Dahir, 2004). Therefore, the focus of this study was on Title I elementary schools; schools that have large percentages of students who live in poverty. The representative sample of the population included schools that have been successful in meeting AYP goals and those who have not.

Sampling Design and Participants

The population for this study was 943 Title I Elementary Schools in Georgia. To determine the total number needed for the sample, the researcher utilized the sampling calculator provided at http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm by Creative Research Systems. According to the calculator, a sample of 450 would provide a sample sufficient sample for the study to ensure that the sample was representative of the population at the 95% confidence level. .

Purposive sampling and systematic random sampling were used in this study. The subjects of this study were counselors at 450 Title I elementary schools in Georgia. Purposive sampling is used when a group or individuals have characteristics that a researcher wants to study (Nardi, 2003). Purposive sampling was used to ensure that the entire population of Title I Needs Improvement elementary schools based on 2006-07 state data (n = 37 schools) were used in the study. The common factor for these schools is that they were classified as Title I schools who did not meet standards required to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress. Inclusion of all of the Needs Improvement schools was necessary to better ensure that the study provided information regarding Title I schools who had not met achievement goals and may have been more deeply involved in reform efforts to improve their performance, as well as those schools who had been more successful. Because the number was so low, all of the schools this category were invited to participate.

Systematic random sampling was used to comprise the remainder of the sample. In line with the state percentages, the researcher ensured that approximately 75% of schools (n = 337 schools) classified as Title I Distinguished schools were included in the sample. Approximately 17% of the schools (n = 76 schools) were classified as Title I Adequate or Commended schools. After generating the list of Title I Needs Improvement elementary schools, a second list was downloaded from the GA Department of Education Title I annual report indicating the Title I elementary schools and the counties within which they were located. Next, the schools listed as Needs Improvement were excluded from this list. Then, the list of remaining schools was sorted according to county of location. The list of schools was then alphabetized and numbered within each county. A minimum of two schools in each of the 159 counties and 21 independent city school systems in the state were invited to participate in the study by choosing the schools numbered “1” and “2” in each county’s list. This provided an additional 360 schools for the study. The selected schools were categorized according to their AYP status (Distinguished or Adequate/Commended). Next, from larger counties, additional schools were added by selecting the next numbered school in each county’s list until the number of schools needed for each AYP category (Distinguished, Commended/Adequate) was filled. Therefore, the sample was comprised of 37 Needs Improvement schools, 337 distinguished schools, and 76 commended or adequate schools totaling 450. Counselors in each of the county and independent city school systems in the state were invited to participate.

Instrumentation

A quantitative survey was used in this study to count the frequency with which specified counseling activities were performed and to identify the most prevalent activities of school counselors in Title elementary schools in Georgia who were selected according to their classification as Distinguished, Needs Improvement, or

Commended/Adequate schools. Demographic survey items allowed for the data to be disaggregated according to school location, counselor-student ratio, counselor experience, school reform status, grades served, training on the ASCA National Model, and county requirement of the National Model implementation. A quantitative design in the form of a self-administered questionnaire was deemed appropriate for this study due to the large number of questions, and with the idea of generalizing the results to the larger population of counselors in similar settings.

A researcher - created survey based on The School Counselor Activity Rating Scale (SCARS) (Scarborough, 2005) was used to collect data. The researcher obtained permission from Scarborough to modify the original survey instrument. The SCARS lists various counselor activities arranged in four major categories (counseling, coordination, consultation and curriculum) and a fifth category of non-counseling activities. While the actual items in the survey were not changed, a revision to the original survey was the categorization of statements according to the four dimensions of the ASCA National Model delivery system (guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services, system support), and another category for roles deemed inappropriate according to the ASCA National Model. Inappropriate activities were included in this study for the purpose of identifying activities that may be performed which inhibit the performance of recommended activities and subsequently, the implementation of comprehensive counseling programs. The re-categorization of activities was done to better align them with the current division of responsibilities as listed in the ASCA National Model. The survey items were cross-referenced with the five roles delineated by the Georgia Board of Education for elementary school counselors and it was found that all activities, excluding “other activities,” also meet GABOE requirements. Twenty-one activities that address counselors’ use of leadership skills were included. The activities were included in the original survey and were identified by the researcher as activities that exhibit leadership according to the ASCA National Model because they emphasize collaboration and advocacy for the purposes of promoting systemic change and counseling program development (ASCA, 2005). Omitted from the original survey are measures to identify the frequency with which counselors would prefer to perform each of the listed activities. Demographic items were added which allowed for the data to be disaggregated according to school location, counselor-student ratio, counselor experience (total and in Title I schools), school reform status, grades served, number of counselors at site, training on the ASCA National Model, and county requirement of the implementation of the National Model. The survey was modified after a thorough review of related literature and pilot study.

Although the original SCARS proved itself reliable, reliability was established for the revised instrument by utilizing SPSS and the data from the pilot study. Cronbach’s Alpha Reading was .97 for all 75 items. To ensure content validity of the researcher-modified survey, an item analysis was used to match added questionnaire items with literature (see Appendix F). For example, researchers (ASCA, 2005; Gysbers et al., 2008) asserted that counselors’ use of the ASCA National Standards based on the attitudes of leadership, advocacy and collaboration will positively impact counselors’ ability to become a part of school reform efforts. Therefore, survey items were directly tied to the National Model standards. Items asked respondents to indicate the frequency with which they complete certain activities recommended by the National Model in the format below.

Table 4.

Sample Survey Item Related to ASCA National Model Recommendations

	I never do this (1)	I rarely do this (2)	I occasionally do this (3)	I frequently do this (4)	I routinely do this (5)
Participate in school-based management team	1	2	3	4	5

Researchers (Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007; House & Hayes, 2001; The Education Trust and Met Life Foundation National School Counselor Training Initiative, 2002) also asserted that counselors can play vital roles in eliminating barriers to student achievement that exist for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds by creating a more positive and encouraging school environment. In this vein, another sample item is shown in the table below:

Table 5

Sample Survey Item Related to Eliminating Barriers

	I never do this (1)	I rarely do this (2)	I occasionally do this (3)	I frequently do this (4)	I routinely do this (5)
Coordinate activities to understand and/or improve school climate	1	2	3	4	5

Additionally, a panel of experts in survey development, school counseling and educational leadership provided face validity for the survey. Finally, a pilot study was conducted with a small sample of counselors for feedback and to test for reliability. Revisions were made as necessary based on these reviews.

The survey contained 65 verbal frequency scale items rating the frequency with which counselors performed various activities and is found in Appendix G. Similar to the Likert scale, a verbal frequency scale is used as a measure of “how often” an action is taken (Scarborough, 2005). Likert scales, created in 1932 by Rensis Likert, measure attitudes and opinions by registering the extent of agreement or disagreement with a particular statement of attitude, belief or judgment. Both measurement tools typically makes use of a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 meaning “strongly agree’ or “never do this [activity]” and 5 is “strongly disagree” or “routinely do this [activity]” (Scarborough, 2005; Nardi, 2003; Tuckman, 1994). Twenty-one of the items addressed leadership skills recommended by ASCA. There were also demographic items at the end of the survey, which were used to disaggregate data for more thorough analysis.

Pilot Survey

Pilot studies are conducted to assess whether the questionnaire flows, instructions are appropriate, items are formatted and worded clearly, and to determine if the survey takes a reasonable amount of time to complete (Nardi, 2003). Responses to pilot questionnaires are usually reviewed by eye for clarity and distribution without necessarily running an item analysis (Tuckman, 1994). After the questionnaire was developed and examined by experts in the fields of survey development, educational leadership, and counseling, it was appropriately revised and submitted to the Institutional Review Board

(IRB) to request permission to release the survey and conduct a pilot study with counselors in Richmond County Schools. Also, a packet was submitted to the Richmond County School System Research Screening Committee for approval and permission to collect data from any employee in Richmond County.

After permission was granted from both the IRB and the Richmond County School System, pilot surveys were distributed to elementary counselors in Richmond County who completed the survey on the secure Survey Monkey website. Feedback was solicited from the participants regarding the ease of accessing the survey, clarity and appropriateness of the instructions and survey items. The survey was refined based on this feedback. A change to the demographics section was made regarding AYP status to reflect the most recent school year, rather than asking counselors to think two years back to the 2006 – 07 school year. This change would not affect the integrity of the survey results and would allow for disaggregation of the results based on most recent performance. Therefore, the researcher made the adjustment. Additionally, specific times quantifying the frequency with which the listed activities were performed (daily, weekly, yearly, etc.), which was added by the researcher, was removed because respondents indicated that it was difficult to make some decisions about frequency because the categories were too restrictive. For example, although performed routinely, a specific activity may not have been performed daily, but was performed more than weekly, and respondents had difficulty determining which category in which to respond. Further validation of the instrument was conducted through a review of the survey by Dr. Carol Rountree, Director of Student Services for the Richmond County Schools and the Educational Leadership personnel at Georgia Southern University. The final survey consisted of 75 items, divided into 51 ASCA recommended activities, 14 inappropriate activities and 10 demographic items.

Data Collection

After the questionnaire was appropriately revised and submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB), it was released to counselors across the state of Georgia on the SurveyMonkey website. An informed consent letter was mailed to identified elementary school counselors at 450 Title I schools inviting them to participate in the study and explaining how to access the survey electronically. The letter was e-mailed to counselors for whom the researcher was able to obtain e-mail addresses. A few respondents also requested paper copies of the survey, which were delivered, completed, and returned to the researcher for input. The informed consent letters were disseminated during the first week of December. Due to the fact that many school systems experienced holiday breaks in mid-December, follow-up post cards were mailed in January to all schools to encourage participation. The average response rate for online surveys has been reported at thirty percent (University of Texas at Austin, 2007). The data was analyzed using appropriate statistical tools.

Data Analysis

Descriptive data from questionnaire items was primarily analyzed by measuring the frequency and central tendency of responses. For each survey item, the number and percentage of counselors performing each activity at each degree of frequency was calculated. The same process was used to determine the extent to which activities not recommended by ASCA were performed by counselors as well as determine the extent to which elementary counselors participated in specific leadership activities utilizing advocacy and collaborative skills in their respective schools. This data was also disaggregated according to the demographic data collected.

Because the data was reported in categories that conveyed the frequency with which counselors performed various activities, the *chi-square test* was deemed the most appropriate test to perform an analysis of the data based on demographic attributes. The *chi-square test* is a non-parametric statistical test utilized when the variables are nominal and the data is categorical (Abu-Bader, 2006). The *chi-square test* of independence examines the relationship between two or more categorical variables by comparing expected and observed outcomes. The *chi-square test* was used to analyze differences based upon location, years of counselor experience, experience in Title I schools, student-to-counselor ratio, training on the National Model, county mandates of the use of the Model, and level of school engagement in whole school reform. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to facilitate data analysis.

In performing the *chi square* analysis, certain categories were combined if the number of responses was too low to allow for adequate analysis and meaningful interpretation. For example, while there were 5 possible responses for each survey item, categories 1 and 2 might have been combined, and categories 4 and 5 combined, so that there were ultimately 3 categories analyzed. Such collapsing of categories allowed for the researcher to better ensure that no more than 20% of the cells in each analysis had expected frequencies of less than 5 cases per cell.

To answer the primary research question, secondary research question 1, secondary research question 2, and secondary research question 4, the researcher analyzed the descriptive data in the form of the number and percentage of respondents in each frequency category. To answer secondary question 3, the researcher utilized the aforementioned descriptive data and conducted the *chi square* test of independence. The results are reported in tabular, graphic and narrative form.

Summary

This chapter has explained the methods used in this quantitative, descriptive study of the activities of elementary counselors in Title I schools in Georgia. After IRB approval was obtained, and revisions made based on pilot study feedback, a survey was disseminated to counselors at 450 elementary schools in 180 county and independent city districts in Georgia. The survey consisted of 65 items deemed either appropriate or inappropriate by ASCA and 10 demographic items. Participants indicated the frequency with which they performed the listed activities. The survey was completed electronically at the SurveyMonkey website, or by paper according to request. To analyze the data collected, the researcher reviewed the number and percentage of respondents in each category indicating the frequency with which they performed activities. Additionally a *chi square* test of independence was conducted to determine if there were differences in the performance of the activities related to demographic factors. The data was reported in narrative, tabular and graphic form. Presented in Chapter 4 are the results obtained with those methods.

CHAPTER 4

REPORT OF DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the activities of counselors at Title I elementary schools in Georgia and their utilization of leadership skills. The activities examined were based on the ASCA National Model and the Georgia Standards for School Counselors. Informed consent letters with information about how to access the on-line survey were disseminated to counselors at 450 Title I elementary schools. The results of this study were outlined in this chapter. Reporting of the results was organized according to the research questions posed in Chapter 1. Analysis of the data included a report of the degree of frequency that activities were performed, a report of the utilization of the specific leadership skills of collaboration and advocacy, and a report of the differences among groups based on specific demographic factors.

The primary research question of this study was: To what extent do counselors implement activities prescribed by the ASCA National Model and leadership within Title I elementary schools?

To guide the study, the secondary research questions were:

1. To what extent do counselors in Title I elementary schools engage in activities described as inappropriate by the ASCA National Model?
2. What activities recommended by the ASCA National Model receive the greatest emphasis by counselors in Title I elementary schools?
3. Are there differences among elementary counselors at Title I schools in the implementation of the ASCA National Model activities according to demographic

factors (2008 AYP Status, student to counselor ratio, level of school engagement in whole school reform, grades served, mandated implementation of ASCA Model, number of counselors, school setting, total years of counseling experience, training on the National Model, and years of counseling experience in Title I schools)?

4. To what extent do elementary counselors in Title I schools exhibit leadership by performing activities requiring the use of collaborative and advocacy skills?

Research Design

Pilot Survey

A pilot survey was disseminated to five counselors in the Richmond County School System. These counselors completed the surveys and provided feedback for revisions, which were made to the survey. A change to the demographics section was made regarding AYP status to reflect the most recent school year, rather than asking counselors to think two years back to the 2006 – 07 school year. This change would not affect the integrity of the survey results and would allow for disaggregation of the results based on most recent performance. Therefore, the researcher made the adjustment. Additionally, specific times quantifying the frequency with which the listed activities were performed (daily, weekly, yearly, etc.), which was added by the researcher, was removed because respondents indicated that it was difficult to make some decisions about frequency because the categories were too restrictive. For example, although performed routinely, a specific activity may not have been performed daily, but was performed more than weekly, and respondents had difficulty determining which category in which to respond.

Respondents

A sample of counselors at Title I elementary schools in each of 180 school systems in the state of Georgia were mailed a letter inviting them to participate in the study. The sample represented the population of elementary school counselors at Title I schools across the state from urban, suburban and rural populations. Additionally, the respondents worked in schools that were in all categories according to the classifications designated by the USDOE for Title I schools based on their AYP results (Distinguished, Needs Improvement, Adequate and Commended). The special schools for the deaf and blind, as well as the 6 state schools were omitted from this study.

Survey Response Rate

The researcher had access to a population of 943 Title I Elementary Schools Letters inviting counselors to participate in this study were sent to 450 counselors in 180 school systems. In the initial mailing of letters to counselors, four letters were returned for incorrect addresses. When follow-up postcards were mailed, four were returned to the researcher. Data were collected from participants using the secure website www.surveymonkey.com. Out of a possible sample of 450 counselors, the number of participants who responded to the survey was 94 (20.9%). The researcher attributed the low response rate to the timing and method of survey dissemination. The survey was disseminated during the first week of December as counselors were nearing a holiday break. Additionally, counselors who received printed letters inviting them to participate had to type in the web address to access the survey, which may have been difficult or inconvenient for some potential participants.

Findings

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The last 10 questions of the survey asked school counselors to respond to items yielding demographic data. Statistics relative to work setting of the participants is listed in Table 6. Seventy-eight percent of the respondents worked in schools designated as Title I Distinguished Schools. Based on data from the GDOE, approximately 80% of all Title I schools were classified as Distinguished schools. Additionally, most of the respondents (81.7%) worked at schools that have met AYP standards during the 2007 – 08 school year. While most of the respondents work in schools that have made AYP, most of them are the only counselors in their schools (77.8%). More than sixty - three percent (63.3%) of the respondents also have more than 450 students assigned to them. Whereas the respondents worked in sites that had students ranging from pre-kindergarten to grade 8, the most common grade levels served at the school sites were pre-kindergarten through grade 5 (55.3%). Sixty-one percent of the respondents (61.4%) worked in schools located in a rural setting, with the other 40% of respondents divided nearly evenly between urban (18.2%) and suburban (20.5%) work settings.

Other demographic items focused more specifically on attributes of the counselors themselves. This information can be viewed in Table 7. A slight majority of counselors had between 11 and 20 years counseling experience (30.4%), while a large percentage had between 6 and 10 years of experience (29.3%) (see Table 7). Further, a slight majority of the respondents have worked in Title I schools for 6 to 10 years (32.6%).

Noteworthy is the finding that a majority of counselors working in Needs Improvement schools had less than 3 years experience working in Title I schools,

Table 6

Demographics of Participants' Work Setting

Item	Category	Frequency	%
Current Work Assignment/Level of School Reform			
	Title I Distinguished School	72	78.2
	Title I Needs Improvement School	14	15.2
	Other	6	6.5
2008 AYP Status			
	Met AYP	76	81.7
	Did Not Meet AYP	16	18.3
Number of Counselors Working at School			
	1	70	77.8
	1 and 1/2	5	5.6
	2	13	14.4
	2 and ½	0	0
	3	2	2.2
Number of Students Assigned to Counselor			
	< 100	1	1.1
	100-250	2	2.2
	250-350	8	8.9
	351-450	22	24.4
	450+	57	63.3
Grades Served at Current Site			
	Pre-K – 5	52	55.3
	K-5	15	16.0
	K – 3	2	2.1
	4 – 5	2	2.1
	Other	23	24.5
School Site Setting			
	Urban	16	18.2
	Suburban	18	20.5
	Rural	54	61.4

Table 7

Demographics of Survey Participants

Item	Category	Frequency	%
Years of Experience as a Counselor in a Title I School			
	None	1	1.1
	less than 3	23	25.0
	3 – 5	16	17.4
	6 – 10	30	32.6
	11 – 20	20	21.7
	20+	2	2.2
Years of Counseling Experience			
	Less than 3	21	22.8
	3 – 5	13	14.1
	6 – 10	27	29.3
	11 – 20	28	30.4
	20+	3	3.3
Trained on ASCA National Model			
	Yes	61	68.5
	No	28	31.5
Required Implementation of ASCA Model			
	Yes	24	27.3
	No	64	72.7

compared to less than 25% of the counselors in Distinguished schools with the same amount of experience in Title I Schools (see Figures 1 and 2). The largest percentage of counselors at Distinguished schools had 6 – 10 years experience working in Title I Schools.

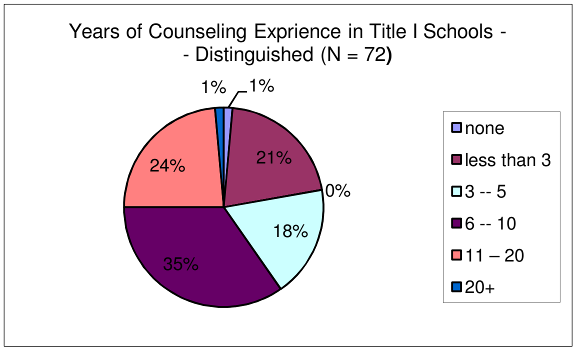

Figure 1. Years of Counseling Experience in Title I Schools – Counselors at Distinguished Schools

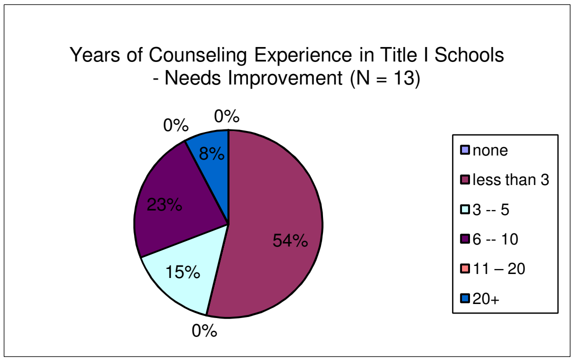

Figure 2. Years of Counseling Experience in Title I Schools – Counselors at Needs Improvement Schools

Although 68.5% of the respondents had been trained on the ASCA National Model, an overwhelming majority of them worked in school districts that did not require implementation of the National Model. Table 8 shows that more than 60% of counselors both at schools who made or did not make AYP had been trained on the ASCA Model. However, as shown in Table 9, a smaller percentage of counselors in Needs Improvement schools were mandated to utilize the National Model.

Table 8

Participants' Training on the ASCA Model According to 2008 AYP Status - Percentage of Respondents

Trained on the ASCA Model	Schools that Met AYP	Schools that Did Not Meet AYP
YES	69.4	64.7
NO	30.6	35.3

Table 9

Mandated Use of ASCA Model by Counselors based on School Reform Level – Percentage of Respondents

Mandated Use of ASCA Model	Distinguished Schools	Needs Improvement Schools
YES	27.3	14.3
NO	72.7	85.7

Finally, as shown in Table 10, the percentage of counselors at schools who met AYP goals and were mandated to use the National Model was higher than the percentage of respondents mandated to use the model at schools who did not meet AYP goals. More respondents at schools classified as Distinguished or who made AYP were required to use the Model than not.

Table 10

Mandated Use of ASCA Model by Counselors Based on 2008 AYP Status

Mandated Use of ASCA Model	% of Respondents at Schools that Met AYP	% of Respondents at Schools that Did Not Meet AYP
YES	32.4	5.9
NO	67.6	94.1

The responses from the survey participants were collected, sorted and analyzed in relationship to the primary and secondary research questions. SPSS was used to analyze the data. The research questions will be addressed in this section.

Primary Research Question

To what extent do counselors in Title I elementary schools implement the activities prescribed by the ASCA National Model?

The detailed responses to the individual survey questions that addressed the extent to which Title I elementary school counselors implemented the activities prescribed by the ASCA National Model are outlined in Appendix H. Many of the recommended activities were implemented on a routine or frequent basis. Of the 51 recommended activities listed in the questionnaire, 32 activities were performed on a frequent or routine basis by more than 50% of the respondents (See Appendix H).

Table 11 highlights the fifteen activities performed on a routine and frequent basis by more than 75% of the respondents (sum of columns “routinely” and “frequently"). Consulting with school staff concerning student behavior, and conducting classroom activities to introduce themselves and explain the counseling program to all students were performed routinely by more than 70% of the respondents. Other commonly performed activities included conducting classroom lessons on various personal and/or social traits (e.g. responsibility, respect), and conducting classroom lessons on relating to others (family, friends, conflict resolution).

There were eight recommended activities that fifteen percent or more of respondents reported never performing (See Table 12). Counseling students regarding substance abuse issues was reported as the least performed activity, with 33% of the respondents indicating they never performed this activity. Two other infrequently performed activities were coordinating school-wide responses for crisis management and intervention and coordinating with an advisory team. Approximately 17% of respondents also indicated that they never conducted or coordinated teacher in-service programs or conducted audits of their programs. It is noteworthy, however, that while 15% reported never using action plans and agreements with their principals, another 46% of the respondents also indicated that they frequently or routinely used them (See Table 12).

In summary, the findings indicated that many of the activities recommended by the ASCA National Model were implemented on a routine or frequent basis by counselors in Title I elementary schools. Consulting with staff concerning student

Table 11

ASCA Recommended Activities Performed on a Frequent or Routine Basis by 75% or More of Respondents -- Percentage of Respondents in Each Category

Activity	Frequency of Performance					
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Routinely	Sum of Frequently & Routinely
1.Counsel with students regarding personal/family concerns	0	0	4.2	41.7	54.2	95.9
15. Consult with school staff concerning student behavior	0.0	0.0	4.3	21.5	74.2	95.7
2. Counsel with students regarding school behavior	0	0	5.2	37.5	57.3	94.8
44. Conduct classroom lessons on various personal and/or social traits (e.g. responsibility, respect)	1.1	3.2	6.5	20.4	68.8	89.2
14. Assist individuals or small groups in setting goals and/or making good decisions	1.1	4.2	6.3	38.9	49.5	88.4
16. Consult with school staff concerning student academic achievement	0.0	0.0	11.8	37.6	50.5	88.1

Table 11 (Continued)

Activity	Frequency of Performance					
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Routinely	Sum of Frequently & Routinely
45. Conduct classroom lessons on relating to others (family, friends, conflict resolution)	1.1	3.3	7.7	20.9	67.0	87.9
42. Conduct classroom activities to introduce yourself and explain the counseling program to all students	1.1	4.3	7.5	16.1	71.0	87.1
12. Assist individual students or small groups with development of self-knowledge and positive self-concept	0.0	2.1	11.6	37.9	48.4	86.3
21. Follow up on individual and group counseling participants	0.0	1.1	12.8	37.2	48.9	86.1
39. Participate on committees within the school	2.2	2.2	10.9	20.7	64.1	84.8

Table 11 (Continued)

Activity	Frequency of Performance					
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Routinely	Sum of Frequently & Routinely
10. Provide assistance to individuals or small groups on social skills development.	1.0	1.0	14.6	37.5	45.8	83.3
46. Conduct classroom lessons on personal growth and development issues	6.5	5.4	9.8	26.1	52.2	78.3
17. Consult with parents regarding academic, personal/social or career issues	1.1	2.2	19.4	40.9	36.6	77.5
49. Coordinate special events and programs for school around academic, career, or personal/social issues (e.g. career day, drug awareness week, test prep)	3.3	5.4	16.3	15.2	59.8	75.0

Table 12

ASCA Recommended Activities Never Performed by More Than 15% Percent of Respondents -- Percentage of Respondents in Each Category

Activity	Frequency of Performance				
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Routinely
7. Conduct individual or small group counseling for students regarding substance abuse issues (own use or family/friend use)	33.3	39.6	18.8	5.2	3.1
8. Coordinate school-wide response for crisis management and intervention	26.3	28.4	25.3	11.6	8.4
36. Coordinate with an advisory team to analyze and respond to school counseling program needs	25.3	26.4	29.7	11.0	7.7
20. Conduct interest inventories	21.7	23.9	37.0	9.8	7.6
50. Conduct or coordinate parent education classes or Workshops	19.6	28.3	26.1	14.1	12.0
33. Conduct or coordinate teacher in-service programs	17.2	29.0	34.4	10.8	8.6

Table 12 (Continued)

Activity	Frequency of Performance				
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Routinely
24. Conduct audits of your counseling program	17.0	29.8	34.0	14.9	4.3
23. Utilize action plans and an management agreement (with principal) to guide program development	15.2	17.4	20.7	25.0	21.7

behavior and conducting classroom guidance lessons on the role and function of the counselor, personal/social traits, and relating to others were the most commonly performed recommended activities. Counseling students regarding substance abuse issues was the least performed recommended activity.

Secondary Research Question 1

To what extent do counselors in Title I elementary schools engage in activities described as inappropriate by the ASCA National Model?

Fourteen survey items listed activities which research indicated have been commonly performed by counselors but are deemed inappropriate by the ASCA. A list of the specific activities and respondents' data are shown in Table 13.

According to the data, counselors did perform inappropriate activities but most were performed infrequently. Of the fourteen activities listed on the questionnaire, only two activities were performed frequently or routinely by more than 60% of the respondents. One activity, performing hall, bus, or cafeteria duty, was performed by.

Table 13

Performance of Inappropriate Activities – Percentage of Responses In Each Category

Activity	Frequency of Performance				
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Routinely
55. Perform hall, bus, or cafeteria duty	6.6	3.3	9.9	13.2	67.0
53. Organize outreach to low-income families (i.e. Thanksgiving dinners, clothing or supply drives)	7.7	13.2	17.6	19.8	41.8
52. Coordinate the standardized testing program	42.9	7.7	7.7	6.6	35.2
57. Prepare IEP, SST, or School attendance records	40.7	4.4	11.0	12.1	31.9
56. Enter data	35.2	17.6	16.5	12.1	18.7
54. Respond to health issues (e.g. check for lice, eye screening, 504 coordination)	22.2	17.8	27.8	14.4	17.8
62. Maintain/complete education records/reports (cumulative files, test scores, attendance reports, drop-out reports)	58.7	9.8	8.7	5.4	17.4

Table 13 (Continued)

Activity	Frequency of Performance				
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Routinely
59. Assist with duties in the principal's office	23.9	29.3	21.7	14.1	10.9
60. Register or schedule students for classes	76.1	4.3	8.7	3.3	7.6
65. Work with individual students in a clinical, therapeutic mode	48.4	22.0	16.5	6.6	6.6
61. Enroll students in and/or withdraw students from school	73.9	9.8	7.6	3.3	5.4
58. Compute grade point averages	82.2	7.8	5.6	1.1	3.3
63. Handle discipline of students	31.5	29.3	23.9	9.8	5.4
64. Substitute teach and/or cover classes for teachers at your school	59.8	29.3	7.6	1.1	2.2

more than 75% of the respondents on a frequent or routine basis. Also, a noteworthy percentage of counselors organized outreach to low-income families (i.e. Thanksgiving dinners, clothing or supply drives) on a routine basis (41.8%). Only two other activities were performed by more than 40% of the respondents on a frequent or routine basis: Coordinating the testing program and preparing IEP, SST or school attendance

Of the fourteen activities, five were reported as "never" being performed by more than 50% of the respondents. Those activities were: (1) maintaining cumulative records, (2) registering/scheduling students for classes, (3) enrolling/withdrawing students, (4) computing grade point averages, and (5) substitute teaching or covering classes for teachers. Moreover, computing grade point averages, registering or scheduling students for classes, and enrolling or withdrawing students from school were reported by more than 70% of respondents as never being performed (See Table 13).

In summary, the data indicated that counselors at Title I schools did perform inappropriate activities, but most were performed infrequently. The inappropriate activities performed most often by the greatest percentage of counselors were hall, bus or cafeteria duty and organizing outreaches for low-income families. The least performed inappropriate activities were computing grade point averages, registering or scheduling students for classes and enrolling or withdrawing students from school.

Secondary Research Question 2

What activities recommended by the ASCA National Model receive the greatest emphasis by counselors in Title I elementary schools?

The recommended activities listed on the questionnaire were categorized according to the four domains of the ASCA National Model Delivery System: responsive services (items 1-8); individual student planning (items 9 – 20); system support (items 21 – 39); curriculum activities (items 40 – 51); and a fifth category for inappropriate activities, other activities (items 52-65). The researcher examined the descriptive statistics in two ways which yielded consistent results. First, the examiner derived the average percentage of respondents who indicated that they “routinely” performed the activities listed in each domain by averaging the responses in the “routinely” category for each domain (See Table 14). Additionally, the researcher derived the average percentage of respondents who indicated they “frequently” or “routinely” performed the activities listed in each domain. These two averages were compared to determine if the findings were consistent.

Activities in the domains of curriculum and individual student planning were most frequently performed by the surveyed counselors (average of sum of responses in frequently and routinely columns) (See Table 14). Curriculum activities include classroom instruction, large group activities and workshops. Individual student planning activities include individual and small group appraisal and/or advisement. Inappropriate activities listed in the “other activities” category were performed least frequently.

In summary, classroom instruction and large group activities in the curriculum domain were performed more often than any other group of activities. Individual student planning activities were performed with the second greatest frequency. “Other activities,” considered inappropriate according to the ASCA Model, were performed least often.

Table 14

Percentages of Respondents In the "Frequently" and "Routinely" Categories According to ASCA Model Delivery System Domain

Domain	Average Percentage of Respondents Reporting "Frequently" Performing Activities in Domain	Average Percentage of Respondents Reporting "Routinely" Performing Activities in Domain	Average Percentage of Respondents Reporting "Frequently" or "Routinely" Performing Activities in Domain
Responsive Services (Items 1-8)	27.0	29.5	56.5
Individual Student Planning (Items 9-20)	29.9	35.1	65.0
System Support (Items 21-39)	26.3	27.2	53.5
Curriculum Activities (Items 40-51)	22.0	43.9	65.9
Other Activities (Items 52-65)	8.8	19.4	28.2

Secondary Research Question 3

Are there differences among elementary counselors at Title I schools in the implementation of the ASCA National Model activities according to demographic factors (2008 AYP Status, student to counselor ratio, level of school engagement in whole school reform, grades served, mandated implementation of ASCA Model, number of counselors, school setting, total years of counseling experience, training on the National Model, and years of counseling experience in Title I schools)?

The data collected was disaggregated and analyzed using the *Chi-Square* test of independence to determine if differences existed in the implementation of ASCA National Model activities based on demographic factors. Tables 15 through 25 show the activities that were found to have statistically significant differences in performance based on demographic category. There were significant relationships between the performance of certain activities and each of the demographic factors investigated. However, all of these relationships are considered to be weak [$(\text{Cramer's V})^2 \leq .25$; $(\text{phi})^2 \leq .25$).].

AYP Status

Significant relationships were found between the 2008 AYP Status and the frequency of implementing individual behavior plans, coordinating with an advisory team, formal evaluation of student progress, and coordinating of orientation processes and activities. The analyzed results are listed in Table 15.

Counselors at schools who met AYP during 2008 more frequently developed and implemented individual behavior plans than those who worked at schools who did not meet AYP. The observed frequencies exceeded expected frequencies in the "occasionally" and "frequently" categories (n= 29 and n= 26, respectively). Only 15% of counselors in these schools reported rarely developing and implementing individual behavior plans. On the contrary, 47% of counselors in schools who did not meet AYP reported rarely performing this activity (n = 8). Accordingly, the observed frequencies exceeded the expected frequencies in this category. The two variables, AYP status and development /implementation of behavior plans, appeared to be related in the population

Table 15

Activities with Differences According to 2008 AYP Status

Activity	2008 AYP Status						
11. Develop and/or implement individual behavior plans	Met AYP		Did Not Meet AYP		X^2	*P*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	9.135	.028	3
Rarely	11	14.9	8	47.1			
Occasionally	29	39.2	4	23.5			
Frequently	26	35.1	3	17.6			
Routinely	8	10.8	2	11.8			
Total	74	100	17	100			

36. Coordinate with an advisory team to analyze and respond to school counseling program needs	Met AYP		Did Not Meet AYP		X^2	*P*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	8.101	.017	2
Rarely	14	19.4	9	25.8			
Occasionally	19	26.4	3	24.7			
Frequently	39	54.2	5	49.4			
Total	72	100	17	99.9			

37. Formally evaluate student progress as a result of participation in individual/group counseling from student, teacher, and/or parent perspectives	Met AYP		Did Not Meet AYP		X^2	*P*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	9.035	.011	2
Occasionally	40	56.3	12	70.6			
Frequently	23	32.4	0	0			
Routinely	8	11.3	5	29.4			
Total	71	100	17	100			

Table 15(Continued)

Activity	2008 AYP Status						
51. Coordinate orientation process/activities for Students	Met AYP		Did Not Meet AYP		X^2	*P*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	6.596	.037	2
Rarely	25	34.7	11	40.9			
Frequently	27	37.5	2	33			
Routinely	20	27.8	3	26.1			
Total	72	100	16	100			

($X^2_{(df = 3)} = 9.135$, $p \leq .05$). The Cramer's Coefficient, (.317) however, indicated that the AYP status explained 10% of the variance and therefore, 90% of the variance was unaccounted for.

The respondents also provided information regarding their coordination of an advisory team to analyze and respond to school counseling program needs. This activity was practiced infrequently by about one half of counselors both at schools who met AYP and those who did not. The observed frequency exceeded the expected frequency for counselors at schools who did not meet AYP in the categories of "never" (n=9). Moreover, the observed frequencies of counselors at schools who met AYP exceeded expectations for the "rarely" and "occasionally" categories. AYP status and coordination of an advisory team were related variables ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 8.101$, $p \leq .05$). The Cramer's Coefficient (.302), however, indicated that the AYP status explained 9% of the variance in the frequency with which advisory teams were coordinated, leaving 91% of the variance unaccounted for.

The evaluation of student progress as a result of counseling from student, teacher and/or parent perspectives was most often performed on an occasional basis by the respondents (see Appendix H). When the results were disaggregated according to AYP status, the observed frequencies exceeded the expected frequency in the “occasionally” (n=12) and “routinely” (n=5) categories for counselors at schools that did not meet AYP. The observed frequency of counselors at schools who met AYP goals who indicated that they frequently performed this activity was greater than the expected frequency (n = 23). AYP status and the evaluation of student progress based on feedback from students, teachers and parents were related variables ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 9.035$, $p \leq .05$). The Cramer’s Coefficient (.320), however, indicated that the AYP status explained 10% of the variance in the frequency with which evaluation of student progress occurs, leaving 90% of the variance unaccounted for by AYP status.

Coordination of the orientation process or activities was rarely performed by a larger majority of counselors in schools that did not meet AYP. Comparatively, a much smaller percentage of counselors in schools that have met AYP reported performing this activity on a rare basis. The number of counselors in schools who met AYP observed to frequently or routinely conduct these groups was higher than expected (n = 27 and n = 20, respectively). The number of counselors in schools that did not make AYP who rarely performed orientation activities was higher than expected (n = 11). Although there was a relationship between the AYP status and the coordination of orientation processes and activities ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 6.596$, $p \leq .05$), the Cramer’s Coefficient (.274), however, indicated that AYP status explained only 8% of the variance in the frequency with which orientation processes are coordinated by counselors. Therefore, 92% of the variance was unaccounted for.

Student-to-Counselor Ratio

To ensure that all categories had a sufficient amount of data to conduct statistical analyses, the categories listed on the survey regarding the number of students assigned to each counselor were collapsed into two categories: (1) less than 450 students and (2) 450 or more students. Statistically significant relationships were found between the counselor-to-student ratio and the frequency of performing four activities: (1) providing small group counseling addressing relationships, (2) providing individual and small group counseling regarding academic issues, (3) informing teachers/administrators about the functioning of counselors and (4) coordinating the standardized testing program. The results are shown in Table 16.

A greater percentage of counselors with more than 450 students reported that they routinely conducted small groups addressing relationships and social issues, compared to counselors with less than 450 students who routinely performed this activity. The number of counselors with more than 450 students observed to occasionally and routinely conduct these groups was higher than expected (n = 21 for both instances). Only the number of counselors who worked with less than 450 students who frequently conducted small groups addressing relationships and social issues was higher than what was expected (n = 17). The two variables were related in the population ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 8.156$, $p \leq .05$), but according to the Cramer's coefficient (.306), only 9.36% of the variance in the frequency with which small groups were conducted to address relationships/ social issues was tied to counselor-to-student ratio.

Table 16

Activities with Significant Differences According to Student-to-Counselor Ratio

Item	Number of Students Assigned to Counselor						
4. Provide small group counseling addressing relationship/social issues	Less than 450 students		450+ students		X^2	*p*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	8.156	.017	2
Occasionally	6	18.8	21	38.2			
Frequently	17	53.1	13	23.6			
Routinely	9	28.1	21	38.2			
Total	32	100	55	100			

19. Counsel individual students or small groups regarding academic issues (i.e., test-taking strategies, academic/career plans)	Less than 450 students		450+ students		X^2	*p*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	6.427	.04	2
Occasionally	12	37.5	24	43.6			
Frequently	12	37.5	8	14.5			
Routinely	8	25	23	41.8			
Total	32	100	55	100			

32. Inform teachers/administrators about the role, training, program and interventions of a school counselor within the context of your school.	Less than 450 students		450+ students		X^2	*p*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	15.07	.001	2
Occasionally	9	28.1	20	36.4			
Frequently	20	62.5	13	23.6			
Routinely	3	9.4	22	40			
Total	32	100	55	100			

Table 16 (Continued)

Item	Number of Students Assigned to Counselor						
52. Coordinate the standardized testing program	Less than 450 students		450+ students		X^2	*p*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	6.594	.037	2.
Never	14	45.2	22	40			
Occasionally	11	35.5	9	16.4			
Routinely	6	19.3	24	43.6			
Total	31	100	55	100			

Counselors also differed significantly in their frequency of counseling individual students or small groups regarding academic issues such as test taking strategies and academic career plans based on student-to-counselor ratio ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 6.427$, $p \leq .05$). The number of counselors who worked with less than 450 students who reported "frequently" counseling individuals or small groups for academic issues was higher than what was expected (n = 12). Overall, 42% of counselors with more than 450 students reported "routinely" counseling individual or small groups regarding academic issues, compared to 25% of counselors with less than 450 students. Therefore, in this sample, counseling regarding academic issues with small groups or individuals was more prevalent as a routine activity amongst counselors with larger caseloads. The Cramer's Coefficient (.272), however, indicated that the counselor to student ratio explained only 7.4% of the variance in the frequency with which individual and small groups were conducted to address academic issues.

Differences existed between counselors in the frequency with which they informed teachers/ administrators about the role, training, program and interventions of counselors in their particular schools. For counselors responsible for a minimum of 450 students, the observed frequencies exceeded what was expected for the categories of "occasionally" (n= 20) and "routinely" (n = 22). Counselors with less than 450 students exceeded the expected frequency in the "frequently" category (n=20). More of the counselors with more than 450 students indicated that they routinely inform the teachers and administrators about their role and interventions than their counterparts who were assigned less than 450 students. However, upon further examination, more than 60% of counselors in both categories indicated performing this activity on a frequent or routine basis. While there was a statistically significant difference ($X_{(df = 2)} = 15.07$, $p \leq .05$), the Cramer's Coefficient (.416) indicated that 83% of the variance was unexplained and that 17.3% of the variance was explained by differences in the student to counselor ratio.

Coordination of the standardized testing program was another activity that was performed to significantly different degrees according to student- to- counselor ratio ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 6.594$, $p \leq .05$). The number of counselors with more than 450 students observed to routinely perform this activity was higher than expected (n = 24). The number of counselors who worked with less than 450 students who never (n=14) or occasionally coordinated the testing program was higher than expected (n = 11). While the percentages of counselors in both groups who never coordinated the testing program was above 40%, the percentage of counselors with more than 450 students who routinely performed this activity was higher than that of counselors with less students. (see Table 16) The Cramer's Coefficient, however, indicated that the counselor to student ratio explained only 7.7% of the variance in the frequency with which standardized testing was coordinated by counselors. Therefore, 92.3% of the variance was unaccounted for. (see Table 16).

School Reform Status: Distinguished/Needs Improvement

The researcher found one activity for which a statistically significant relationship was discovered based on school reform status. A relationship was found to exist between the school reform status and the coordination of orientation processes and/or activities ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 9.332$, $p \leq .05$). Coordination of the orientation process and/or activities was rarely performed by most of counselors in schools classified as Needs Improvement. On the other hand, a smaller percentage of counselors in Distinguished Schools reported performing this activity on a rare basis. The number of counselors in Distinguished schools observed to frequently or routinely conduct these groups was higher than expected (n = 25 and n = 18, respectively). The number of counselors in Needs Improvement schools who rarely performed orientation activities was higher than expected (n = 11). The Cramer's Coefficient (.342), indicated that the school reform status accounted for 12% of the variance in the frequency with which orientation processes and/or activities were coordinated. Therefore, 88% of the variance was unaccounted for (see Table 17).

Grades Served in School

For the purpose of meaningful analysis, responses were collapsed into two major categories: counselors serving students in grades pre-k – 5 and those serving other grade levels. The findings based on this demographic criterion are delineated in Table 18. While the majority of the respondents worked in schools with the grade levels served

Table 17

Activity with Significant Difference Based on School Reform Status

Item	School Reform Status						
51. Coordinate orientation process/activities for students	Distinguished		Needs Improvement		X^2	*p*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	9.332	0.009	2
Rarely	23	34.8	11	78.6			
Frequently	25	37.9	1	7.1			
Routinely	18	27.3	2	14.3			
Total	66	100	14	100			

being pre-k through 5th (68% of respondents), differences were found between the groups in the performance of activities related to providing teacher in-service programs, coordination of the standardized testing program and organization of outreach to low-income families.

While counselors in schools with a pre-k – 5 organization reported more often providing teacher in-service programs than did their counterparts in schools serving other grade levels, the programs were provided on an occasional basis at most (57%). This observed frequency (n=28) exceeded the expected frequency. The observed number of counselors in schools with organizations different than pre-k – 5 who never provided teacher in-service programs was higher than expected (n = 12). Thirty two percent (32%) of counselors in this category never provided in-service programs, compared to 8% of

Table 18

Activities with Significant Differences According to Grades Served in School

Item	Grade Served in School						
33. Conduct or coordinate teacher in-service programs	Pre-K - 5		Other Grade Levels		X^2	*p*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	8.838	0.012	2
Never	4	8.2	12	32.4			
Rarely	17	34.7	7	18.9			
Occasionally	28	57.1	18	48.6			
Total	49	100	37	99.9			

Item 52 : Coordinate the standardized testing program	Pre-K - 5		Other Grade Levels		X^2	*p*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	6.578	0.037	2
Never	20	42.6	16	43.2			
Occasionally	15	31.9	4	10.8			
Routinely	12	25.5	17	45.9			
Total	47	100	37	99.9			

53. Organize outreach to low-income families (i.e. Thanksgiving dinners, clothing or supply drives)	Pre-K - 5		Other Grade Levels		X^2	*p*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	8.771	0.032	3
Rarely	9	19.1	5	13.5			
Occasionally	7	14.9	9	24.3			
Frequently	15	31.9	3	8.1			
Routinely	16	34	20	54.1			
Total	47	99.9	37	100			

those in pre-k – 5 schools. The *Chi-Square* test revealed a relationship between the variables ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 8.838$, $p \leq .05$) and the Cramer's Coefficient (.321), indicated that the grade levels served explained 10% of the variance in the frequency with which teacher in-service programs were provided, leaving 90% of the variance unexplained (See Table 18).

Regarding the coordination of the standardized testing program, nearly equal percentages of counselors serving grades pre-k – 5 and those serving other grade levels indicated that they never performed that activity. However, more counselors in schools with grade levels other than pre-k – 5 indicated that they routinely coordinated testing than counselors in pre-k – 5 schools. The observed number of counselors in grades pre-k – 5 schools who occasionally performed this function was higher than expected (n = 15). The expected frequencies for counselors in schools serving other grade levels was lower than observed in the categories of "never" and "routinely" coordinating testing (n= 16 and n= 17). There was a significant relationship between the two variables ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 6.57$, $p \leq .05$). However, the relationship was weak, as it only accounted for 8% of the variance, leaving 92% unaccounted for.

Nearly 65% of counselors in both categories reported organizing outreach to low-income families on a frequent or routine basis, but this activity was performed more routinely in schools with an organization different from pre-k – 5 (see Table 18). The observed frequency of counselors in pre-k – 5 schools exceeded the expected frequency in the category of "rarely" (n=9), "occasionally" (n=7) and "frequently" (n=15) organizing outreaches. The numbers of counselors working in schools serving grade levels other than pre-k through 5 exceeded expected frequencies in the "occasionally" (n=9) and “routinely” (n=20) categories. While there was a significant relationship between the grade levels served and the provision of outreaches to low-income families ($X^2_{(df = 3)} = 8.771$, $p \leq .05$), the relationship only explains 10% of the variance, leaving 90% to other causes.

ASCA National Model Mandate for Implementation

The majority of respondents worked in school districts that did not require the implementation of the ASCA National Model (see Table 19). However, it appeared that there were significant differences between some of the activities of counselors in districts where the National Model implementation was required and those where it was not. One activity where differences were apparent was in the conduction of audits of the counseling program. Audits were frequently performed by 38% of counselors who were in districts where the Model was mandated and 11% of counselors who worked in districts where the model was not mandated. However, it is noteworthy that 42% of counselors in districts where the model was not mandated reported occasionally performing the audits. More than 45% of counselors in both categories indicated that they never or rarely performed the audits of their counseling programs. The *Chi-Square* test results ($X^2_{(df = 3)} = 10.281$, $p \leq .05$), indicated a relationship between the Model mandate and the performance of counseling program audits. Twelve percent (12%) of the variance between the performance of audits was accounted for by districts mandate of the National Model and the lack thereof (Cramer V = .346).

Participation in school–level decision-making was another activity whose performance differed according to whether or not the counselor worked in a district where the ASCA Model was mandated. More than half of the respondents who work in a

Table 19

Differences According to ASCA National Model Mandated Implementation

Activity	ASCA Model Implementation						
24. Conduct audits of your counseling program	Mandated		Not Mandated		X^2	*P*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	10.281	0.016	3
Never	5	20.8	9	14.5			
Rarely	6	25	20	32.3			
Occasionally	4	16.7	26	41.9			
Frequently	9	37.5	7	11.3			
Total	24	100	62	100			

25. Participate in school-level decision-making	Mandated		Not Mandated		X^2	*P*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	11.927	0.003	2
Occasionally	9	37.5	21	33.9			
Frequently	2	8.3	27	43.5			
Routinely	13	54.2	14	22.6			
Total	24	100	62	100			

63. Handle discipline of students	Mandated		Not Mandated		X^2	*P*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	11.461	0.009	3
Never	6	25	20	32.8			
Rarely	6	25	18	29.5			
Occasionally	3	12.5	18	29.5			
Routinely	9	37.5	5	8.2			
Total	24	100	61	100			

Table 19 (Continued)

Activity	ASCA Model Implementation						
64. Substitute teach and/or cover classes for teachers at your school	Mandated		Not Mandated		X^2	*P*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	6.334	0.042	2
Never	9	37.5	41	67.2			
Rarely	11	45.8	14	23			
Routinely	4	16.7	6	9.8			
Total	24	100	61	100			

district where the Model was mandated performed this activity on a routine basis (54%). By contrast, 23% of respondents working in districts where the Model was not mandated reported performing this activity routinely. The observed frequencies of counselors in districts where the Model was not mandated exceeded expectations in the "frequently" category (n=27). For counselors in districts where the Model was mandated, observed frequencies exceeded the expected frequencies in the "occasionally" and "routinely" categories (n=9 and n= 13, respectively). The *Chi-Square* test results ($X^2_{(df = 3)} = 11.927$, $p \leq .05$), indicated a relationship between the Model mandate and the frequency of participation in school-level decision-making. Fourteen percent (14%) of the variance was accounted for by districts' mandate of the National Model and the lack thereof (Cramer V = .372). The other 86% of variance was unaccounted for by mandating of the National Model.

One of the activities that is not prescribed by the ASCA National Model is the handling of discipline. The percentage of counselors in districts where the Model was mandated who handled discipline on a routine basis (38%) was greater than the percentage of counselors in districts where the Model was not mandated (8%). Additionally, the percentage of counselors in districts where the Model was not mandated who never handled discipline (33%) was greater than that of their counterparts who worked in districts where the Model was mandated (25%). Only in the "routinely" category did the observed frequency exceed the expected frequencies for counselors who worked in districts where the Model was mandated (n=9). Observed frequencies exceeded expected frequencies in the categories of "never", "rarely", and "occasionally" for counselors in districts where the Model was not mandated (n = 20, 18 and 18, respectively). The *Chi-Square* test results ($X^2_{(df = 3)} = 11.461$, $p \leq .05$), indicated a relationship between mandated Model implementation and the frequency of handling discipline. Fourteen percent (14%) of the variance was accounted for by districts' mandate of the National Model and the lack thereof (Cramer V = .367).

Another activity not recommended by the ASCA National Model is substitute teaching or covering classes for teachers. Nearly 80% of counselors, both in districts where the Model was mandated and districts where it is not, indicated that they never or rarely substitute taught or covered classes. The observed frequency of counselors in districts where the Model is not mandated who never performed this activity was greater than expected (n=41). The observed frequency of counselors in districts where the Model is mandated who reported rarely (n=11) or routinely (n=4) substitute teaching or covering classes exceeded the expected frequencies. There was a relationship between the variables of mandate of the ASCA Model and performance of substitute teaching or covering classes ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 6.334$, $p \leq .05$). However, only 8% of this variance was accounted for by district mandate of the ASCA National Model (Cramer's V = .273).

Counselors working in districts where the Model was mandated more frequently participated in school-level decision making, handled discipline and performed substitute teaching.

Number of Counselors

Only one activity had significant differences in frequency rating based on the number of counselors working at the school. Informing teachers and administrators about the role, training, program and interventions of the school counselor was performed routinely by a larger percentage of counselors who were the sole practitioner in their school than those who worked with other counselors (see Table 20). However, the activity was performed frequently or routinely by more than 65% of counselors in both categories. The observed counts of sole counselors who reported "occasionally" and "routinely" performing this activity exceeded the expected frequencies (n =23 and n=24, respectively). The observed frequency of counselors who did not work alone who "frequently" reported informing teachers and administrators exceeded the expected frequency (n=12). The relationship between the variables has been indicated ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 8.277$, $p \leq .05$), but the Cramer's coefficient (.312) indicated a weak relationship in which only 10% of the variance was related to the number of counselors working in a school.

School Setting

According to the demographic of school setting (urban, rural, suburban), several activities indicated statistically significant differences in the frequency ratings reported by counselors. Conducting small groups around family/personal issues, consulting with

Table 20

Activities with Difference According to the Number of Counselors Working at the School

Activity	Number of Counselors						
32: Inform teachers/administrators about the role, training, program and interventions of a school counselor within the context of your school.	1 Counselor		More than 1 Counselor		X^2	*p*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	8.277	0.016	2
Occasionally	23	35.4	6	30			
Frequently	18	27.7	12	60			
Routinely	24	36.9	2	10			
Total	65	100	20	100			

community and school agencies regarding individual issues, analyzing student data, publishing calendars, attending professional development programs and coordinating special events and programs around academic, career or personal issues were the activities for which differences were noted. Table 21 lists these activities. Sixty three percent (63%) of the counselors reported working in a rural setting, and for the purposes of analysis, the numbers of urban and suburban counselor respondents were combined, comprising 36.9% of the sample.

Nearly half of the counselors (49%) working in rural settings reported conducting small groups regarding family/personal issues on a frequent or routine basis, compared to 36% of counselors in other settings who reported conducting such groups at that frequency. Thirteen percent of counselors in suburban/urban areas reported rarely

Table 21

Activities with Significant Differences in Frequency According to School Setting

Activity	School Setting						
5. Conduct small groups regarding family/personal issues (e.g. divorce, death)	Suburban or Urban		Rural		X^2	*P*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	7.903	0.048	3
Rarely	4	12.9	14	26.4			
Occasionally	16	51.6	13	24.5			
Frequently	7	22.6	11	20.8			
Routinely	4	12.9	15	28.3			
Total	31	100	53	100			

6. Consult with community and school agencies concerning individual issues	Suburban or Urban		Rural		X^2	*P*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	7.329	0.026	2
Occasionally	15	48.4	11	20.4			
Frequently	8	25.8	23	42.6			
Routinely	8	25.8	20	37			
Total	31	100	54	100			

18: Analyze student data to better meet academic needs and develop individual long-range plans	Suburban or Urban		Rural		X^2	*P*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	6.701	0.035	2
Occasionally	15	48.4	11	20.4			
Frequently	8	25.8	23	42.6			
Routinely	8	25.8	20	37			
Total	31	100	54	100			

Table 21 (Continued)

Activity	School Setting						
22. Develop and publish calendars (to organize program)	Suburban or Urban		Rural		X^2	*p*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	13.035	0.001	2
Rarely	2	6.3	19	35.2			
Frequently	10	31.3	20	37			
Routinely	20	62.5	15	27.8			
Total	32	100.1	54	100			

35: Attend professional development activities (e.g. state conferences, local in-services)	Suburban or Urban		Rural		X^2	*p*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	5.976	0.05	2
Occasionally	10	32.3	18	33.3			
Frequently	7	22.6	24	44.4			
Routinely	14	45.2	12	22.2			
Total	31	100	54	99.9			

49. Coordinate special events and programs for school around academic, career, or personal/social issues (e.g. career day, drug awareness week, test prep)	Suburban or Urban		Rural		X^2	*p*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	8.002	0.018	2
Occasionally	3	9.7	19	35.2			
Frequently	4	12.9	9	16.7			
Routinely	24	77.4	26	48.1			
Total	31	100	54	100			

conducting these groups, while 26% of counselors in rural areas reported doing so. For counselors in suburban/urban settings, the observed frequencies exceeded the expected frequencies in the category of “occasionally” (n=16) performing this activity. Only in the category of “rarely” performing this activity did the observed frequency exceed the expected frequency for counselors working in rural settings (n= 14). The Cramer’s coefficient (.307) indicated that 9% of the variance between the groups could be attributed to school setting ($X^2_{(df = 3)} = 7.903, p \leq .05$).

Consulting with community and school agencies concerning individual issues was performed on a frequent or routine basis by more than 70% of the counselors in rural settings and by 52% of counselors in other settings. Additionally, the observed frequency of counselors in rural settings who reported performing this activity frequently (n=23) or routinely (n=20) exceeded expected frequencies. For counselors in suburban and urban areas, the observed frequencies of counselors reporting that they occasionally consulted with community and school agencies concerning individual issues exceeded what was expected in that category (n=15), and accounted for the largest single percentage of respondents in this demographic category (48%). The Chi-Square test revealed a relationship between this activity and school setting ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 7.329, p \leq .05$). The Cramer’s coefficient indicated that 9% of the variance observed for this activity was attributed to differences in school setting, leaving 91% unexplained.

Analysis of student data to meet academic needs and develop individual long-range plans was an activity performed on an occasional basis by the majority counselors in all school settings. Less than 15% of counselors in all settings reported performing this activity on a frequent basis. The observed frequencies of counselors in rural settings who indicated they occasionally (n=11) or frequently (n=23) perform these activities passed the expected frequencies. The observed frequencies of counselors in suburban and urban areas who frequently perform this activity exceeded the expected frequency (n=8). The *Chi-Square* test revealed a relationship between this activity and school setting ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 6.701, p \leq .05$). Only 8% of the variance observed for this activity was attributed to differences in school setting, leaving 92% unaccounted for (Cramer's V = .281).

Many counselors working in rural settings indicated that they rarely published calendars to organize their programs (35%). In contrast, only 6% of counselors in suburban and urban settings reported rarely publishing calendars. Further, 63% of counselors in suburban and urban settings reported routinely publishing calendars. The observed frequency in the category "routinely" exceeded the expected frequency (n=20) for counselors in urban settings. The observed frequency of counselors in rural areas who rarely (n=19) and frequently (n=20) published calendars surpassed the expected frequency. The results of the *Chi-Square* test indicated a relationship between the setting and the frequency with which counselors publish calendars ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 13.035, p \leq .05$). Fifteen percent (15%) of the variance could be attributed to differences in setting for this activity (Cramer's V = .389).

Another activity for which the findings indicated there was a relationship between school setting and frequency of performance was attending professional development programs ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 5.97, p \leq .05$). Counselors in rural settings reported not attending professional development activities as routinely as counselors in other settings. However, more than 65% of counselors in both rural and suburban/urban areas reported that they frequently or routinely participated in such activities. The number of counselors in rural settings observed to "occasionally" (n=18) and "frequently" (n=24) attend the professional development activities exceeded the expected frequencies. The number of counselors in suburban/urban settings who routinely attended professional development activities was greater than expected (n=14). The relationship between the variables was weak. Based on the Cramer's coefficient (.265), 7% of the variance in frequency was attributed to school setting.

The final activity which had statistically significant differences in frequency of performance related to school setting is the coordination of special events and programs for school around academic, career, or personal/social issues. The *Chi-Square* test results indicated that 9% of the variance was accounted for by school setting differences ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 8.002$, $p \leq .05$; Cramer's V = .307) and that 91% was unaccounted for by this demographic characteristic. The number of counselors in urban and suburban settings who indicated they routinely coordinated special events exceeded the expected number (n=24). Additionally, for counselors working in rural areas, the number who indicated they occasionally performed this activity exceeded the expected number (n=19). While 35% of respondents from rural settings indicated that coordination of special events and programs for school around academic, career, or personal/social issues occurred on an occasional basis, notable percentages of counselors in both rural and suburban/urban settings indicated that they routinely performed this activity (48% and 77%, respectively).

Total Years of Counseling Experience

Table 22 shows the two activities whose frequency of performance was found to be related to the counselor's total years of experience in the field: (1) utilizing action

Table 22

Activities with Significant Differences in Frequency Based on Counselor's Years of Experience

Item	Total Years of Counseling Experience					
23. Utilize action plans and an management agreement (with principal) to guide program development	5 years or less		6 – 10 years		11 or more years	
Frequency	N	%	N	%	N	%
Rarely	12	38.7	10	40	6	19.4
Occasionally	7	22.6	5	20	6	19.4
Frequently	7	22.6	1	4	13	41.9
Routinely	5	16.1	9	36	6	19.4
Total	31	100	25	100	31	100.1*

$X^2 = 13.509$, $p = .036$, $df = 3$

47. Conduct classroom lessons on personal safety issues and substance abuse prevention	5 years or less		6 – 10 years		11 or more years	
Frequency	N	%	N	%	N	%
Occasionally	6	18.2	11	44	7	23.3
Frequently	11	33.3	1	4	8	26.7
Routinely	16	48.5	13	52	15	50
Total	32	100	25	100	30	100

$X^2 = 9.467$, $p = .05$, $df = 2$

**Total exceeds 100 due to rounding.*

plans and management agreements and, (2) conducting classroom lessons on personal safety issues and substance abuse prevention. For the purposes of analysis, the respondents were grouped into three categories based on their years of experience: 5 years or less; 6 to 10 years; and 11 or more years.

Counselors with 6-10 years of experience had the largest percentage of respondents who routinely utilized action plans and management agreements with their principals (36%). More experienced counselors (11 or more years) most often reported performing this activity on a frequent basis. More than one-third of counselors with the least experience reported utilizing action plans and agreements on a rare basis (39%), which was the most popular response (See Appendix H). The observed frequencies for counselors with five years or less experience exceeded the expected frequencies for the "rarely" category (n=12). The same was true for counselors with 6 to 10 years experience (n=10). For counselors with 11 or more years experience, the observed frequency exceeded the expected frequency in the category of "frequently" performing the activity (n= 13) (See Table 22). The results of the *Chi-Square* test for utilizing action plans and management agreements with principals ($X^2_{(df = 6)} = 13.509$, $p \leq .05$) and the corresponding Cramer's coefficient (.279) indicated that 8% of the variance among counselor's responses could be attributed the counselor's years of experience. Counselors with the most experience, however, had the largest number of respondents who frequently or routinely performed this activity.

The frequency with which classroom lessons on personal safety issues and substance abuse prevention was performed also varied to a small degree relative to the counselor's years of experience. About 50% of the counselors in all three of the experience categories indicated that they routinely conduct such classroom lessons Moreover, in all three categories, the highest percentage of respondents was in the category of routinely performing this activity. The expected frequency in the "frequently" category for counselors with 5 years or less experience was surpassed (n=11). For counselors with 6 to 10 years experience, the observed frequency of responses in the categories of "occasionally" and "routinely" (n=11 and n=13, respectfully) exceeded the expected frequency. The *Chi Square* Test indicated that there was a relationship between the frequency with which classroom lessons on personal safety issues and substance abuse prevention were conducted by counselors based on their years of experience in counseling ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 9.467$, $p \leq .05$). However, the findings indicated that 5% of the variance was explained by counselors' professional experience (Cramer's V = .232).

Training on the ASCA National Model

The data was analyzed according to whether or not counselors were trained on the ASCA National Model. The *Chi-Square* test revealed a relationship between counselors' training on the ASCA National Model and the frequency with which they attended professional development activities, conducted classroom lessons on personal growth and development issues and conducted or coordinated parent education classes or workshops. The results are shown in Table 23.

The majority of counselors in the entire sample indicated that they frequently attended professional development activities. However, a larger percentage of counselors not trained on the ASCA Model reported performing this activity "occasionally" compared to counselors who had been trained. Further, for counselors trained on the ASCA Model, the observed frequency for the category "occasionally"(n=13), as well as

Table 23

Activities with Significant Differences in Frequency Based on Training on ASCA National Model

Activity	Training on the National Model						
Item 35: Attend professional development activities (e.g. state conferences, local in-services)	Trained		Not Trained		X^2	*P*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	6.09	0.048	2
Occasionally	16	27.6	13	46.4			
Frequently	19	32.8	11	39.3			
Routinely	23	39.7	4	14.3			
Total	58	100.1*	28	100			

46. Conduct classroom lessons on personal growth and development issues	Trained		Not Trained		X^2	*P*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	6.677	0.035	2
Occasionally	7	12.1	10	35.7			
Frequently	18	31	6	21.4			
Routinely	33	56.9	12	42.9			
Total	58	100	28	100			

50. Conduct or coordinate parent education classes or workshops	Trained		Not Trained		X^2	*P*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	12.652	0.005	2
Never	11	19	6	21.4			
Rarely	22	37.9	3	10.7			
Occasionally	10	17.2	14	50			
Frequently	15	25.9	5	17.9			
Total	58	100	28	100			

the number of responses in the "frequently" category (n=11) exceeded the expected frequency. For counselors who had been trained on the Model, the observed number of counselors who indicated they attended professional development activities routinely (n=23) exceeded the expected number. While some variance exists amongst the responses ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 6.090$, $p \leq .05$), according to the Cramer's coefficient (.266), 7% of this variance can be related to training on the ASCA National Model.

The majority of the respondents in the sample indicated that they routinely conducted classroom lessons on personal growth and development issues (52%). This finding was consistent when the data was disaggregated according to training on ASCA National Model. However, the statistical test indicated variance between counselors trained on the ASCA Model and those not trained on the Model ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 6.677$ $p \leq .05$). Based on the Cramer's coefficient (.279), 8% of this variance was attributed to the counselor training on the ASCA Model.

Counselors trained on the ASCA Model had a greater percentage of respondents who "routinely" conducted classroom lessons on personal growth and development issues than counselors without the training. The observed frequency of counselors trained on the Model who frequently (n=18) and routinely (n=33) performed this activity exceeded the expected frequency. For counselors untrained on the Model, the number who responded that they occasionally conduct lessons on personal growth and development (n=10) exceeded the expected frequency.

The frequency with which counselors conducted or coordinated parent education classes or workshops appeared to be related to the respondents' training on the ASCA model. Counselors who had been trained on the model had a larger percentage of respondents who reported “rarely” or “never” conducting/coordinating parent education programs than those who had not been trained on the model. For counselors who had been trained on the model, the observed frequency of respondents exceeded the expected frequency for “rarely”(n=22) and “frequently” (n=15). For counselors not trained on the Model, the frequencies for the categories “never” and “occasionally” surpassed the predicted numbers (n=6 and n=14, respectively). The statistical test indicated a relationship between the variables ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 4.484$, $p \leq .05$) and the Cramer’s coefficient (.384) indicated the relationship was weak. Fourteen percent of the variance in the frequency of conducting or coordinating parent education events was tied to training on the ASCA Model.

Years of Counseling Experience in Title I Schools

Based on the demographic characteristic of years of counseling experience in Title I schools, two activities were found to differ in their reported frequency of performance: (1) entering data and (2) enrolling and/or withdrawing students from school. The results are shown in Table 24. To ensure that there were enough responses in each category to conduct the analyses, the 5 categories for years of counseling experience in Title I schools were collapsed into 2: (1) 5 years or less experience and (2) 6 or more years of experience. The results of the *Chi Square* test for this activity indicated that there was a relationship between entering data and the years of experience in Title I schools ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 4.484$, $p \leq .05$). This activity was performed frequently or routinely by most of the counselors in the sample. In fact, for counselors with a minimum of 6 years experience in a Title I school, entering data was frequently performed by a large majority of the respondents. The observed frequency for this

Table 24

Activities with Differences Related to Counseling Experience in Title I Schools

Activity	Years of Counseling Experience in Title I Schools						
56. Enter data	5 years or less		6 or more years		X^2	*P*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	4.484	0.034	2
Frequently	16	43.2	11	22			
Routinely	21	56.8	39	78			
Total	37	100	50	100			
Item 61: Enroll students in and/or withdraw students from school	5 years or less		6 or more years		X^2	*P*	*Df*
Frequency	N	%	N	%	3.941	0.047	2
Never	26	68.4	43	86			
Routinely	12	31.6	7	14			
Total	38	100	50	100			

category exceeded the expected frequency (n=39). Additionally, a majority of counselors with less than 5 years of counseling experience in Title I schools indicated that they routinely entered data. The observed frequency of counselors with no more than 5 years of experience who reported that they frequently entered data surpassed the expected frequency (n=16). Likewise, the number of respondents with 6 or more years of experience in Title I schools who routinely entered data (n=39) exceeded the expected frequency. The Phi coefficient (.227) indicated that only 5% of the variance for this activity was accounted for by years of counseling experience in Title I schools.

A second activity for which a relationship was found to exist with years of experience in Title I schools was the enrolling and withdrawal of students in and from school ($X^2_{(df = 2)} = 3.941$, $p \leq .05$). The majority of counselors reported never performing this activity (78%). For counselors with more than 6 years of counseling experience in Title I schools, the observed frequency for the category "never" exceeded the expected frequency (n=43). Eighty-six percent of those counselors reported never enrolling and /or withdrawing students, compared to 68% of counselors with no more than 5 years experience in Title I schools in the same category. The observed frequency of counselors with a maximum of 5 years experience in the routinely category exceeded the expected frequency (n=12). Based on the Phi Coefficient (-.212), 5% of the variance could be attributed to the counselors' years of experience in Title I schools.

In summary, statistically significant differences in the frequency of performance of a small number of activities were found to be related to each of the demographic factors studied. However, all of the relationships between the activities and demographic factors were weak. Overall, the findings indicated that the frequency with which activities were performed was not significantly impacted by demographic characteristics.

Secondary Research Question 4

To what extent do elementary counselors in Title I schools exhibit leadership by performing activities requiring the use of collaborative and advocacy skills?

The data indicated that the respondents were performing many leadership activities requiring collaborative and/or advocacy skills, but that some activities were still performed on an infrequent basis. The 21 items on the questionnaire that were leadership activities requiring the use of collaboration or advocacy skills are listed in Table 25,

Table 25

Performance of Activities that Require Utilization of Counselor Leadership Skills – Percentage of Respondents

Activity	Frequency of Performance				
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Routinely
15. Consult with school staff concerning student behavior	0.0	0.0	4.3	21.5	74.2
39. Participate on committees within the school	2.2	2.2	10.9	20.7	64.1
49. Coordinate special events and programs for school around academic, career, or personal/social issues (e.g. career day, drug awareness week, test prep)	3.3	5.4	16.3	15.2	59.8
16. Consult with school staff concerning student academic achievement	0.0	0.0	11.8	37.6	50.5
53. Organize outreach to low-income families (i.e. Thanksgiving dinners, clothing or supply drives)	7.7	13.2	17.6	19.8	41.8
27. Participate in school-based management team	7.6	6.5	14.1	22.8	48.9
17. Consult with parents regarding academic, personal/social or career issues	1.1	2.2	19.4	40.9	36.6
6. Consult with community and school agencies concerning individual issues	0.0	4.2	27.4	35.8	32.6
25. Participate in school-level decision-making	3.2	6.4	24.5	36.2	29.8

Table 25 (Continued)

Activity	Frequency of Performance				
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Routinely
28. Provide consultation for administrators (regarding school policy, programs, staff, and or/ students)	4.3	11.7	19.1	36.2	28.7
51. Coordinate orientation process/activities for students	13.5	27.0	19.1	13.5	27.0
29. Participate in team/grade level/subject team meetings	8.5	19.1	33.0	17.0	22.3
23. Utilize action plans and an management agreement (with principal) to guide program development	15.2	17.4	20.7	25.0	21.7
9. Assist in identifying exceptional children (special education)	8.3	17.7	29.2	25.0	19.8
38. Conduct needs assessments and counseling program evaluations from parents, faculty and /or students	6.5	14.1	40.2	19.6	19.6
26. Coordinate referrals for students and/or families to community or education professionals (e.g. mental health, speech pathology, medical assessment)	4.3	4.3	28.7	43.6	19.1
30. Coordinate activities to understand and/or improve school climate	5.3	11.7	36.2	33.0	13.8
50. Conduct or coordinate parent education classes or workshops	19.6	28.3	26.1	14.1	12.0

Table 25 (Continued)

Activity	Frequency of Performance				
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Routinely
33. Conduct or coordinate teacher in-service programs	17.2	29.0	34.4	10.8	8.6
8. Coordinate school-wide response for crisis management and intervention	26.3	28.4	25.3	11.6	8.4
36. Coordinate with an advisory team to analyze and respond to school counseling program needs	25.3	26.4	29.7	11.0	7.7

along with the survey results. Fourteen of the 21 activities were performed at least occasionally by 70% of the respondents. Ten activities were performed by the more than 50% of respondents on a frequent or routine basis. More specifically, six leadership activities were performed on a frequent or routine basis by more than 70% of the respondents: Consulting with school staff concerning student behavior (95.7%), consulting with school staff concerning student academic achievement (88.1%), participating on committees within the school (84.8%), consulting with parents regarding academic, personal/social or career issues (77.5%), coordinating special events and programs (75%), and participating in school-based management teams (71.7%).

Four of the leadership activities were indicated by more than 45% of respondents to be performed “rarely” or “never”: coordinating school-wide response for crisis management (54.7%), coordinating with an advisory team (51.7%), conducting or coordinating parent education classes or workshops (47.9%), and conducting or coordinating teacher in-service programs (46.2%). Two activities had more than 25% of counselors indicate that they never performed them: Coordinating school-wide response for crisis (26.3%) and coordinating with an advisory team (25.3%).

In conclusion, the majority of counselors in Title I elementary schools were engaged in 14 of 21 activities requiring the use of leadership skills on at least an occasional basis. Ten activities were reported by a majority of the counselors to be performed on frequent or routine basis. The most frequently performed activities included consulting with school staff concerning student behavior and/or academic achievement, participating on committees and school-based management teams, consulting with parents regarding academic, personal/social or career issues and coordinating special events and programs. Coordination with an advisory team and coordination of school-wide responses for crisis were the leadership activities reported to occur with the least frequency.

Summary

This study was designed to examine the activities of counselors in elementary schools with high poverty rates. Specifically, the study explored the implementation of activities prescribed by the ASCA National Model by counselors working in Title I elementary schools in Georgia. The researcher also investigated the frequency of performance of activities that were not recommended by the National Model, differences in frequency of implementation according to demographics, and the counselors' use of leadership skills in their respective schools.

The researcher conducted a pilot study with five elementary counselors in Richmond County and invited 450 counselors from each of 180 school systems across the state to participate in the study. Ninety – four counselors participated in the study and their results were analyzed utilizing SPSS. The participants responded to 65 questionnaire items which asked them to indicate the frequency with which they performed the various activities listed. Additionally, the respondents provided demographic information which was used to further disaggregate and analyze the data.

In Chapter 4, a description of all of the findings, as well as a general analysis of the data related to the research questions was provided. Most of the respondents indicated that they had been trained on the ASCA National Model, but did not work in districts in which implementation of the Model was mandatory. Overall, the findings regarding the level at which counselors performed activities recommended by the Model indicated that many activities are performed on a “frequent” or “routine” basis. However, some activities prescribed by the model were never or rarely performed by a significant percentage of counselors in Title I elementary schools. These activities included coordinating school-wide responses to crises, working with an advisory team, and conducting interest inventories.

The researcher also investigated the extent to which elementary counselors in Title I schools engaged in activities described as inappropriate by the ASCA National Model. Of the fourteen activities, five were reported as “never” being performed by more than 50% of the respondents. Those activities were: (1) maintaining cumulative records, (2) registering/scheduling students for classes, (3) enrolling/withdrawing students, (4) computing grade point averages, and (5) substitute teaching or covering classes for teachers. Moreover, four activities were reported as being performed “frequently” or “routinely” by more than 40% of the respondents: (1) hall, cafeteria, or bus duty; (2) organizing outreach for low-income families; (3) coordinating the testing program and, (4) preparing IEP, SST or school attendance records. These findings indicated that while inappropriate activities were performed, there were few that are performed on a very regular basis.

Investigation was done to determine what activities received the greatest emphasis by counselors in Title I schools. On the questionnaire, the activities were grouped according to the four domains of the ASCA National Model delivery system and other activities. Counselors indicated that activities pertinent to curriculum and individual planning were performed most frequently.

The findings also indicated that for a small number of activities, differences in the frequency of engagement of certain activities existed which were related to demographic characteristics. However, the relationships between the activities and demographic factors were all weak. This indicated that demographic factors had little impact on the frequency with which recommended or inappropriate activities were performed by counselors.

The final question pertained to the exhibition of leadership skills by counselors performing activities requiring the use of collaborative and/or advocacy skills. Twenty-one items on the survey required the use of leadership skills. The data indicated that ten of the activities were performed by more than 50% of the respondents on a frequent or routine basis. The most frequently performed activities were consulting with school staff concerning student behavior and/or academic achievement, participating on committees and school-based management teams, consulting with parents regarding academic, personal/social or career issues and coordinating special events and programs. Two activities, coordination with an advisory team and coordination of school-wide responses for crisis, were “rarely” or “never” performed by a majority of counselors. While the respondents were more regularly engaged in some activities requiring the use of leadership skills, such as consultation with school staff regarding student behavior and participating on committees within the school, there were a few leadership activities that counselors infrequently performed. Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the aforementioned findings, conclusions drawn from them and implications, as well as recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS,

Introduction

Research has indicated that most schools are engaged in some type of educational reform (Stickel,1999). One major aim of this reform is increasing the performance of students who live in poverty. In the midst of this era of national education reform, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) released *The National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs* to solidify how counselors work and to better integrate them into the operations of schools as leaders and agents of change. Few studies have documented the specific activities and roles of counselors. Moreover, a dearth of information has existed regarding how counselors function in schools with high rates of poverty. To address these gaps, the researcher attempted to discover how counselors in schools with high levels of poverty implemented activities prescribed by the ASCA National Model. In Chapter 5, the researcher reviewed the research problem and major methods used to conduct this study. Additionally, the researcher discussed the major findings, and presented conclusions, implications and recommendations based on these findings.

Summary

The researcher's purpose for conducting this study was to shed light on the activities of counselors working in Title I elementary schools and to discover to what extent they utilized leadership skills. The primary question undergirding this study was : To what extent do counselors implement activities prescribed by the ASCA National Model and leadership within Title I elementary schools?

The secondary questions addressed were:

1. To what extent do counselors in Title I elementary schools engage in activities described as inappropriate by the ASCA National Model?
2. What activities recommended by the ASCA National Model receive the greatest emphasis by counselors in Title I elementary schools?
3. Are there differences among elementary counselors at Title I schools in the implementation of the ASCA National Model activities according to demographic factors [location, years of counselor experience (total and in Title I schools), student to counselor ratio, training on the national model, county mandates, and level of school engagement in whole school reform]?
4. To what extent do elementary counselors in Title I schools exhibit leadership by performing activities requiring the use of collaborative and/or advocacy skills?

A quantitative survey based on the School Counselor Activity Rating Scale (Scarborough, 2005) was developed which asked respondents to indicate the frequency with which they engaged in 51 appropriate and 14 inappropriate activities as determined by the ASCA National Model. Participants were also asked to respond to 10 demographic questions which were used to disaggregate the data for analysis. After receiving approval from the IRB, the researcher mailed informed consent letters to counselors at 450 Title I elementary schools in Georgia inviting them to participate in the study. The letter sent to the counselors contained a link to access the questionnaire at the secure, independent website, SurveyMonkey.com. The letter was e-mailed to counselors for whom the researcher had e-mail addresses. A few respondents also requested paper copies of the survey, which were delivered and completed. Reminder postcards were mailed to the 450 invitees to encourage their participation. A total of 94 counselors participated in the study, yielding a return rate of 20.9%. The low response rate was attributed to the timing and method of dissemination of the survey.

Analysis of Research Findings

The Statistical Package for the Social Studies was used to analyze the survey responses. Descriptive data was calculated and the *Chi-Square* test was used to determine if differences existed in the frequency of performing activities based on demographic characteristics.

Results of the analysis of the demographic data indicated that the majority of respondents worked as the sole counselor in pre-k – 5 schools where they were responsible to more than 450 students. While the majority of the respondents worked in rural settings, about 40% of the respondents worked in suburban or urban settings. Overwhelmingly, the counselors worked in schools classified as Title I Distinguished Schools and schools who had met 2008 AYP goals. In terms of total counseling experience, a slight majority of the respondents had between 11 and 20 years of experience. A majority of the respondents indicated they had worked in Title I Schools for 6 to 10 years. The analysis also indicated that a greater percentage of less experienced counselors were found in Needs Improvement schools. Most of the participants had been trained on the ASCA National Model, although they were not required by their school districts to implement the Model. In Needs Improvement Schools, the percentage of counselors mandated to utilize the Model was lower than that of Distinguished Schools. Moreover, a larger percentage of counselors were mandated to utilize the Model at schools who made AYP than those who did not meet AYP goals.

While investigating the primary research question regarding the extent to which counselors implement activities prescribed by the ASCA National Model, the researcher found that of the 51 recommended activities listed in the questionnaire, 32 activities were performed on a frequent or routine basis by more than 50% of the respondents. Furthermore, 14 activities were performed on a frequent or routine basis by more than 75% of the respondents. The most often performed activities were consulting with school staff concerning student behavior and conducting classroom guidance lessons to introduce themselves to all students. The least performed recommended activity was conducting individual or small group counseling for students regarding substance abuse issues.

The researcher also examined the extent to which counselors in Title I elementary schools engaged in inappropriate activities as designated by the ASCA National Model. Findings indicated that of the fourteen activities listed on the questionnaire, two activities were performed frequently or routinely by more than 60% of the respondents. Performing hall, bus or cafeteria duty was the most commonly performed inappropriate activity, followed by organizing outreach activities on a routine basis. Five activities were reported by more than 50% of the respondents as never being performed. The inappropriate activities reported by the greatest percentage of counselors to never be performed was computing grade point averages, registering or scheduling students for classes and enrolling/withdrawing students from school. The findings indicated that the elementary counselors in the sample did perform inappropriate activities, but that most were conducted largely on an occasional and infrequent basis.

Another major finding of the study resulted from examining the performance of activities according to the domain of the ASCA National Model delivery system. Counselors reported most frequently performing activities in the curriculum and individual planning domains. "Other Activities" were performed with the least frequency.

Analysis of the data to determine if differences in the performance of activities existed due to demographic factors indicated that a number of differences existed. The *Chi-Square* test of independence revealed that there were statistically significant differences that related to each of the demographic factors examined (location, years of counselor experience, student - to - counselor ratio, training on the National Model, county mandated use of the Model, level of school engagement in reform and years of experience in Title I schools). However, all of the relationships between demographic variables and the activities were weak.

The final question addressed the respondents' level of engagement in activities utilizing the leadership skills of collaboration and advocacy. Counselors reported consulting with school staff about behavior and academic concerns as the most frequently practiced leadership activities. Fourteen of the 21 activities were performed on at least an occasional basis by 70% of the respondents. Based on the findings, counselors were engaged in activities that require the use of collaboration and advocacy skills. but still did not perform some leadership activities on a frequent basis. The leadership activities they did perform were largely focused on consultation with staff or community stakeholders.

Summary of Research Findings

1. Counselors working at Title I elementary schools implemented many of the activities recommended by the ASCA National Model on a frequent basis. In particular, these counselors consulted often with teachers about student behavior and conducted classroom guidance introducing their role and function on a routine basis.
2. Elementary counselors at Title I schools participated in activities considered inappropriate by the ASCA National Model on an infrequent basis. The most commonly performed activity was performing bus, hall or cafeteria duty.
3. Curriculum activities were performed with the greatest frequency. Individual student planning activities were performed with the second greatest frequency. “Other Activities” were performed most infrequently.
4. Overall, the demographic characteristics of location, years of counselor experience (total and in Title I schools), student to counselor ratio, training on the national model, county mandates, and level of school engagement in whole school reform had little impact on the frequency with which most activities were implemented by counselors at Title I elementary schools in Georgia. .
5. Counselors utilized leadership skills on a frequent basis in Title I elementary schools. Collaboration with teachers and community stakeholders was performed on a frequent basis. Leadership in the form of teacher and parent education was performed less frequently.

Discussion of Research Findings

The researcher collected data from counselors at Elementary Title I schools across the state of Georgia regarding their implementation of the ASCA National Model and utilization of leadership skills. The following discussion of research findings is presented in response to the primary research question and the four secondary questions listed in chapters 1, 2 and 4, as well as a major theme from the review of related literature (Chapter 2). The theme from the review of the literature that will be addressed in this section is counselors' involvement in school reform. While, the specific research questions did not address this theme explicitly, there were findings related to this theme that give significance to the study and were, therefore, included in this discussion.

Findings Related to Research Questions

The overarching research question guiding this study focused on the extent to which the ASCA National Model was being implemented by elementary counselors at Title I schools. Findings from this study indicated that elementary counselors at title I schools were implementing many of the activities that are prescribed by the model. This supports the findings by Walsh et al., (2007) that counselors can practice in ways that are aligned with the ASCA National Model delivery system and the new directions of school counseling. Because the research reported that the activities of counselors were largely determined by their building principal (Zalaquett, 2005; Amatea & Clark, 2005; Kirchner & Setchfield, 2005; Ponec & Brock, 2000), these findings may also indicate that principals are open to counselors functioning in ways that are aligned with the recommendations of the ASCA National Model. In agreement with earlier findings by Perusse et.al, (2004) based on the data, elementary principals are concerned that counselors help students acquire the attitudes, knowledge and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect themselves and others. Accordingly, the activities performed most often by more than 70% of the study participants were activities focused on improving students' personal/social skills, including classroom guidance and consulting with teachers about student behavior.

State leadership is a factor that may also play a role in the high level of implementation of many of the activities recommended by the ASCA National Model in Georgia. A substantial number of the activities prescribed by the GDOE curriculum and the list of "necessary and essential" counselor functions are in line with the Model. In addition to the fact that the majority of the participants (69%) had been trained on the model, the GDOE requires that counselors implement a comprehensive school counseling program. The findings of this study seem to contrast with those by Davis (2006) who discovered that although counselors in Texas were aware of new reforms promoting the development of comprehensive programs legislated by a House bill, they were not operating in accordance to the guidelines. Not only do the counselors in this study seem to be knowledgeable about the ASCA Model and state guidelines, but they operate on a day-to-day basis in agreement with the GDOE standards for elementary counseling and their training on the ASCA National Model. This finding is interesting in that only 27% of the respondents work in districts where implementation of the Model is mandatory.

According to the study results, as counselors perform activities recommended by ASCA, it appears that a more programmatic approach emerges. Counselors performed many of the activities outlined by Gysbers in the CGCP and by Myrick in the Developmental Guidance framework (Burnham, et al., 2000; Gysbers, 2003). The respondents indicated spending significant time in classroom guidance, helping students with personal problems, actively referring students, and communicating with others about their programs.

Even though counselors performed activities aligned with the CGCP and developmental guidance perspective, the results showed that many of the activities that move beyond traditional roles were not being implemented to the same degree as those that counselors have traditionally performed. Activities such as coordinating with an advisory team or coordinating school-wide responses for crisis were reported to never be performed by a significant percentage of respondents (25% and 26% respectively). This finding may be tied to previous findings by Perusse, et. al (2004) and Walsh, et al. (2007) that counselors and principals do not accept whole school goals as central to counselors' roles and therefore do not engage heavily in such activities.

Findings of the performance of recommended activities was also examined in relationship to working with students in poverty. The literature explained that students of low-income often must deal with barriers to their learning that their middle and upper class peers do not face. (Bryan, 2005; House & Hayes, 2002: Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007). Additionally, there is a sizeable population of children under 18 living below the poverty level in the state of Georgia (Ferris, 2006). In this light, the researcher found that counselors were performing many of the activities recommended to improve the achievement of students in poverty. One such recommended activity was providing extra support for students who need it, as well as caring and supportive adult relationships. The findings of this study indicated that elementary counselors were engaged routinely with individual students and small groups for personal, academic and social concerns.

Moreover, counselors routinely consulted with teachers regarding student behavior and academic concerns.

Another recommended activity was analysis of student data to help educators engage in needed reforms and data-driven decision making (Duke, 2006; ASCA, 2005). Elementary counselors reported analyzing data to meet academic needs and promote the achievement of individual goals on a frequent basis. This type of advocacy, particularly for students in poverty, is an important step for improving their educational achievement (Duke, 2006). Counselors also reported connecting families with agencies in the community to provide resources for families on a regular basis – another activity pertinent to schools with higher levels of poverty (Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007; Bemak, 2002). Interestingly, 61% of the counselors indicated that they frequently or routinely organize outreach for low-income families. While this activity was not explicitly recommended by the ASCA National Model, it was common among elementary counselors at Title I schools and may be an important step to eliminating barriers to learning.

The literature indicated that school environments can foster educational resilience of children at-risk (Bryan, 2005). The Education Trust found that a climate that encourages high expectations and standards for all students is critical in developing high performing schools that serve high-poverty and/or high-minority students (2002). Although school boards in Georgia are required to develop Student Services plans that incorporate school climate improvement and management, the data may indicate that counselors may not be explicitly included in these plans. Based on the findings of this study, counselors were more inclined to work directly with students and their families on an individual basis as compared to facilitating changes in school climate on a frequent or routine basis. For example, counselors reported infrequently conducting in-service activities to help educators or for parents. Moreover, less than half of the counselors surveyed reported coordinating activities to understand and/or improve school climate. It is noteworthy, however, to examine these findings alongside previously discussed findings that elementary counselors reported participating on a frequent basis in school decision-making and school-based management teams. Participation on these teams can be used as a vehicle for counselors to advocate for students and facilitate systemic change. However, it does appear that counselors need to be more intentional about their efforts to impact school climate.

Surprisingly, the most infrequently performed recommended activity was counseling students regarding substance abuse issues. According to Bryan (2005) and House & Hayes (2002) drugs are one of the barriers with which students in poverty may have to contend. Elementary counselors at Title I schools were not conducting substance abuse-related interventions on a frequent basis. Upon closer examination of the data, it appears that counselors addressed this concern from a preventative standpoint, since respondents reported conducting classroom guidance regarding personal safety and abuse prevention on a regular basis. While there is no empirical data supporting this thought, this type of intervention may occur more infrequently at the elementary level due to the age of the students and the reduced chance that students at that developmental level are engaged in drug-related activities.

There were four secondary questions addressed in the study. The first secondary question investigated the extent to which counselors performed inappropriate activities as determined by the ASCA National Model. Ideally, according to Gysbers (2003) the CGCP made no provision for the execution of inappropriate activities within a counselor's schedule; however, the GDOE recommended that elementary counselors allocate about 5% of their time on non-counseling duties (GDOE, 2008). The findings of this study showed that counselors were performing inappropriate activities but they were fewer in number and on a less frequent basis than in times past. In contrast to findings by Partin (1993), Hardesty & Dillard (1994), counselors reported performing teaching duties such as substitute teaching or covering classes on a very infrequent basis, with more than half of the respondents stating that they never performed this function. This finding is consistent with Sanders (2006). However, more than 70% of the respondents indicated they performed bus, cafeteria, or hall duty. This may be one popular activity that falls into the non-counseling category according to the GDOE recommendations

More than 50% of respondents indicated that they do not or rarely perform activities such as data entry, scheduling and computing grade point averages. This is consistent with findings by Hardesty & Dillard (1994) and Partin(1993) who discovered that elementary counselors spent less time doing paperwork and administrative duties. Like Perusse et.al.(2004), Sanders (2006) and Burnham et al. (2000), the researcher found that coordinating standardized tests was still a routine activity for elementary counselors at Title I schools. Moreover, maintaining student IEP, SST or school attendance records (IEP, SST, etc.) were still activities performed by a sizable percentage of respondents, which supports findings by Perusse et.al.(2004).

Interestingly, 42% of counselors organized outreach activities to families on a routine basis. According to the ASCA guidelines, this activity falls within a "gray area" in terms of being appropriate or inappropriate. The Model asserts that in providing responsive services, counselors should perform activities to meets students' immediate needs and concerns. In the area of responsive services, the Model spoke of consultation, counseling, referral and peer facilitation as proper activities regarding students in crisis. However, counselors are also advised to design programs and perform activities based on the specific needs of their respective schools. In this light, coordinating outreach activities may actually be an appropriate activity for schools where students have high levels of poverty. Additionally, about 25% of the counselors also responded to health issues. The performance of such activities may also reflect the lingering existence of historical ambiguity surrounding the role and function of counselors in schools (Burnham et al., 2000; Foster, 2003; Gysbers, 2001).

Overall, the findings of the current study did not support findings by Stickel (1999) which predicted that counselors would be performing more paperwork and performing more non-counseling duties. However, it is noteworthy that Stickel's study involved more middle and high school counselors who have typically had more paperwork requirements and non-counseling duties than elementary counselors.

The second sub-question explored what types of activities counselors in Title I schools most frequently performed. The data indicated that counselors most frequently performed activities in the curriculum and individual planning domains. Stickel (1999) found that in evaluating the impact of school reform on their practice, counselors predicted that they would have increased focus on classroom guidance, which is supported by the findings of this study. According to the CGCP guidelines as devised by Gysbers and his comrades, as well as the GDOE recommendations, elementary counselors should spend the bulk of their time involved in activities related to guidance curriculum and responsive services (Gysbers et al., 2008; Burnham et al., 2000; Gysbers, 2003; GDOE, 2000). It was recommended that individual planning and system support activities should constitute a smaller percentage of counselors' time. The findings of this study indicated that counselors were heavily involved in individual planning activities, which is consistent with previous studies by Hardesty & Dillard (1994) and Burnham et al. (2000). Consistent with recommendations by Gysbers and the GDOE, system support and "other"(inappropriate) activities were performed by elementary counselors at Title I schools with the least regularity. However, neglect of activities in the system support domain, such as program management and professional development could hinder the development of strong comprehensive, developmental guidance programs.

The third sub-question explored whether or not differences existed in implementation of the ASCA National Model by elementary counselors at Title I schools based on demographic factors. There have been few studies that have examined the functions of counselors based on demographic attributes and none as comprehensive as the current study. When the data was disaggregated according to the demographic factors of 2008 AYP Status, student to counselor ratio, level of school engagement in whole school reform (Distinguished versus Needs Improvement), grades served, mandated implementation of ASCA Model, number of counselors, school setting, total years of counseling experience, training on the National Model, and years of counseling experience in Title I schools, overwhelmingly the frequency with which activities were performed by the counselors was more similar than different.

In regards to school achievement level, findings from this study substantiate to a small degree findings by Fitch & Marshall (2004) in their comparison of high-achieving and low-achieving schools. In line with the findings by Fitch & Marshall (2004), counselors at high-achieving schools reported spending more time in some program management activities, and coordination, but not in formal evaluation activities. Schools classified as Distinguished had a greater percentage of counselors who reported coordinating orientation activities on a routine basis than did counselors in Needs Improvement schools. Specifically, nearly 78% of counselors in Needs Improvement schools reported performing this activity on a rare basis.

Upon examination of a second indicator of school achievement, 2008 AYP Status, counselors at schools who met AYP during 2008 more frequently developed and implemented individual behavior plans, worked with advisory committees, and coordinated orientation process/activities than those who worked at schools who did not meet AYP. However, counselors at schools who did not meet AYP goals had a larger percentage of respondents who indicated that they formally evaluated student progress as a result of participation in individual/group counseling from student, teacher, and/or parent perspectives. Statistically significant differences were not found with other activities based on school performance.

Another demographic characteristic examined in previous research was the years of counseling experience. Davis (2006) found that counselors with more years of experience were more likely to implement developmental programs. The findings of this study indicated some differences in the frequency of implementation of certain activities, but that there were not significant differences for most activities according to years of experience. The least experienced counselors were found to utilize action plans and management agreements with principals with the least frequency. However, counselors with 6-10 years experience had the greatest percentage of respondents report that they used the plans and agreements with their principals on a routine basis, rather than the most experienced counselors. It is noteworthy that 40% of the respondents in that same category (6 – 10 years experience) reported rarely using them. By combining the percentage of responses in the frequently and routinely categories, counselors with the greatest experience did report the greatest percentage of counselors utilizing the action plans and agreements most regularly. This finding for this recommended activity adds little support to Davis's findings.

Another activity for which statistically significant differences were found based on experience was conducting classroom lessons on personal safety issues and substance abuse prevention. Counselors with the least experience (5 years or less) reported performing this activity with the greatest frequency, with 82% performing the activity on a frequent or routine basis. The next highest level was counselors with the greatest years of experience.

The researcher in this study also examined the impact of the years of counseling experience in Title I schools had on the frequency of activity implementation. One inappropriate activity, entering data, was reported to be performed often by all of the respondents. However, a greater percentage of counselors with more experience reported that they perform this routinely than those with less than 6 years experience. Performance of inappropriate activities by more experienced counselors may relate to the fact that national guidelines specifically condoning such activities have only become uniform within recent years, and these counselors may be operating to some extent according to a different paradigm.

Only one other activity, enrolling/withdrawing students, showed a significant difference in frequency according to years of experience in Title I Schools. A greater percentage of counselors with 5 years or less experience (32%) reported routinely performing this activity than the percentage of respondents with 6 years or more experience in Title I Schools (14%). The findings are rather inconclusive, except that years of experience in counseling makes little difference in the implementation of the guidance program. Again, this may also go back to the fact that the counselors in the state of Georgia are mandated to implement comprehensive developmental guidance programs, so that most counselors are implementing the same activities.

Differences in implementation of activities based on district-mandated of the use of the ASCA National Model was also investigated. The majority of the respondents worked in districts not requiring use of the Model. For two recommended activities, conducting audits of their counseling programs and participating in school-level decision making, counselors in districts mandating use of the Model performed these activities more frequently. Oddly, two other inappropriate activities, however, disciplining students and substitute teaching were performed at a slightly greater level of frequency by counselors in districts where the model is mandated. No data was collected that would explain this finding. Thus, it is difficult to determine if mandatory implementation of the model would significantly impact the frequency with which activities were performed.

Another demographic characteristic examined was school setting. According to Holcomb-McCoy (2001), counselors working in urban settings believed that they should be involved in school restructuring activities, such as understanding school climate, participating on school-based management teams and participating in school-level decision-making. Specifically there was great agreement regarding participation on school based management teams and involvement in school-level decision-making. The current study examined if there is a distinction in the frequency of performing such functions and found that a majority of counselors in both urban/suburban and rural settings performed these functions frequently or routinely and there were not significant differences in the frequency with which these activities were performed based on school setting.

However, differences were found for several other activities related to school setting. Counselors in urban or suburban areas more frequently developed and published calendars, attended professional development programs, and coordinated special events and programs for school around academic, career, or personal/social issues. Counselors in rural areas reported performing the following activities more regularly than their counterparts in urban and suburban areas: conducting small groups regarding family/personal issues (e.g. divorce, death), analyzing student data to better meet academic needs and develop individual long-range plans, and consulting with community and school agencies concerning individual issues. There is insufficient data to draw any conclusion as to why these particular differences have emerged.

Davis found in a 2006 study that counselors in schools with smaller enrollments were more likely to implement a developmental guidance program. Accordingly, the current study investigated if there were differences in the implementation of activities based on the number of students assigned to each counselor. The respondents indicated that 78% of them were the sole counselor in their buildings and 63% worked with a minimum of 450 students. Again, for most activities, there were not significant differences in the frequency of implementation of activities based on student-to-counselor ratio. However, a greater percentage of counselors with more than 450 students reported that they routinely conducted small groups addressing relationships and social issues, compared to their counterparts with less than 450 students. Additionally, counselors with more than 450 students assigned reported more frequently informing stakeholders of their role and function, counseling regarding academic issues with small groups or individuals, as well as performing an inappropriate duty – coordinating standardized testing. Developmental program implementation appears not to be hindered by student-to-counselor ratio. The data adds little support to the idea that small student enrollment enhances development of comprehensive, developmental programs.

Another demographic factor examined was whether or not training on the ASCA National Model had an impact on the frequency with which activities were performed. The results of the study indicated that counselors trained on the Model more frequently attended professional development activities, conducted classroom lessons on personal growth and development issues, and conducted or coordinated parent education classes or workshops. While not exhaustive, the results indicate that training does promote the implementation of certain activities that promote student achievement. If counselors have training they appear to utilize it as a guide for the activities they perform.

A final demographic quality alluded to in a previous study by Davis (2006) was the grade levels served. Davis found that it was not a strong indicator of counselors' implementation of reform initiatives. Because the overwhelming majority of respondents worked in pre-k – 5 schools, all other responses were grouped into the "other" category. Counselors who served in pre-k - 5 schools reported more frequently conducting or coordinating teacher in-service program. However, more counselors in schools with grade levels other than pre-k – 5 indicated that they routinely coordinated testing and organized outreaches to low-income families than counselors in pre-k – 5 schools. It is noteworthy that schools with organizations other than pre-k – 5 more routinely perform activities that are considered inappropriate or not directly germane to the goals of the ASCA National Model. There is insufficient research in this area to draw further conclusions.

The final research question investigated the extent to which counselors utilized the leadership skills of collaboration and advocacy. Distributed leadership models suggest and ASCA proposes that counselors be involved in school reform efforts and undertake leadership roles. The literature indicated several factors, including principals' reservations and counselors' personal inhibitions, which limit counselors' functioning as partners in educational leadership in schools ((Stone & Clark, 2001; Niebuhr et al., 1999; Bemak, 2000; House & Sears, 2002). However, according to the literature, urban counselors had some interest in participating in school reform efforts, (Holcomb-McCoy, 2001), particularly by participating in school-level decision-making. The findings of this study support this research as 66% of all participants reported taking part in school-level decision making and only 9% indicated that they never perform this function. Additionally, the findings of this study show that respondents routinely participate in school based management teams and consultation with principals. This supports findings that an open, supportive principal-counselor relationship is fundamental to a successful guidance program and that principals are supportive to some extent of counselors operating in new roles as prescribed by the ASCA National Model (Perusse et al., 2004; Ponec & Brock, 2000; Fitch et al., 2001).

Amatea found that counselors' roles were typically classified into four conceptions by principals: (1) innovative school leader, (2) collaborative case consultant, (3) responsive direct service provider, and (4) administrative team player (2005). This study's findings indicate that while elementary counselors in Title I schools perform activities aligned with each of these conceptualizations, there has been some growth in the area of innovative school leader and the diminishing of the nebulous administrative team player role. According to Amatea's study, the role of collaborative case consultant was embraced most by elementary principals and the role of responsive direct service provider who intervenes with students and adults was preferred by teachers (2005). The data showed that while still not pervasive in all schools, many of these counselors performed functions that enabled them to operate as innovative school leaders such as coordinating activities to address school climate issues and participating on school based management teams. These functions do fall in line with the recommendations of the CACREP, ASCA, and the Education Trust. According to House &Hayes (2002), the counselor's utilization of skills such as consensus building and collaboration, as well as proactive leadership are activities counselors should perform. Regarding teamwork with teachers, the data supports findings by Hardesty and Dillard (1994), Stickel, (1999), Lapan et al., (2001), and Holcomb-McCoy & Mitchell, (2005) in that large percentages of counselors reported collaboration with staff and the community.

Counselors still infrequently performed activities that move beyond consultation with parents and teachers or actively facilitate school-wide change. A small percentage of counselors reported that they provided in-service programs for teachers or training for parents. Further, small percentages of the respondents indicated that they coordinated school-wide responses for crises or consulted with an advisory board, both activities that support systemic change (ASCA, 2005).

In agreement with findings by Walsh et al., (2007) and Lapan et al., (2001) counselors reported performing many activities that have been influenced by new reform models and are implementing a more programmatic approach enabling them to better serve as systematic change agents. There is, however, still room for counselors to grow and more frequently utilize leadership skills.

Findings Related to Counselor Involvement in School Reform

Research indicated that counselors have been absent from school reform initiatives (Paisley & Hayes, 2003; Herr, 2002). However, it has been argued that the establishment of counseling as an integral part of the academic mission of schools will facilitate stronger acceptance of the contributions of counseling programs to student achievement and success (Dahir, 2004; ASCA, 2005). Accordingly, the findings from this study indicate that elementary counselors at Title I schools are able to overcome many of the personal obstacles presented in the literature to function as key players in school reform through the implementation of comprehensive programs.

One argument as to why counselors have not been active in school reform or perform activities that promote school reform has been a lack of training (House and Sears, 2002). However, most of the counselors indicated that they have training on the

ASCA National Model, although it is less than 10 years old. Moreover, most of the counselors indicated that they take advantage of professional development opportunities.

Adleman and Taylor (2002) discussed the idea that the marginalization of counselors' is tied to a lack of unity among district offices and insufficient district leadership. Additionally, Adleman and Taylor recommended that in order to facilitate meaningful and lasting school reform efforts, emphasis should be a move toward research-based interventions with higher standards and ongoing accountability, as are evident in the ASCA National Model. While districts in Georgia vary in their requirement of implementation of the Model, it is apparent that state leadership in regards to better integrating counselors into the leadership of schools has been effective and meaningful. In contrast to an argument by House & Sears (2002), it appears that increasingly, elementary counselors in Title I in schools in Georgia are guided by a "strong personal/professional compass" in the form of the GDOE guidelines and the ASCA National Model.

The Education Trust and ASCA posited that counselors should be involved in educational reform as a part of the "achievement team" (Eliers, 2002; ASCA, 2005; The Education Trust & Met Life National School Counselor Training Initiative, 2002). Given that counselors are participating in school – based management teams, engaged in school-level decision-making, and participate in team/grade level meetings, it is apparent that counselors are already heavily engaged in school reform efforts in this way, based on the findings of this study. It is assumed that counselors do provide a different, broader perspective that can be meaningful in achievement team discussions and decision-making.

Conclusions

The researcher analyzed the findings from the study to conclude:

1. Counselors are willing and able to implement recommended activities of the ASCA National Model
2. While not typically recognized as leaders in their schools, elementary counselors in Title I schools perform many activities that require the use of leadership skills
3. School leadership (i.e. principals) for Title I elementary schools are open towards having counselors function in ways that are aligned with the ASCA National Model and promote school reform.
4. Elementary school counselors at Title I schools perform many activities, particularly with students, that are associated with improved student achievement. Specifically, counselors are performing numerous activities that promote the achievement of students living in poverty.
5. Role clarity for counselors in schools is improving in response to specific guidelines (ASCA National Model, GDOE requirements), counselor training, and willingness to adhere to the guidelines and standards.
6. Elementary Counselors at Title I schools still need encouragement to move beyond traditional roles and perform activities that require the utilization of leadership skills and facilitate systemic change, such as training teachers and parents.
7. Counselors at Title I elementary schools are developing comprehensive, developmental counseling programs, but lag in areas of system support. Additionally, counselors still perform activities that are inappropriate according to

the ASCA National Model, which may be somewhat helpful to the operations of schools, but may hinder counselors from more fully implementing beneficial counseling programs.

Implications

The findings of this study have implications for instructional leaders at the state, district and school levels. State leaders may be encouraged that counselors are implementing to a large extent the Georgia QCC requirements, following the guidelines outlined in the GDOE Counselor Role and Functions statement, and the tenets of the ASCA National Model. This is particularly important for schools who serve students at great risk for failure due to the socio-economic status of their students' families. The willingness of counselors to utilize exemplary methods and activities to strengthen their programs, even without State level dictates, implies that officials may need to expedite efforts to completely align the curriculum and job descriptions with the National Model. The findings indicate that counselors are becoming more receptive to change that better integrates them in the student reform and school leadership structures. As the academic curriculum has been revised with new standards to improve student achievement, officials may need to review the state guidelines to ensure that counselors are functioning in ways that address the needs of contemporary schools.

At the district level, it is becoming apparent that counselors are implementing many of the activities prescribed by the ASCA National Model, although the implementation is not mandated in most counties. This implies that the counselors may have a commitment to improving students' chances of succeeding by utilizing preferred methods. This commitment could be further fortified by stronger, more distinct district leadership.

District leadership may need to be provided to both counselors and principals. Principals may be advised to consider that many counselors exhibit leadership skills as they coordinate activities, collaborate with community stakeholders, teachers, parents and principals, and advocate on behalf of students and may therefore, bring worthwhile contributions to the school reform discussions. Principals may be encouraged to re-evaluate their conception of the role that counselors should play in their respective schools, whether they are administrative assistants or innovative school leaders, or something else. Since most administration preparation programs have not provided information on how counselors function in schools, district officials may need to help principals challenge existing conceptualizations of counselors' roles. A better understanding of counselor knowledge, skills and dispositions as well as training on the ASCA National Model is necessary. Further, principals may benefit from training on how to incorporate counselors into processes that are focused on improving school climate. Training on how to more effectively use distributed leadership principles that invite the participation of all members of the school community in school reform processes may also be necessary. This training of administrators may even need to extend into college level graduate programs.

The findings of this study also imply that counselors may benefit from more training on how to implement untraditional activities to facilitate systemic change. This training could occur at the district level and/or in counselor preparation programs. Given that the ASCA National Model and the disposition that counselors are school leaders is relatively new, many older counselors have been trained according to a paradigm that considered them “helpers” rather than “leaders.” Additionally, continued development in learning to work with teachers and parents may be necessary, particularly helping counselors to build the confidence and knowledge required to facilitate in-service and educational programs. Continued education on the components of the ASCA National Model and its meaningful operationalization is necessary. In particular, counselors may need to have additional training on how to understand school climate and coordinate activities to improve it and to enhance student success

This study indicated that elementary counselors working at Title I schools in Georgia implemented many elements of the ASCA National Model. In particular, this study found that these counselors implemented many activities that have been associated with academic success for students living in poverty. This study implies that counselors have accepted the call to be held accountable for student achievement outcomes and operating in the school reform efforts. .

Additionally, this study implies that counselors are developing comprehensive programs that are aligned with National Standards and not spending an inordinate amount of time on tasks deemed inappropriate. The establishment and operation of effective developmental, comprehensive programs promotes the achievement of all students. The findings of this study may be used to have school counselors and their supervisors re-evaluate their allocations of time and resources, particularly in schools where students live in poverty. Discussions between counselors and administrators regarding how staff roles are to be organized are necessary. Given that NCLB legislation emphasizes the entire student body rather than working with a few individuals, expectations for counselors have changed. Administrators and counselors must come to agreement on how to best operate within this new framework

Counselor education programs are most meaningful when they can prepare students for the realities of working day-to-day in schools. Accordingly, school counselors in training and their instructors have a more concrete idea of how elementary counselors in Title I schools utilize their time. While much is known about the direct and indirect activities counselors perform, this study illuminates which activities receive more attention as it relates to working w with students in poverty. This study helps to fill the knowledge gap of how counselors work with students who live in poverty. While this study gives some information, there is still a wealth of knowledge to be gained regarding counselor's work with specific populations, like the poor, who constitute such a significant percentage of the student population and have had lower levels of achievement.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are given regarding the implementation of the study:

1. Open-ended questions that would allow for counselors to share other activities they perform that were not listed on the instrument should be added. Such additions would allow for the revelation of other activities that may have been particular to Title I schools that may not be performed as often at schools serving different populations and which are not explicitly recommended by the ASCA Model.

2. A mixed-method including a focus group could be used. After reviewing the findings, several questions emerged that cannot be answered by the data alone. The responses from a focus group may have helped to fill those gaps.
3. The survey should be disseminated at a more optimal time. The survey was disseminated close to a holiday break. Dissemination at another time during the school year may have yielded a larger response rate.
4. The survey should be disseminated by mail or via e-mail invitation only, rather than a letter directing participants to type in a link. Some respondents indicated that they had difficulty accessing the survey by typing in the web link. Moreover, if e-mail addresses were more accessible, respondents may have been able to access the survey with greater ease.
5. A larger pilot study should be used. There were several items that respondents did not answer. While the results of the small pilot study enabled the researcher to make adjustments prior to disseminating the survey, a larger pilot study may have allowed the researcher to see trends for items that respondents had difficulty with or were reluctant to address. Modifications on the survey could have ensued to increase the return rate of entirely completed surveys.

Recommendations for further study derived from the findings of this study are:

1. Conduct a study comparing the activities of elementary counselors at non-Title I schools with those working at Title I schools. This particular demographic may give more specific information about the differences

and similarities of counselor functioning that may be attributed to school status.

2. Because district leadership plays a vital role in determining how school personnel, including counselors function, more investigation should be conducted to determine if structured leadership is in place at the district level to better guide counselors. It is the researcher's assumption that leadership structures vary across the state based on many factors, such as size and available resources.
3. Further investigation into how principals conceptualize counselors' roles, skills and abilities needs to be conducted. Particularly, administrative training regarding the most effective use of counselors should be explored.
4. A study determining the factors that prevent or encourage states to adopt the ASCA National Model is warranted. Georgia is one of several states that has not fully adopted or mandated use of the Model.
5. Further studies relative to the level of implementation of the ASCA National Model is warranted. From the findings of this study, a question worthy of exploring is whether or not certain activities beyond the scope of the current ASCA National Model recommendations may need to be implemented to meet the needs of at-risk populations.
6. Investigation of the extent to which counselors are explicitly included in school reform plans at a state, district and school level is warranted.
7. Further exploration counselor's concepts of themselves as "helpers" and "leaders" should be conducted. While the governing bodies such as

ASCA, GSCA and CACREP call for counselors to operate as leaders, investigation is warranted to determine if counselors have made the conceptual move from “helpers” to “leaders.”

8. Future studies might explore Title I schools outside of the state of Georgia. Since most of the Title I schools in Georgia are classified as Distinguished, a study which draws participants from wider range of achievement levels may yield different results. Additionally, other state’s guidance curriculums many not be as closely aligned with the ASCA Standards as they are in Georgia, which may subsequently impact the implementation of the Model.

Dissemination

The results of this study will be shared with the Student Services department of the Richmond County Board of Education. The researcher proposes to present the findings to the Executive Director of Student Services and perhaps to counselors during a district-in-service. Because Richmond County is predominantly comprised of schools that are Title I, this information would be helpful to refine counselor practice and encourage counselor self-reflection. Additionally, a brief summary could possibly be disseminated to principals to help facilitate evaluation and re-alignment of current counselor functioning in schools.

The findings of this study may be disseminated to the Georgia School Counselor Association. This body decides if the information should be presented to other counselors throughout the state. The information my also be submitted to the American School Counselor Association, particularly because they recently published a study regarding the lack of studies that exist regarding counselors and their work with children in poverty. Through these means, it is the researcher's aim to make a meaningful contribution to the professional literature.

Concluding Thoughts

Educational leaders are faced with a myriad of concerns, but ensuring the ultimate of success of all students who enter schools doors should be primary. Research makes it clear that there is no question of the fact that while educational gains are being made, many students still suffer from inadequate preparation and an insufficient learning experience. Numerous and diverse efforts are being made to help students who enter school doors saddled with burdens that are connected with poverty achieve at a level equal to their more advantaged peers. Most of these efforts have explicitly included administrators and teachers, but not other parties. Specifically, it is painstakingly apparent that counselors for many years have been absent from the discussions and decisions that impact student achievement. The reasons why counselors have not been involved appear to be related to a pervasive mindset that counselors have, and should, function as ancillary support providers and helpers, rather than as leaders and significant participants in the school reform process.

The research presented in this study focused on work with students who live in poverty. As the researcher has work experience in a Title I elementary school, and currently works in a district where most of the elementary schools are classified as Title I, the reality of the fact that many children must battle against obstacles associated with poverty cannot be ignored. While it is the researcher's belief that low socio-economic status cannot be used as an excuse for failure, it does present unique challenges that are not found in middle and upper-class environments and therefore, must be addressed by school personnel. Meeting the NCLB goals that all students will perform on grade level, the achievement gap among student groups will be closed, and students will learn in safe and drug-free environments will not occur without the explicit and meaningful participation of all school personnel, from custodians to principals. The discussions of school reform must not only include developing a more rigorous curriculum, but must also account for the elimination of barriers to learning that exist for many students, but especially the poor. In addition to teachers and administrators, findings from this study supported the notion that counselors were performing some tasks that enhance the achievement of students who are poor. Further study should occur that explores the impact of these activities.

The researcher has tried to explore and challenge traditional notions of school leadership, particularly as it relates to counselors. As the role and function of counselors has gained significantly more clarity in recent years, the research still indicates that counselors still have a somewhat nebulous role in schools. Leaders in school counseling are encouraging practitioners to function as leaders in their schools. One major way this can be accomplished is by implementing a comprehensive guidance and counseling program based on the ASCA National Model which promotes counselors' utilization of leadership skills such as advocacy, collaboration and data analysis to facilitate meaningful change. The researcher does not assert that the ASCA National Model is a panacea to the ills of role confusion and student failure; however, utilization of this model as a framework to build school-specific programs that capitalize on counselors unique skills adds a new color on the canvas of leadership. Further, principals' utilization of transformational and distributed leadership strategies can help to empower counselors to function as leaders. Ultimately, principals, counselors, teachers, district leaders, state leaders, and even national leaders must re-examine their notions about the traditional functioning of counselors and their role in school reform. Two pivotal concerns that must be reckoned with is whether or not counselors are indeed leaders and whether or not they should they be included as a part of the formal leadership structure in schools. Ultimately, it is hoped that readers are challenged to examine their ideas about leadership, evaluate the notion of counselors as educational leaders, further explore the role of counselors in school reform efforts and most of all, advocate for the empowerment of poor children who are most in need.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION RULES, GEORGIA STATE LAW REGARDING COUNSELORS AND INAPPROPRIATE USES OF SCHOOL COUNSELORS

Counselor Roles and Responsibilities and Inappropriate Use of School Counselors

State Defined Roles and Responsibilities

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.

Georgia Code

Georgia law (§ 2-2-182) states:
(c) The program weights for the kindergarten, kindergarten early intervention, primary, primary grades early intervention, upper elementary, upper elementary grades early intervention, middle grades, middle school, and alternative education programs and the program weights for the high school programs authorized pursuant to paragraph (4) of subsection (b) of Code Section 20-2-151, when multiplied by the base amount, shall reflect sufficient funds to pay the beginning salaries for guidance counselors needed to provide essential guidance services to students and whose duties and responsibilities shall be established by the state board to require a minimum of five of the six full-time equivalent program count segments of the counselor's time to be spent counseling or advising students or parents.

State Board of Education Rule

State Board Rule 160-4-8-.05 GUIDANCE COUNSELORS defines the role of the counselor and states in part:

(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**
(a) The local board of education (LBOE) shall provide for school guidance and counseling services in accordance with state and federal laws, State Board of Education rules, and department guidelines by:

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.

Inappropriate Uses of Counselors

During the mandated time required for counseling services with students and parents, school counselors are often used for activities that are not appropriate guidance and counseling functions. These include:

- **Master Schedule Duties** – although counselors have a role as consultant and expert in the process of developing a master schedule, they should not carry the bulk of the responsibility for the process since this is clearly an administrative role.

- **Testing Coordination** – the use of counselors as testing coordinators is inappropriate. The appropriate role for a school counselor is the interpretation and analysis of tests.

- **Discipline** – school counselors are not disciplinarians and do not possess the appropriate credentials for disciplining students. Their appropriate role is to provide counseling for students before and/or after discipline, to determine the causes of student behavior that leads to the need for discipline and to provide school wide curriculum for the deterrence of behaviors that lead to discipline, and to collaborate on school leadership teams that work systematically to create policies which promote appropriate behavior on campus.

- **Classroom coverage and Other Assigned Duties** – because school counselors are team players and understand the need to assist when emergencies arise and classrooms need coverage, they may occasionally help in filling this need. The problem is when school counselors are turned to regularly and first in order to cover classes; this is an inappropriate use of the counselor's time and skills. In the same manner assigning counselors to regularly scheduled duties such as bus duty or hall duty is also inappropriate.

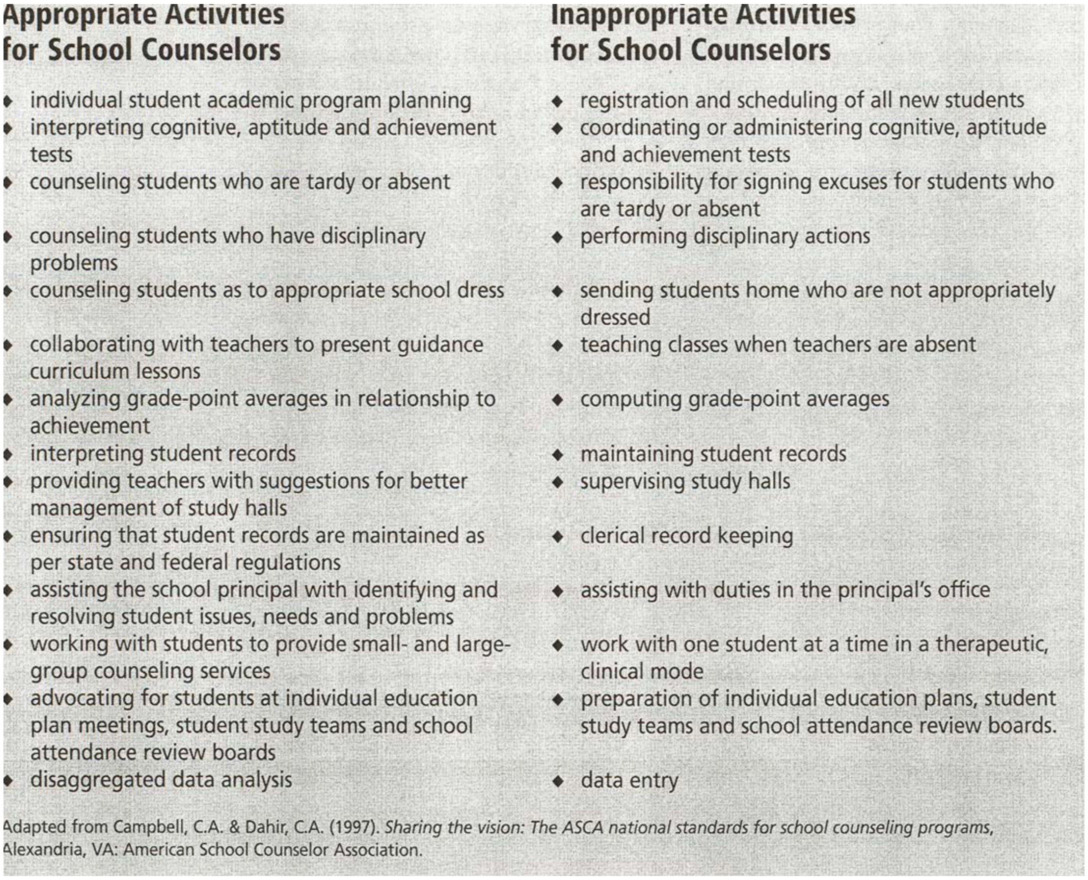
- **Clerical responsibilities** – Guidance assistants or other clerical personnel should provide clerical assistance so that school counselors can spend their time in direct service to students, teachers, and parents.

- **School Support Team (SST) Management** – Although not specifically outlined in law or rule, SSTs are most effective when managed by someone from the administrative staff and not by the school counselor. Participation as a SST member, when necessary, is an appropriate use of counselors.
  Appended to this document is a section of a document adopted by (and used with permission from) the American School Counselor Association that deals with school counselor roles and inappropriate uses of school counselors.

Appended to this document is a section of a document adopted by (and used with permission from) the American School Counselor Association that deals with school counselor roles and inappropriate uses of school counselors.

Appropriate and Inappropriate School Counseling Program Activities

A school counseling program recommends counselors spend most of their time in direct service to and contact with students. Therefore, school counselors' duties are focused on the overall delivery of the total program through guidance curriculum, individual student planning and responsive services. A small amount of their time is devoted to indirect services called system support. Prevention education is best accomplished by implementing school guidance curriculum in the classroom and by coordinating prevention education programs such as the conflict resolution and anti-violence programs at school sites. Eliminate or reassign certain inappropriate program tasks, if possible, so school counselors can focus on the prevention needs of their program. See below for a comparison between the two similar types of activities that serves as a helpful teaching tool when explaining the school counseling program activities. For example, when considering discipline, counseling students who have discipline problems is the role of the school counselor while performing the disciplinary action itself is the role of the administrator.



Appropriate Activities for School Counselors	Inappropriate Activities for School Counselors
◆ individual student academic program planning	◆ registration and scheduling of all new students
◆ interpreting cognitive, aptitude and achievement tests	◆ coordinating or administering cognitive, aptitude and achievement tests
◆ counseling students who are tardy or absent	◆ responsibility for signing excuses for students who are tardy or absent
◆ counseling students who have disciplinary problems	◆ performing disciplinary actions
◆ counseling students as to appropriate school dress	◆ sending students home who are not appropriately dressed
◆ collaborating with teachers to present guidance curriculum lessons	◆ teaching classes when teachers are absent
◆ analyzing grade-point averages in relationship to achievement	◆ computing grade-point averages
◆ interpreting student records	◆ maintaining student records
◆ providing teachers with suggestions for better management of study halls	◆ supervising study halls
◆ ensuring that student records are maintained as per state and federal regulations	◆ clerical record keeping
◆ assisting the school principal with identifying and resolving student issues, needs and problems	◆ assisting with duties in the principal's office
◆ working with students to provide small- and large-group counseling services	◆ work with one student at a time in a therapeutic, clinical mode
◆ advocating for students at individual education plan meetings, student study teams and school attendance review boards	◆ preparation of individual education plans, student study teams and school attendance review boards.
◆ disaggregated data analysis	◆ data entry

Adapted from Campbell, C.A. & Dahir, C.A. (1997). *Sharing the vision: The ASCA national standards for school counseling programs*, Alexandria, VA: American School Counselor Association.

APPENDIX B

STATE OF GEORGIA ELEMENTARY COUNSELOR DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS

State of Georgia Elementary Counselor Duties and Functions

Elementary School Counselor

Position Title: Elementary School Counselor

Qualifications: Valid Georgia professional service certification in school counseling

Reports to: Building principal and/or other authorized administrators

The Georgia Board of Education recognizes the importance of providing essential and necessary guidance and counseling to students that will result in school success and completion. In providing these programs and services, two principles should be followed. Counselors shall adhere to national, state, and local statutes, policies, and regulations and the ethical standards of the American School Counselor Association. Counselors shall be accessible for students and their parents during the entire school day.

Realizing that the functions of elementary school counselors have varied greatly and expectations have been unclear, the Board establishes the essential and necessary functions to be:

Performance Tasks

I. Establishes and Promotes School Guidance and Counseling Program

A. Implements or assists in implementing the school-based written guidance plan.

1. Seeks input/gathers data from students, school staff, and parents in addressing student needs.
2. Develops goals and/or objectives to provide a sequential program related to the identified needs of elementary students, including students identified as being "at risk."
3. Develops a written school-based guidance plan appropriate to the developmental needs of elementary students, accommodating individual and cultural differences.
4. Writes a specific individual plan of action that focuses on identified school-based priorities.
5. Conducts specified tasks as planned and makes revisions as needed.
6. Involves administration and staff in the development of the school guidance plan(s).
7. Coordinates a guidance advisory committee for the school.

B. Promotes the school guidance and counseling program to students, school staff, parents, and community.

  1. Informs students, school staff, parents, and community of the school counselor role, guidance program, and counseling services.
  2. Informs students, school staff, and parents of special programs and services related to the guidance program.
  3. Provides special programs for students appropriate to their developmental needs (e.g., peer tutoring); parent education programs; and staff development activities which focus on the needs of students "at risk."
  4. Informs students, school staff, parents, and community of the school-based written guidance plan goal and activities.
  5. Presents results of the effectiveness of the school-based plan to school staff, parents, and community.

II. Implements and Facilitates Delivery of Counseling Services

A. Conducts individual counseling with students in areas of need.

  1. Intervenes quickly during crisis situations.
  2. Schedules time to provide opportunities for counseling.
  3. Schedules counseling appointments according to school/system policy.
  4. Counsels students by actively listening, identifying/defining problems, exploring alternative solutions, observing, using developmental play, and/or other appropriate counseling strategies.
  5. Assists/develops with students a stated plan of action.
  6. Consults with referral services/community agencies when necessary. (See Task IV for further explanation.)
  7. Initiates and continues a mentoring or modeling relationship with identified "at-risk" students.

B. Conducts group counseling with students in areas of educational, career, or personal need.

  1. Obtains parental consent prior to student participation, consistent with local system/school policy/procedures.
  2. Conducts skill-building groups in student self-improvement (peer leadership/ tutoring, study skills, test-taking skills, career awareness, peer relations skills, self-esteem, etc.).
  3. Provides necessary feedback to persons involved, consistent with legal and ethical guidelines.

III. Implements and Facilitates Delivery of Guidance Services

A. Coordinates with school staff to provide supportive instructional classroom activities that relate to student educational, career, and personal needs.

1. Collaborates with teachers in defining the counselor's role in instruction and the teachers' role in guidance.
2. Promotes student awareness of available counseling programs and activities through classroom sessions.
3. Collaborates with media specialist to provide guidance-related material for teachers and students.
4. Assists teachers in individualizing instructional programs for students with special guidance needs (e.g., loss, transitions, low self-esteem, illness).
5. Coordinates with teachers in scheduling classroom guidance activities.
6. Models lessons in classrooms for teachers on topics such as positive reinforcement, behavior management, and classroom meetings.
7. Conducts and evaluates classroom guidance activities related to instructional goals and the developmental level of the students (e.g., motivation, self-esteem, test-taking, interpersonal relations, problem-solving).
8. Collaborates with teachers in addressing special classroom problems (e.g., fighting, stealing, personal hygiene, bullying).
9. Gathers follow-up data from teachers/students to determine effectiveness of classroom guidance activities

B. Assists with administration of standardized group testing.

1. Conducts sessions with students, parents, and teachers to provide information and techniques to relieve test anxiety.
2. Collaborates with school staff to provide efficient and effective administration of group testing appropriate to the developmental level of the students (e.g., preparing parents as test monitors, holding shorter testing periods).
3. Collaborates with school staff to provide positive follow-up experiences to testing, (i.e., positive recognition programs).
4. Provides assistance to parents/teachers in interpreting and understanding standardized test results to facilitate individual and instructional planning.

C. Ensures that students receive appropriate career/life (educational or occupational) development assistance

1. Assists students in understanding their capabilities, interests, skills, and limitations.
2. Coordinates the career-awareness program of the school.

3. Assists teachers in helping students understand the relationships between school and life experiences, including relevant vocational information.
4. Assists parents and students in preparing for school transitions: school entry, placement in special-needs programs, orientation to next school level.

IV. Consults with School or System Staff, Parents, and Community

A. Consults with school staff on student problems and concerns as needed or requested

1. Gathers data about the student and identifies "at-risk" behavior from various sources (e.g., records, teachers, parents, peers, school staff, system resource personnel, community specialists).
2. Provides necessary information that will help school staff meet individual student needs.
3. Develops with school staff strategies to enhance student learning (e.g., classroom management techniques, motivation programs).
4. Participates in the referral process by providing information about the student's social and emotional development.
5. Acts as an on-going, effective advocate for students.
6. Monitors the progress of students who are in programs for "at-risk" students.

B. Consults with parents on student problems and concerns as needed or requested.

1. Obtains information about the student and identifies "at-risk" behavior from various sources (e.g., records, teachers, parents, peers, school staff, system resource personnel, community specialists).
2. Provides information about the student to parents that enables them to better understand their child's individual needs, accomplishments, abilities, limitations, etc.
3. Develops with parents a strategy for resolving/preventing student problems.
4. Follows up on consultation with parents to assess effectiveness and future direction.
5. Consults with parents concerning appropriate referrals.
6. Plans and coordinates parent education programs.

C. Consults with community resources.

1. Develops and maintains a listing of community resources/services/agencies.
2. Communicates with community resources/services/agencies.

3. Makes referrals of "at-risk" students when appropriate to in-school specialists or community agencies/specialists consistent with state and local system policies.
4. Follows up on referrals to in-school specialists and community agencies/specialists by acting as a liaison between school and community.

V. Participates in Professional Development Activities

A. Engages in professional-growth activities.

    1. Attends and participates in continuing education (e.g., workshops/sessions at meetings/conventions, coursework, staff development) appropriate to counselor or program needs.
    2. Reviews current research and literature related to children and elementary guidance and counseling.
    3. Self-evaluates to enhance skills in areas of need related to written guidance plan.

B. Applies newly acquired professional knowledge.

    1. Shares information acquired through professional growth activities with staff and parents as appropriate.
    2. Incorporates acquired information into improved program delivery.

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APPENDIX C

ASCA NATIONAL MODEL LIST OF APPROPRIATE AND INAPPROPRIATE COUNSELOR ACTIVITIES

ASCA National Model List of Appropriate and Inappropriate Counselor Activities

Inappropriate Activities	Appropriate Activities
registration and scheduling of all new students	individual academic program planning
coordinating or administering cognitive, aptitude and achievement tests	interpreting cognitive, aptitude and achievement tests
responsibility for signing excuses for students who are tardy or absent	counseling students who are tardy or absent
performing disciplinary actions	counseling students with disciplinary problems
sending students home who are not appropriately dressed	counseling students as to appropriate dress
teaching classes when teachers are absent	collaboration with teachers to present guidance curriculum lessons
computing grade point averages	analyzing grade-point averages in relationship to achievement
maintaining student records	interpreting student records
supervising study halls	providing teachers with suggestions for better management of study halls
clerical record keeping	ensuring that student records are maintained as per state and federal regulations
assisting with duties in the principal's office	assisting the school principal with identifying and resolving student issues, needs and problems
work with one student at a time in a therapeutic, clinical mode	working with students to provide small and large group counseling services
preparation of individual education plans, student study teams and school review boards	advocating for students at individual education plan meetings, student study teams and school attendance
data entry	

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

APPENDIX D

GEORGIA STATE CODE – GUIDANCE COUNSELORS

Georgia State Code – Guidance Counselors

Code: GBBA
160-4-8-.05 GUIDANCE COUNSELORS.

(1)DEFINITIONS.
(a) **Counseling –** 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.

(b) **Guidance** – 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.

(c) **School counseling and guidance services** – 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.

(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**

(a) The local board of education (LBOE) shall provide for school guidance and counseling services in accordance with state and federal laws, State Board of Education rules, and department guidelines by:

(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 full time 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.

160-4-8-.05 (Continued)

(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.

Authority O.C.G.A § 20-2-182.

Adopted: August 10, 2000 Effective: September 3, 2000

APPENDIX E

STATE OF GEORGIA QUALITY CORE CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES FOR ELEMENTARY GUIDANCE AND LEARNER COMPETENCIES

State of Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Objectives for Elementary Guidance and Learner Competencies

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LEARNER

At this level, the student will become aware of himself/herself and will develop appropriate skills to learn about others and how to get along. Career awareness is also learned.

A. Self-Knowledge

Competency I: Knowledge of the importance of self-concept.
Describe positive characteristics about self as seen by self and others.
Identify how behaviors affect school and family situations.
Describe how behavior influences the feelings and actions of others.
Demonstrate a positive attitude about self.
Identify personal interests, abilities, strengths, and weaknesses.
Describe ways to meet personal needs through work.

Competency II: Skills to interact with others.
Identify how people are unique.
Demonstrate effective skills for interacting with others.
Demonstrate skills in managing conflicts with peers and adults.
Demonstrate group membership skills.
Identify sources and effect of peer pressure.
Demonstrate appropriate behavior when peer pressures are contrary to one's belief.
Demonstrate awareness of different cultures, lifestyles, attitudes, and abilities.

Competency III: Awareness of the importance of growth and change.
Identify personal feelings.
Identify ways to express feelings.
Identify causes of stress.
Identify and select appropriate behavior to deal with specific emotional situations.
Demonstrate healthy ways of dealing with conflicts, stress, and emotions in self and others.
Demonstrate knowledge of good health habits.

B. Educational and Occupational Exploration

Competency IV: Awareness of the benefits of educational achievement.
Describe how academic skills can be used in the home and community.
Identify personal strengths and weaknesses in subject areas.

Identify academic skills needed in several occupational groups.
Describe relationships among ability, effort, and achievement.
Implement a plan of action for improving academic skills.
Describe school tasks that are similar to skills essential for job success.
Describe how the amount of education needed for different occupational levels varies.

Competency V: Awareness of the relationship between work and learning. Identify
Different types of work, both paid and unpaid.
Describe the importance of preparing for occupations.
Demonstrate effective study and information-seeking habits.
Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of practice, effort, and learning.
Describe how current learning relates to work.
Describe how one's role as a student is like that of an adult worker.

Competency VI: Skills to understand and use career information.
Describe work of family members, school personnel, and community workers.
Identify occupations according to data, people, and things.
Identify work activities of interest to the student.
Describe the relationship of beliefs, attitudes, interests, and abilities to occupations.
Describe jobs that are present in the local community.
Identify the working conditions of occupations (e.g., , inside/outside, hazardous).
Describe ways in which self-employment differs from working for others.
Describe how parents, relatives, adult friends, and neighbors can provide career information.

Competency VII: Awareness of the importance of personal responsibility and good work habits.
Describe the importance of personal qualities (e.g., , dependability, promptness, getting along with others) to getting and keeping jobs.
Demonstrate positive ways of performing work activities.
Describe the importance of cooperation among workers to accomplish a task.
Demonstrate the ability to work with people who are different from oneself (e.g., , race, age, gender).

Competency VIII: Awareness of how work relates to the needs and functions of society.
Describe how work can satisfy personal needs.
Describe the products and services of local employers.
Describe ways in which work can help overcome social and economic problems.

C. Career Planning

Competency IX: Understanding how to make decisions.
Describe how choices are made.
Describe what can be learned from making mistakes.
Identify and assess problems that interfere with attaining goals.

Identify strategies used in solving problems.
Identify alternatives in decision making situations.
Describe how personal beliefs and attitudes affect decision making.
Describe how decisions affect self and others.

Competency X: Awareness of the interrelationship of life roles.
Describe the various roles an individual may have (e.g., , friend, student, worker, family member).
Describe work-related activities in the home, community, and school.
Describe how family members depend on one another, work together, and share responsibilities.
Describe how work roles complement family roles.

Competency XI: Awareness of different occupations and changing male/female roles.
Describe how work is important to all people.
Describe the changing life roles of men and women in work and family.
Describe how contributions of individuals, both inside and outside the home, are important.

Competency XII: Awareness of the career planning process.
Describe the importance of planning.
Describe skills needed in a variety of occupational groups.
Develop an individual career plan for the elementary school level.

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APPENDIX F

MATRIX OF SURVEY ITEMS AND RELATED LITERATURE

Matrix of Survey Items and Related Literature

Survey Item	***Supporting Research***
Responsive Services	
1. Counsel with students regarding personal/family concerns	Brown, 1999; Brigman & Campbell, 2003; Fitch & Marshall, 2004; GDOE, 2006
2. Counsel with students regarding school behavior	Burnham, Jones & Jackson, 2000; GDOE, 2006
3. Counsel students regarding crisis/emergency issues	
4. Provide small group counseling addressing relationship/social issues	
5. Conduct small groups regarding family/personal issues (e.g. divorce, death)	
6. Consult with community and school agencies concerning individual issues	Hardesty & Dillard, 1994; Partin, 1993; GDOE 2003
7. Conduct individual or small group counseling for students regarding substance abuse issues (own use or family/friend use)	Burnham, Jones & Jackson, 2000; GDOE, 2006;Gysbers, 2001
8. Coordinate school-wide response for crisis management and intervention	Brown, 1999;Sink & Stroh, 2003; Colbert et al., 2006; Hernandez & Seem, 2004
9. Assist in identifying exceptional children (special education)	Monteiro-Leitner et al, 2006;Kirchner & Setchfield, 2005; Zalaquett, 2005; Beesley, 2004; GDOE 2003,
10. Provide assistance to individuals or small groups on social skills development.	Burnham, Jones & Jackson, 2000; GDOE, 2006
11. Develop and/or implement individual behavior plans	Brown, 1999; Brigman & Campbell; Morrison, Douzenis, Bergin, & Sanders, 2001; Dahir, 2004
12. Assist individual students or small groups with development of self-knowledge and positive self-concept	GDOE, 2007; Burnham, Jones & Jackson, 2000
13. Work with individuals or small groups to develop safety and/or survival skills	Burnham, Jones & Jackson, 2000; GDOE, 2006

Survey Item	*Supporting Research*
14. Assist individuals or small groups in setting goals and/or making good decisions	Burnham, Jones & Jackson, 2000; GDOE, 2006
15. Consult with school staff concerning student behavior	Musheno & Talbert, 2002; House & Hayes, 2002; Bemak, 2002; Bryan, 2005; Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007; GDOE, 2005
16. Consult with school staff concerning student academic achievement	GDOE, 2005; Amatea & Clark, 2005; Beesley, 2004
17. Consult with parents regarding academic, personal/social or career issues	GDOE, 2005; GDOE, 2000 Amatea & Clark, 2005; Beesley, 2004
18. Analyze student data to better meet academic needs and develop individual long-range plans	Musheno & Talbert, 2002; House & Hayes, 2002; Bemak, 2002; Bryan, 2005; GDOE, 2003
19. Counsel individual students or small groups regarding academic issues (test-taking strategies, academic/career plans)	Burnham, Jones & Jackson, 2000; GDOE, 2006 ; GDOE, 2000
20. Conduct interest inventories	ASCA, 2005; GDOE, 2000

System Support

21. Follow up on individual and group counseling participants	a) Johnson & Johnson, 2003;
22. Develop and publish calendars (to organize program)	b) Johnson & Johnson, 2003
23. Utilize action plans and an management agreement (with principal) to guide program development	c) Johnson & Johnson, 2003; ASCA, 2005
24. Conduct audits of your counseling program	ASCA, 2005
25. Participate in school-level decision-making	Holcomb-McCoy, 2001; House & Hayes, 2002
26. Coordinate referrals for students and/or families to community or education professionals (e.g. mental health, speech pathology, medical assessment)	Hardesty & Dillard, 1994; Partin, 1993; Foster, 2003; Beesley, 2004

Survey Item	*Supporting Research*
27. Participate in school-based management team	ASCA 2005; GDOE, 2005; Holcomb-McCoy, 2001; House & Hayes, 2002; Education Trust, 2007
28. Provide consultation for administrators (regarding school policy, programs, staff, and or/ students)	Studer & Allton, 1996; GDOE, 2005;
29. Participate in team/grade level/subject team meetings	Eliers, 2002, ASCA, 2005, The Education Trust & Met Life National School Counselor Training Initiative, 2002;
30. Coordinate activities to understand and/or improve school climate	Hernandez & Seem, 2004; Holcomb-McCoy, 2001; GDOE, 2000, p. 2; Sanders, 2006
31. Inform parents about the role, training and interventions of a school counselor within the context of your school	GDOE, 2003; ASCA, 2005
32. Inform teachers/administrators about the role, training, program and interventions of a school counselor within the context of your school.	GDOE, 2003; ASCA, 2005D
33. Conduct or coordinate teacher in-service programs	Musheno & Talbert, 2004; Stickel,1999
34. Keep track of how time is being spent on the functions you perform	GDOE, 2000; ASCA, 2005; Johnson & Johnson, 2003
35. Attend professional development activities (e.g. state conferences, local in-services)	House & Sears, 2002; GDOE, 2000;
36. Coordinate with an advisory team to analyze and respond to school counseling program needs	GDOE, 2003; Johnson & Johnson, 2003; ASCA, 2005
37. Formally evaluate student progress as a result of participation in individual/group counseling from student, teacher, and/or parent perspectives	GDOE, 2003; GDOE, 2000; ASCA, 2005
38. Conduct needs assessments and counseling program evaluations from parents, faculty and /or students	Johnson & Johnson, 2003; ASCA, 2005; GDOE, 2000
39. Participate on committees within the school	ASCA, 2005
Curriculum Activities	
40. Provide parents with information regarding child/adolescent development	GDOE, 2003; ASCA 2005

Survey Item	***Supporting Research***
41. Provide parents information to help ensure student academic success	GDOE, 2003; ASCA 2005; Stickel, 1999; Gysbers, 2003; Bryan, 2005; Cross & Burney; House & Hayes, 2005
42. Conduct classroom activities to introduce yourself and explain the counseling program to all students	GDOE, 2003;ASCA, 2005; Beesley, 2004; Gysbers, 2003; Burnham, Jones & Jackson, 2000
43. Conduct classroom lessons addressing career development and the world of work	
44. Conduct classroom lessons on various personal and/or social traits (e.g. responsibility, respect)	
45. Conduct classroom lessons on relating to others (family, friends) and conflict resolution	
46. Conduct classroom lessons on personal growth and development issues	
47. Conduct classroom lessons on personal safety issues and substance abuse prevention	
48. Conduct classroom lessons on academic success skills (study skills, time management)	
49. Coordinate special events and programs for school around academic, career, or personal/social issues (e.g. career day, drug awareness week, test prep)	GDOE, 2000;Foster, 2003; ASCA; 2003; USDOE, 2007; House & Hayes, 2002; Sanders, 2001
50. Conduct or coordinate parent education classes or workshops	GDOE 2003; Bryan, 2005; Cross & Burney; House & Hayes, 2005
51. Coordinate orientation process/activities for students	GDOE, 2003

Other Activities

Survey Item	***Supporting Research***
52. Coordinate the standardized testing program	Fitch, Newby, Ballestro & Marshall, 2001; ASCA, 2005; Kirchner & Setchfield, 2005; Zalaquett, 2005; Williamson et al., 2005; GDOE, 2003
53. Organize outreach to low-income families (i.e. Thanksgiving dinners, clothing or supply drives)	Fitch, Newby, Ballestro & Marshall, 2001; ASCA, 2005; Kirchner & Setchfield, 2005; Zalaquett, 2005; Williamson et al., 2005; GDOE, 2003
54. Respond to health issues (e.g. check for lice, eye screening, 504 coordination)	
55. Perform hall, bus, or cafeteria duty	
56. Enter data	
57. Prepare IEP, SST, or School attendance records	
58. Compute grade point averages	
59. Assist with duties in the principal's office	
60. Register or schedule students for classes	
61. Enroll students in and/or withdraw students from school	
62. Maintain/complete education records/reports (cumulative files, test scores, attendance reports, drop-out reports)	
63. Handle discipline of students	
64. Substitute teach and/or cover classes for teachers at your school	
65. Work with individual students in a clinical, therapeutic mode	

Demographic Survey Items

1. Total number of years of experience as a counselor	Davis, 2006
2. Total number of years of experience as a counselor at a Title I school	Davis, 2006
3. Current Assignment	Holcomb-McCoy, 2001; Davis, 2006
4. AYP Status 2007	Holcomb-McCoy, 2001; Davis, 2006
5. Grades Served at Current Site	General demographic information

Survey Item	*Supporting Research*
6.	
7. Number of Counselors working at your school	Davis, 2006
8. Current school site setting	Holcomb-McCoy, 2001; DePaul, 2007; Bryan, 2005; House & Hayes, 2002; Amatea and Olatunji 2007; Borkowski, 2004
9. Number of students assigned to each counselor	Davis, 2006
10. Have you been trained on the ASCA National Model	House & Hayes, 2002; Fitch & Marshall, 2004
11. Does your county require implementation of the ASCA National Model?	Adleman & Taylor, 2002

APPENDIX G

SURVEY

School Counseling Activities Survey for Elementary Counselors

The purpose of this survey is to identify activities performed by counselors at Title I schools in Georgia. The data will be used to gauge the extent to which counselors in schools characterized by high-poverty complete activities that are recommended by the American School Counselor Association National Model and utilize leadership skills. The ultimate goal is to promote the implementation of counseling activities in all school settings that promote student success. Your responses will be kept confidential and you will not be identified individually in any way in the final report. Your input is important and valued. Please take a few minutes to respond to this instrument. Thank you in advance for your support.

Directions: Please circle the response that best describes the frequency with which you ACTUALLY perform each function.

	I never do this (1)	I rarely do this (2)	I occasionally do this (3)	I frequently do this (4)	I routinely do this (5)
Responsive Services					
1. Counsel with students regarding personal/family concerns	1	2	3	4	5
2. Counsel with students regarding school behavior	1	2	3	4	5
3. Counsel students regarding crisis/emergency issues	1	2	3	4	5
4. Provide small group counseling addressing relationship/social issues	1	2	3	4	5
5. Conduct small groups regarding family/personal issues (e.g. divorce, death)	1	2	3	4	5

	I never do this (1)	I rarely do this (2)	I occasionally do this (3)	I frequently do this (4)	I routinely do this (5)
6. Consult with community and school agencies concerning individual issues	1	2	3	4	5
7. Conduct individual or small group counseling for students regarding substance abuse issues (own use or family/friend use)	1	2	3	4	5
8. Coordinate school-wide response for crisis management and intervention	1	2	3	4	5
Individual Student Planning					
9. Assist in identifying exceptional children (special education)	1	2	3	4	5
10. Provide assistance to individuals or small groups on social skills development.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Develop and/or implement individual behavior plans	1	2	3	4	5
12. Assist individual students or small groups with development of self-knowledge and positive self-concept	1	2	3	4	5
13. Work with individuals or small groups to develop safety and/or survival skills	1	2	3	4	5

	I never do this (1)	I rarely do this (2)	I occasionally do this (3)	I frequently do this (4)	I routinely do this (5)
14. Assist individuals or small groups in setting goals and/or making good decisions	1	2	3	4	5
15. Consult with school staff concerning student behavior	1	2	3	4	5
16. Consult with school staff concerning student academic achievement	1	2	3	4	5
17. Consult with parents regarding academic, personal/social or career issues	1	2	3	4	5
18. Analyze student data to better meet academic needs and develop individual long-range plans	1	2	3	4	5
19. Counsel individual students or small groups regarding academic issues (i.e., test-taking strategies, academic/career plans)	1	2	3	4	5
20. Conduct interest inventories	1	2	3	4	5
System Support					
21. Follow up on individual and group counseling participants	1	2	3	4	5
22. Develop and publish calendars (to organize program)	1	2	3	4	5

	I never do this (1)	I rarely do this (2)	I occasionally do this (3)	I frequently do this (4)	I routinely do this (5)
23. Utilize action plans and an management agreement (with principal) to guide program development	1	2	3	4	5
24. Conduct audits of your counseling program	1	2	3	4	5
25. Participate in school-level decision-making	1	2	3	4	5
26. Coordinate referrals for students and/or families to community or education professionals (e.g. mental health, speech pathology, medical assessment)	1	2	3	4	5
27. Participate in school-based management team	1	2	3	4	5
28. Provide consultation for administrators (regarding school policy, programs, staff, and or/ students)	1	2	3	4	5
29. Participate in team/grade level/subject team meetings	1	2	3	4	5
30. Coordinate activities to understand and/or improve school climate	1	2	3	4	5
31. Inform parents about the role, training and interventions of a school counselor within the context of your school	1	2	3	4	5
32. Inform teachers/administrators about the role, training, program and interventions of a school counselor within the context of your school.	1	2	3	4	5

	I never do this (1)	I rarely do this (2)	I occasionally do this (3)	I frequently do this (4)	I routinely do this (5)
33. Conduct or coordinate teacher in-service programs	1	2	3	4	5
34. Keep track of how time is being spent on the functions you perform	1	2	3	4	5
35. Attend professional development activities (e.g. state conferences, local in-services)	1	2	3	4	5
36. Coordinate with an advisory team to analyze and respond to school counseling program needs	1	2	3	4	5
37. Formally evaluate student progress as a result of participation in individual/group counseling from student, teacher, and/or parent perspectives	1	2	3	4	5
38. Conduct needs assessments and counseling program evaluations from parents, faculty and /or students	1	2	3	4	5
39. Participate on committees within the school	1	2	3	4	5
Curriculum Activities					
40. Provide parents with information regarding child/adolescent development	1	2	3	4	5
41. Provide parents information to help ensure student academic success	1	2	3	4	5

	I never do this (1)	I rarely do this (2)	I occasionally do this (3)	I frequently do this (4)	I routinely do this (5)
42. Conduct classroom activities to introduce yourself and explain the counseling program to all students	1	2	3	4	5
43. Conduct classroom lessons addressing career development and the world of work	1	2	3	4	5
44. Conduct classroom lessons on various personal and/or social traits (e.g. responsibility, respect)	1	2	3	4	5
45. Conduct classroom lessons on relating to others (family, friends, conflict resolution)	1	2	3	4	5
46. Conduct classroom lessons on personal growth and development issues	1	2	3	4	5
47. Conduct classroom lessons on personal safety issues and substance abuse prevention.	1	2	3	4	5
48. Conduct classroom lessons on academic success skills (study skills, time management)	1	2	3	4	5
49. Coordinate special events and programs for school around academic, career, or personal/social issues (e.g. career day, drug awareness week, test prep)	1	2	3	4	5
50. Conduct or coordinate parent education classes or workshops	1	2	3	4	5
51. Coordinate orientation process/activities for students	1	2	3	4	5

	I never do this (1)	I rarely do this (2)	I occasionally do this (3)	I frequently do this (4)	I routinely do this (5)
Other Activities					
52. Coordinate the standardized testing program	1	2	3	4	5
53. Organize outreach to low-income families (i.e. Thanksgiving dinners, clothing or supply drives)	1	2	3	4	5
54. Respond to health issues (e.g. check for lice, eye screening, 504 coordination)	1	2	3	4	5
55. Perform hall, bus, or cafeteria duty	1	2	3	4	5
56. Enter data	1	2	3	4	5
57. Prepare IEP, SST, or School attendance records	1	2	3	4	5
58. Compute grade point averages	1	2	3	4	5
59. Assist with duties in the principal's office	1	2	3	4	5
60. Register or schedule students for classes	1	2	3	4	5

	I never do this (1)	I rarely do this (2)	I occasionally do this (3)	I frequently do this (4)	I routinely do this (5)
61. Enroll students in and/or withdraw students from school	1	2	3	4	5
62. Maintain/complete education records/reports (cumulative files, test scores, attendance reports, drop-out reports)	1	2	3	4	5
63. Handle discipline of students	1	2	3	4	5
64. Substitute teach and/or cover classes for teachers at your school	1	2	3	4	5
65. Work with individual students in a clinical, therapeutic mode	1	2	3	4	5

Directions: Please circle the appropriate response.

1. Total number of years of experience as a counselor less than 3 3 – 5 6 – 10 11-20 20+
2. Total number of years as a counselor at a Title I school none less than 3 3 – 5 6 – 10 11-20 20+
3. Current assignment Title I Distinguished School Title I Needs Improvement School

4.	AYP Status 2008	met		did not meet		
5.	Grades served at current site	pre-k – 5	k-5	k-3	4-5	other:_________
6.	Number of counselors working at your school	1	1and ½	2	2 and ½3	other:_______________
7.	Current school site setting	Urban	Suburban	Rural	other:_______________	
8.	Number of students assigned to each counselor	<100	<250	250 – 350	351 – 450	450+
9.	Have you been trained on the ASCA National Model?	yes	no			
10.	Does your county/district require implementation of the ASCA National Model?			yes	no	

APPENDIX H

PERFORMANCE OF RECOMMENDED ACTIVITTIES – PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES IN EACH CATEGORY

Performance of Recommended Activities -

Percentage of Responses In Each Category

Activity	Frequency of Performance				
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Routinely
1. Counsel with students regarding personal/family concerns	0	0	4.2	41.7	54.2
2. Counsel with students regarding school behavior	0	0	5.2	37.5	57.3
3. Counsel students regarding crisis/emergency issues	0	5.3	37.9	32.6	24.2
4. Provide small group counseling addressing relationship/social issues	5.3	5.3	23.2	32.6	33.7
5. Conduct small groups regarding family/personal issues (e.g. divorce, death)	6.4	17.0	35.1	19.1	22.3
6. Consult with community and school agencies concerning individual issues	0.0	4.2	27.4	35.8	32.6
7. Conduct individual or small group counseling for students regarding substance abuse issues (own use or family/friend use)	33.3	39.6	18.8	5.2	3.1
8. Coordinate school-wide response for crisis management and intervention	26.3	28.4	25.3	11.6	8.4

Activity	Frequency of Performance				
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Routinely
9. Assist in identifying exceptional children (special education)	8.3	17.7	29.2	25.0	19.8
10. Provide assistance to individuals or small groups on social skills development.	1.0	1.0	14.6	37.5	45.8
11. Develop and/or implement individual behavior plans	5.2	15.6	35.4	32.3	11.5
12. Assist individual students or small groups with development of self-knowledge and positive self-concept	0.0	2.1	11.6	37.9	48.4
13. Work with individuals or small groups to develop safety and/or survival skills	6.3	14.6	33.3	27.1	18.8
14. Assist individuals or small groups in setting goals and/or making good decisions	1.1	4.2	6.3	38.9	49.5
15. Consult with school staff concerning student behavior	0.0	0.0	4.3	21.5	74.2
16. Consult with school staff concerning student academic achievement	0.0	0.0	11.8	37.6	50.5
17. Consult with parents regarding academic, personal/social or career issues	1.1	2.2	19.4	40.9	36.6

Activity	Frequency of Performance				
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Routinely
18. Analyze student data to better meet academic needs and develop individual long-range plans	5.4	9.7	36.6	26.9	21.5
19. Counsel individual students or small groups regarding academic issues (i.e., test-taking strategies, academic/career plans)	0.0	7.5	32.3	23.7	36.6
20. Conduct interest inventories	21.7	23.9	37.0	9.8	7.6
21. Follow up on individual and group counseling participants	0.0	1.1	12.8	37.2	48.9
22. Develop and publish calendars (to organize program)	13.8	11.7	17.0	19.1	38.3
23. Utilize action plans and an management agreement (with principal) to guide program development	15.2	17.4	20.7	25.0	21.7
24. Conduct audits of your counseling program	17.0	29.8	34.0	14.9	4.3
25. Participate in school-level decision-making	3.2	6.4	24.5	36.2	29.8
26. Coordinate referrals for students and/or families to community or education professionals (e.g. mental health, speech pathology, medical assessment)	4.3	4.3	28.7	43.6	19.1
27. Participate in school-based management team	7.6	6.5	14.1	22.8	48.9

Activity	Frequency of Performance				
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Routinely
28. Provide consultation for administrators (regarding school policy, programs, staff, and or/ students)	4.3	11.7	19.1	36.2	28.7
29. Participate in team/grade level/subject team meetings	8.5	19.1	33.0	17.0	22.3
30. Coordinate activities to understand and/or improve school climate	5.3	11.7	36.2	33.0	13.8
31. Inform parents about the role, training and interventions of a school counselor within the context of your school	1.1	16.3	25.0	30.4	27.2
32. Inform teachers/administrators about the role, training, program and interventions of a school counselor within the context of your school.	1.1	7.5	24.7	36.6	30.1
33. Conduct or coordinate teacher in-service programs	17.2	29.0	34.4	10.8	8.6
34. Keep track of how time is being spent on the functions you perform	3.2	20.4	15.1	23.7	37.6
35. Attend professional development activities (e.g. state conferences, local in-services)	2.2	4.3	26.9	35.5	31.2
36. Coordinate with an advisory team to analyze and respond to school counseling program needs	25.3	26.4	29.7	11.0	7.7

Activity	Frequency of Performance				
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Routinely
37. Formally evaluate student progress as a result of participation in individual/group counseling from student, teacher, and/or parent perspectives	10.0	12.2	36.7	26.7	14.4
38. Conduct needs assessments and counseling program evaluations from parents, faculty and /or students	6.5	14.1	40.2	19.6	19.6
39. Participate on committees within the school	2.2	2.2	10.9	20.7	64.1
40. Provide parents with information regarding child/adolescent development	4.3	10.9	38.0	31.5	15.2
41. Provide parents information to help ensure student academic success	3.3	5.4	34.8	38.0	18.5
42. Conduct classroom activities to introduce yourself and explain the counseling program to all students	1.1	4.3	7.5	16.1	71.0
43. Conduct classroom lessons addressing career development and the world of work	8.6	6.5	26.9	22.6	35.5
44. Conduct classroom lessons on various personal and/or social traits (e.g. responsibility, respect)	1.1	3.2	6.5	20.4	68.8

Activity	Frequency of Performance				
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Routinely
45. Conduct classroom lessons on relating to others (family, friends, conflict resolution)	1.1	3.3	7.7	20.9	67.0
46. Conduct classroom lessons on personal growth and development issues	6.5	5.4	9.8	26.1	52.2
47. Conduct classroom lessons on personal safety issues and substance abuse prevention.	5.4	6.5	16.3	23.9	47.8
48. Conduct classroom lessons on academic success skills (study skills, time management)	2.2	9.8	14.1	21.7	52.2
49. Coordinate special events and programs for school around academic, career, or personal/social issues (e.g. career day, drug awareness week, test prep)	3.3	5.4	16.3	15.2	59.8
50. Conduct or coordinate parent education classes or workshops	19.6	28.3	26.1	14.1	12.0
51. Coordinate orientation process/activities for students	13.5	27.0	19.1	13.5	27.0

APPENDIX I

MATRICES OF RELATED LITERATURE

MATRICES OF RELATED LITERATURE

Studies Related to School Reform

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN/ ANALYSIS	OUTCOMES
Stickel, (1999)	to gauge the impact that school reform and restructuring is having on the functions of school counselors to anticipate how counselors will work in the new century and how this will impact counselor training	40 respondents 29 females, 33 white with an average of 19.5 years of experience mostly high school and middle school	Delphi Model – qualitative method (series of questionnaires	• counselors seem to agree that they are involved in more teamwork with administration, students, teachers and parents • strong agreement is indicated concerning doing more paperwork, having a larger caseload, doing more non-counseling duties and having more evening obligations. • 5-year projections = counselors strongly agreed that they will be making greater use of technology and will be working collaboratively as part of teams *Less agreement* • Counselors generally agree that they are more involved with teaming efforts • restructuring has increased the use of technology, resulted in more focus on preparing students for the work world and placed more emphasis on professional development • in the future, counselors see themselves running more prevention programs, meeting the needs of more at-risk students, making greater use of tech, working consistently w/parent, insuring student accountability and doing more classroom based guidance disagreement with statements

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN/ ANALYSIS	OUTCOMES
				• consistent disagreement with having more time for group work as a result of restructuring • disagreed that school reform has perpetuated the status quo. • disagree that counselors would be seen as more valuable, that caseloads would lessen, and that counselors would be working more independently and on a consultative basis. *Less consensus* • more community agencies are providing services in schools and whether counselors are working with more severely disturbed students • doing more classroom guidance, presenting information in school assemblies, and having more involvement with scheduling • effects of block scheduling, the counseling role in defending restructuring programs to the community and counselors' involvement with curriculum – less clear

Holcomb-McCoy, (2001)	to examine urban school counseling professionals' perceptions of school restructuring activities	269 school counseling professions from 6 east coast urban areas (New York City, Newark, NJ, Philadelphia, Washington DC, Baltimore & Trenton, NJ) drawn from 1999-2000 ASCA membership	Urban School Counselor Questionnaire	• respondents agreed that school counselors should be involved in school restructuring • respondents agreed school counselors understand the nature of school climate and its impact on teaching and learning (mean 1.67) and school counselors should be able to participate in school-level decision making (mean 1.67) denoted the highest agreement, respectively. • Least agreement – school counselors should spend a considerable amount of time building partnerships with community members, orgs, & businesses (mean 3.01) and school counselors should be able to implement family counseling (mean 2. 87) • urban school counselors agree they should be involved in typical restructuring activities such as understanding the nature of school climate, participating on school-based management teams and being a participant in school-level decision-making. • urban counselors are unsure of their role as implementers of family counseling
Davis, (2006)	To examine Region IV school counselors' use of a developmental guidance and counseling program and the impact , and the impact, if any, Senate bill 518 has had on the job	450 counselors in Texas	Quantitative survey	• Majority of counselors were aware of the passage of bill, but only a little more than ½ followed a developmental guidance and counseling program in their daily job responsibilities • most did not have job responsibilities change as a result of the bill • counselors w/ more years of experience more likely to use a developmental program. • grade level had no influence on usage • counselors on campuses w/ lower enrollment = more likely to use plan

	responsibilities of counselors since its enactment in 2001			
Kaufman, P., Bradby, D., Teitelbaum, P. (2000).	To determine if strategies implemented in High Schools that Work (HSTW) reform impacted student achievement	424 schools	Quantitative	• Guidance counseling is one of 6 key practices to promote student achievement • Increases in the amount of time that students spent talking to their guidance counselors and teachers about their school program were directly associate with increases in the schools' mean assessment scores.

Studies Related to Counselors' Roles In Schools

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN/ ANALYSIS	OUTCOMES
Hardesty, P. & Dillard (1994)	To examine the functions/activities of counselors at different grade levels, particularly to compare elem. to middle and high school.	369 Kentucky school counselors 141 elementary 88 middle school 140 secondary	Questionnaire – telling amount of time spent in 17 activities	• elementary counselors reported higher levels of coordination and consultation, especially in consulting with faculty, consulting w/ community agencies and coordinating programs • elementary counselors have more interaction with parents, families and teachers than others • elementary counselors perform less administrative like activities (scheduling & paperwork) • elementary counselors work systematically w/ families, teachers & community agencies where as high school/ middle work with individuals more

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN/ ANALYSIS	OUTCOMES
Burnham, J., Jones, J. & Jackson, M. (2000).	Examine discrepancies between counselors' actual practice & existing models' Compare what counselors actually do to what has been suggested by the CGCP (Gysbers & Henderson) & Myrick's developmental guidance plan	80 counselors from 2 southeastern states; 25 elem. 12 middle schools 3 middle-high schools 15 high schools 5 k-12 schools 11 – no grade indicated	Quantitative Questionnaire	• Individualized counseling utilized frequently • large percentage of counselors were test coordinators (reflective of historic role in assessment & appraisal)
Perusse, R., Goodnough, G., Donegan, J. & Jones, C. (2004).	Determine the degree of emphasis that professional s,. counselors and principals should give to the	636 professional counselors from ASCA membership 255 NASSP	Total Design Method – questionnaire (quantitative) Analysis – Kruskal-	• Principals & counselors agree that emphasis should be given to all 9 standards • Highest ranked item for elem. counselors & element principals = students will acquire the attitudes, knowledge and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self & others. • Ranked 2nd by second. Principals

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN/ ANALYSIS	OUTCOMES
	National Standards & TSCI domains To compare responses between elem. & secondary counselors & principals	principals 220 NAEP principals	Wallace H as omnibus test followed by Mann U Whitney	• Top 3 inappropriate tasks for element. counselors were the top 3 endorsed as appropriate by elem. Principals: “administering cognitive, aptitude, and achievement tests” “assisting with duties in the principal’s office” & “maintaining student records” • elem. Counselors showed greater support for the personal/social domain • not clear agreement from counselors or principals about what are appropriate & inappropriate tasks • discrepancy b/w what counselors & principals identify as appropriate. & inappropriate. Tasks • 1970 study by Hart & Prince found principals believed counselors should due clerical duties, fill in as teachers. 30 years later, this has not changed. • Data suggests that counselors and principals do not accept systemic whole school goals as central to counselors’ role, as prescribed by the Ed. Trust. (whole school and system concerns and using data to effect change in schools towards ed. Equity & become accountable for student success)

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN/ ANALYSIS	OUTCOMES
Chata, C. & Loesch, L.(2007).	To determine whether principals in –training favor ASCA recommended PSC roles over those not endorsed by the counseling profession Investigate differences in prin.-in-training perceptions based on gender of the PSC	244 principals-in-training	Clinical-simulation technique (bogus profile)	• Principals In training were able to differentiate appropriate and inappropriate PSC performance as related to role and function recommendations in the ASCA model • Implicit endorsement of ASCA model activities • Principals in-training differentiated PSC performance appropriateness regardless of PSC gender • Substantial variability in the ratings for both appropriate & inappropriate performance = lack of consensus about PSC's performance = some principals who do not agree with current recommendations for effective PSC functioning.

STUDY	**PURPOSE**	**PARTICIPANTS**	**DESIGN/ ANALYSIS**	**OUTCOMES**
Walsh, Barrett, & DePaul (2007)	to examine the new directions of counseling field to examine the implementation of the components of the delivery system of the ASCA national model	counselors participating in the Boston Connects program -- counselors in 4 schools (2 full time and 2 part-time)	Qualitative – deduction from collection of weekly logs	• programmatic approach reflected in 17% of activities • collaborative approach = 60% of activities • Advocacy/prevention = 23% of activities • *ASCA model delivery system* -guidance curriculum = 32% of activities -17% = individual planning 34% = responsive services 17% = system support • newly hired urban school counselors can practice in a way that is aligned with both new directions in the field of counseling as well as the guidelines of the ASCA national model delivery system • positive outcomes for individual students and school culture over a 2 year period has led principals to argue staunchly for presence of counselors • new findings contrast sharply w;/ earlier decades in which counselor roles were confined to activities such as orientation, individual appraisal, counseling, information, placement and follow-up – primarily responsive services; they are only about 1/3 of new

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN/ ANALYSIS	OUTCOMES
				counselors' role
Partin (1993)	1. identify activities counselors perceive to be their greatest time wasters 2. identify percentage of time counselors believe they spend on each of the primary job functions 3. to compare	210 counselors 52 elementary 83 middle 70 high school	Quantitative – survey likert survey	• Counselors at all levels = paperwork greatest time robber • significantly wasteful by high school than elementary • middle school found resolving discipline as a major robber • elementary rated teaching duties as a time robber more than the other 2 groups • counselors would prefer to spend more time on individual and group counseling as well as professional development activities and significantly less time in testing and student appraisal, and administrative /clerical activities • -time spent on counseling and consultation = 52% of time • -elementary want to spend more time for group counseling

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN/ ANALYSIS	OUTCOMES
	those perceptions w/ideal allocations of time			- if not on paper, by default the counselor's job has grown to encompass many non-counseling duties.
Lapan & Gysbers (2001)	to examine on a statewide basis, the impact of more fully implemented cgcp on 1. student perceptions of safety in school, 2. Satisfaction with their education, 3. grades, 4. perception of relationships with	22,601 7th grader students 4,896 teachers 184 schools 50% girls 16% minority	Hierarchical Linear Model (multiple linear regression, correlation analysis, included)	- -growing body of info. about the positive impact counseling has on overall student development. - when counselors. are engaged fully in implementing preferred tasks outline in cgcp, they move out of marginalized positions = student improvement educationally and career objectives - Implementation of CGCP is associate with indicators of student safety & success - Counseling activities performed – 1. more time in classrooms 2. assisting students with per. probs. & educational &career plans 3. consulting with parents & personnel 4. providing individual. & group counseling

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN/ ANALYSIS	OUTCOMES
	teachers, 5. Perception of the importance and relevance of ed. to future			5. referring as needed 6. communicating to others within school and community about goals of program Both boys & girls reported 1. better relationships with teachers 2. higher grades 3. belief that their education was more important to them and relevant to future 4. more enhance subjective & objective perceptions of the QOL available to them in schools.

Studies Related to Counselors and Students in Poverty

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN/ ANALYSIS	OUTCOMES
Cross & Burney, (2005)	To determine how counselors impact educational success of poor, rural students	21 middle & high school counselors	Qualitative interviews	• 3 Themes add to understanding of difficulties facing high-ability students of poverty in rural settings: o rigorous courses are too much work or take too much time o School climate issues and rules discourage participation advanced options o there are issues relating to generational poverty • Counselor suggestions: o Personal relationships very effective o go out of your way o point out specific opportunities o assuring the student financial aid can be obtained o encouraging goal setting o assuring student of counselor's high expectations o Sponsor career fairs o .Build institutional relationships (joint enrollment)

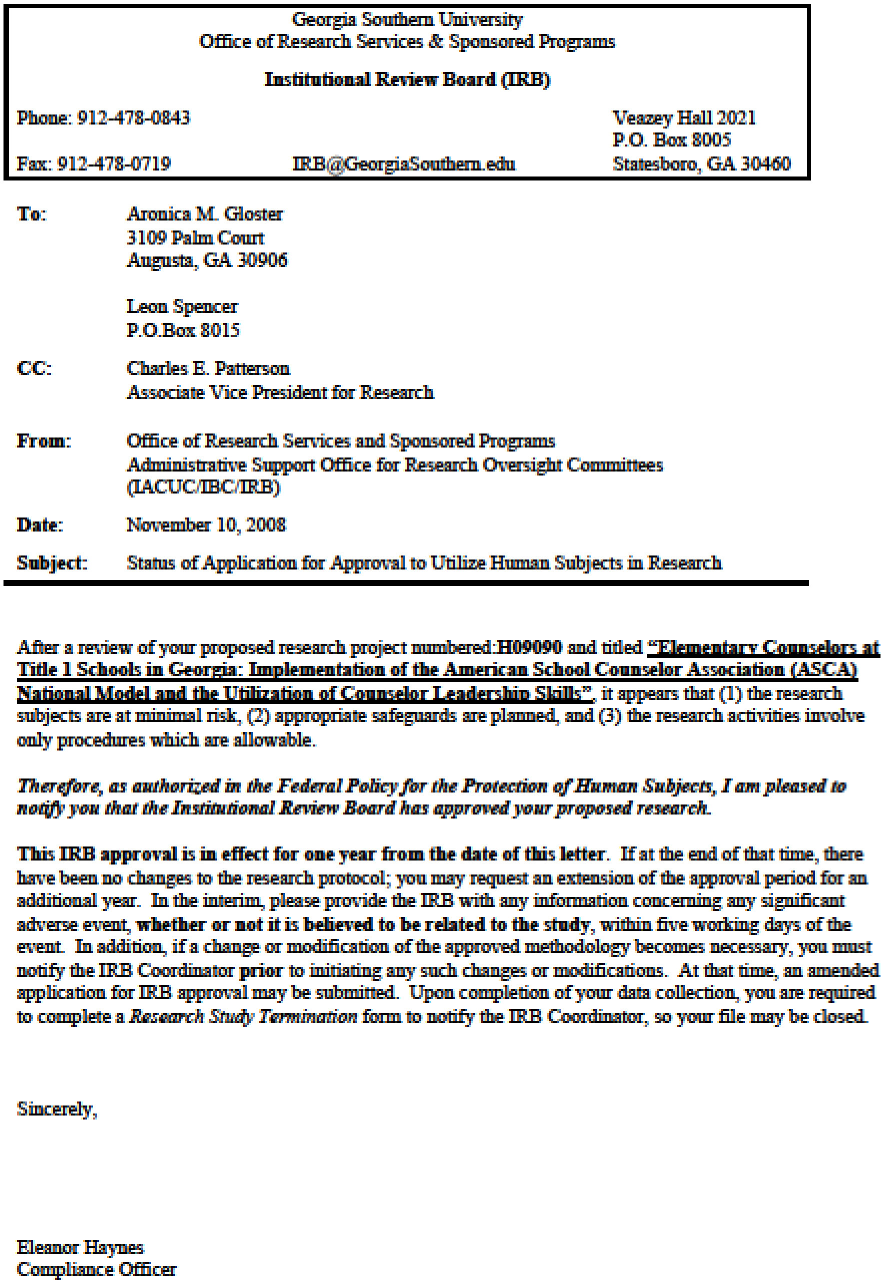
STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN/ ANALYSIS	OUTCOMES
Louis, (2001)	to examine the planning and implementation of the Transforming School counseling Initiative by Dewitt-Wallace Readers Digest (DWRD) collaboration and to provide data for other universities and districts interested in similar reforms	Six university school districts Large, urban centers to med-sized communities Substantial population of low-income students		• factors that present significant challenges to changing school counselor roles: o weak/nonexistent definitions of job o role of principals in defining the actual work of counselors o predominance of paperwork and administration in daily activities o competing organizational crises and reform agendas that distract district administrators from focusing on counseling o Suggest perception of counseling reform and increased accountability as competing rather than complementary goals

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN/ ANALYSIS	OUTCOMES
Holcomb-McCoy & Mitchell (2005)	explore the roles, functions and perceptions of urban school counselors; Utilized Gysbers & Henderson's CGCP components and Myrick's Developmental Guidance components	102 school counseling professions in 6 east coast urban areas (New York city, Newark, NJ, Philadelphia, Washington, DC, Baltimore, and Trenton, NJ ASCA membership roster 27% high school 27% middle school 6% all settings 32% elementary 1% charter 21% private school 6% other	Urban School Counselor Questionnaire	• Consultation with teachers most frequent = avg. 14.12 % of time • -Counseling -- 3 – 90%; M = 36.42 • -Coordination – avg. 87.2% • Administering tests – 3.19% of time • Advising – 4.59% of time • Administrative/clerical work – 13.21% of time • Scheduling – 4.56% of time (range 0 – 35) • Most prevalent Issues/Concerns o low family functioning/parenting o Academic achievement o poverty • Average caseload – 362.45; SD = 309.66 • -82.4% believed they are effective; 4.9% no; 13.7% no response

APPENDIX J

IRB APPROVAL

IRB Approval



Georgia Southern University
Office of Research Services & Sponsored Programs

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Phone: 912-478-0843
Fax: 912-478-0719
IRB@GeorgiaSouthern.edu
Veazey Hall 2021
P.O. Box 8005
Statesboro, GA 30460

To: Aronica M. Gloster
3109 Palm Court
Augusta, GA 30906

Leon Spencer
P.O.Box 8015

CC: Charles E. Patterson
Associate Vice President for Research

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

Date: November 10, 2008

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

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After a review of your proposed research project numbered:**H09090** and titled **"Elementary Counselors at Title 1 Schools in Georgia: Implementation of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model and the Utilization of Counselor Leadership Skills"**, 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,

Eleanor Haynes
Compliance Officer

APPENDIX K

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF RESEARCH SERVICES
AND SPONSORED PROGRAMS
POST OFFICE BOX 8005
STATESBORO, GEORGIA 30460-8005
TELEPHONE (912) 681-5465

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF LEADERSHIP, TECHNOLOGY & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Colleague:

My name is Aronica Gloster and I am a doctoral candidate at Georgia Southern University. I am conducting a study on the activities of school counselors at Title I Elementary Schools in Georgia and I am soliciting your input.

The purpose of this research is to discover the level of implementation of the ASCA National Model for School Counseling Programs by counselors in elementary schools with high poverty rates. Additionally, the study will examine the extent to which elementary counselors in Title I schools utilize leadership skills that promote school reform.

Participation in this research involves completion of a questionnaire. This process should take no more than 15 minutes. The questionnaire can be accessed on-line by typing in the following link:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=FUvKDuzqkxDNMKZQLmrM2Q_3d_3d

The title of the survey is "School Counseling Activities Survey for Elementary Counselors." If you prefer, a paper copy of the survey can be provided for your completion by using the contact information below. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. The risks from participating in this study would be no more than risks encountered in everyday life; however, you may choose to omit any items or you may choose not to complete the questionnaire. There is, of course, no penalty should you decide not to participate.

As a participant, you have the opportunity to inform educational leaders and counselors about the vital functions counselors fulfill in schools. Additionally, the results will highlight counselor practices deemed most effective for facilitating student success. This information can be used to strengthen the role that counselors play in educational reform and ultimately better enable schools to meet students' needs and promote their achievement. Should you decide to participate, please be assured that your responses will be kept confidential and you will not be identified individually in the study.

You must be 18 years of age or older to consent to participate in this research study. ***Completion of the survey implies that you agree to participate and your data may be used in this research***. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study at any time, please feel free to contact me, Aronica Gloster, at (706) 793-9545 or via e-mail at agloster@georgiasouthern.edu. You may also contact Dr. Leon Spencer, advisor, at (912) 478-5917 or lespence@georgiasouthern.edu. For questions concerning your rights as a research participant, contact Georgia Southern University Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs at 912-681-0843 or ovrsight@georgiasouthern.edu. A copy of the study's results will be provided upon request.

Respectfully,

Aronica M. Gloster

Aronica M. Gloster
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Administration
Georgia Southern University

APPENDIX L

FOLLOW-UP POSTCARD

Dear Colleague:

About two weeks ago, you received a letter inviting you to participate in a survey. The purpose of this research is to discover the level of implementation of the ASCA National Model for School Counseling Programs and examine counselors' involvement as leaders.

If you have already completed the survey, I sincerely thank you. If not, your input is solicited and valued. The survey takes no more than 15 minutes and can be accessed on-line by typing in this link:
http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=FUvKDuzqkxDNMKZQLmrM2Q_3d_3d

The title of the survey is "School Counseling Activities Survey for Elementary Counselors." Please complete it at your earliest convenience.

If you have any questions, would like me to e-mail you the link, or want survey results, please feel free to contact me at (706)793-9545 or via e-mail at agloster@georgiasouthern.edu.

Sincerely,

Aronica M. Gloster

Aronica Gloster

GEORGIA
SOUTHERN
UNIVERSITY